



Name of policy: HEALTHY EATING, SNACKS AND LUNCHBOX POLICY

Version	Date	Approved by governors	Description
1	October 2024	14/10/24	Policy created
2	September 2025	23/09/25	Policy updated - minor changes to section 3 (responsibilities of the school) and change of catering company details.

This policy is due for review on: September 2026



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1. Aims

- At Highwood we recognise the important part a healthy diet plays for a child's wellbeing and their ability to learn effectively and achieve. We believe that the school, in partnership with parents and carers, can make a major contribution to improving children and young people's health by increasing their knowledge and understanding of food and helping them make healthy food choices.
- We want to ensure that all food and drink brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips), including at before and after school clubs and at break and lunchtimes, is healthy and nutritious and in line with food served in schools, which is now regulated by national standards.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy takes account of national guidance produced by the School Food plan, Change4life and the NHS 'Healthy Steps' guidance for schools.

It is also based on guidance provided by Wokingham Borough Council and the 'Healthy promoting schools' programme.

3. Responsibilities of the school

It is the responsibility of all staff including teaching, support staff and catering staff to implement the food policy and to actively act as role models to demonstrate positive attitudes to healthy eating and develop pupils' awareness and understanding of how to make healthy food choices:

- The subject leaders of PSHE and PE are jointly responsible for what is taught about healthy eating and practical food education in the curriculum.
- The EYS lead is responsible for ensuring all snacks, meals, and drinks provided to early years pupils are aligned with the EYS statutory framework, including that staff model healthy eating and create positive food environments.

In addition to the responsibilities of teaching and catering staff, the Family Support Worker will play a role in promoting and supporting food education and healthy eating practices with families. The lead governor on health and safety ensures the policy is implemented.

- Innovate (our catering providers) and kitchen staff are responsible for providing high quality food that complies with the national nutritional standards for school food and contributing to a welcoming and positive eating environment
- We recognise that our children come from diverse backgrounds, cultures, ethnic and faith groups. We also recognise that children may have food related condition and require additional consideration. We understand that some children find new and varied foods challenging. We encourage parents to let us know if this is the case so that we can support these children sensitively and with encouragement and praise for what they have eaten.

4. School lunches

All of our school lunches are provided by a contracted caterer that follows national nutrition guidelines. The menu offered will provide for children with allergies and other dietary requirements. We endeavour to provide a calm and positive atmosphere in the dining area where children socialise and enjoy the dining experiences. Staff monitor food choices and encourage pupils to try new foods. We provide Universal Free School Meals for children in Reception and KS1 and encourage all parents to take free school meals where there is an entitlement. Parents receive the catering menu for the term and it is also available on the school website.

Children are encouraged to be independent during the meal and clear up after themselves at the end by tidying their plates and cutlery away. They will seek permission from a Lunch Supervisor before leaving the table and they will be encouraged to eat the food they have been provided with.

5. Packed lunches

This applies to all pupils and parents providing packed lunches to be consumed within school or on school trips during school hours.

WE ARE A NUT FREE SCHOOL. NO NUTS OR NUT PRODUCTS MUST BE BROUGHT INTO SCHOOL. THIS INCLUDES ANYTHING COOKED IN NUT OIL AND PRODUCTS SUCH AS NUTELLA AND KINDER BUENO WHICH CONTAIN HAZELNUTS.

As fridge space is not available within school, parents are advised to send packed lunches in a cool bag or provide food that does not require refrigeration and include a cold drink or ice pack to help keep food cool.

Pupils packed lunches should offer balanced nutrition that is similar to food served in schools which is in line with The School Food Standards.

Below is some guidance for preparing a child's balanced lunchbox. It should include:

- ✓ Starchy food – these are bread, rice, potatoes and pasta, ideally wholegrain.
- ✓ Protein foods - including meat, fish, eggs and beans
- ✓ A dairy item – cheese or sugar free/natural yoghurt or a boiled egg
- ✓ Vegetables or salad and a portion (aim for 2 or 3) of fruit

We would strongly encourage parents to limit unhealthy foods (such as those with high sugar, salt or fat content and highly processed foods) to a small amount or not at all in a lunchbox. Please note however that the following are NOT allowed:

- ✗ Any product that contains nuts

- ✗ Bags of sweets
- ✗ Fizzy drinks, Fruit Shoots (or similar), cartons of juice, Capri Suns (or similar)
- ✗ Energy drinks that contain high sugar or any amount of stimulant eg caffeine
- ✗ Chewing gum

If any of these items are brought in lunchboxes, staff will speak to the children about appropriate lunchtime foods and drinks and will return the item back to the child at the end of the day to take home.

In addition, parents may also wish to consider reducing the amount of UPF (Ultra processed foods) in lunch boxes. Research shows that increasing the variety of wholefoods in a diet supports growth, concentration, immunity and overall development.

Children take their water bottles to the hall at lunchtime. If they do not have one school will provide water to drink.

Children are taught not to share packed lunches. Food not eaten in a packed lunch will be taken home by the child to ensure that parents know what their child has or has not eaten.

Staff may open up a discussion with parents to offer support if, over a period of time, they feel that lunchbox choices could be improved or contain a high number of unhealthy products. This is to support a healthy diet for the child and to see how we, as a school might help.

Please see the end of the document for further suggested lunch ideas.

6. Break time snacks

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Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1

- Daily fruit or vegetables are provided each day at no cost to parents.
- Water is always available.
- Milk is available for all pupils in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 as part of the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) offer.

Key Stage 2

Key Stage 2 pupils require a snack provided by parents. Examples of a suitable snack are as follows:

- ✓ Vegetable sticks (e.g. carrots, cucumber, peppers, mange tout, baby corn)
- ✓ Sliced or whole fruit (e.g. apple, banana, satsuma, pear, plum)
- ✓ Healthy snack foods such as halved cherry tomatoes or olives
- ✓ Oat cakes/wholegrain crackers/breadsticks.
- ✓ Natural/ plain greek / yoghurt with fruit/seeds/oats added

✓ Seeds (eg pumpkin or sunflower seeds)

The following is a list of items that are not allowed as everyday snacks in school:

✗ chocolate

✗ cakes

✗ sweets

✗ highly processed meats such as pepperami

✗ biscuits

✗ flavoured/sweetened yogurts

✗ crisps

If they are brought onto the playground at break time, staff will speak with the children about healthy options for snacking and return the item back to the child to be taken home.

7. Events and Celebrations

Foods that are sent into school to celebrate birthdays are an exception to the above. These will be distributed at home time and children will be told to seek parental permission before consuming anything provided in this way.

If children would like to give out sweets or chocolate to other children in the class for their birthdays we ask that this be limited to one item per child.

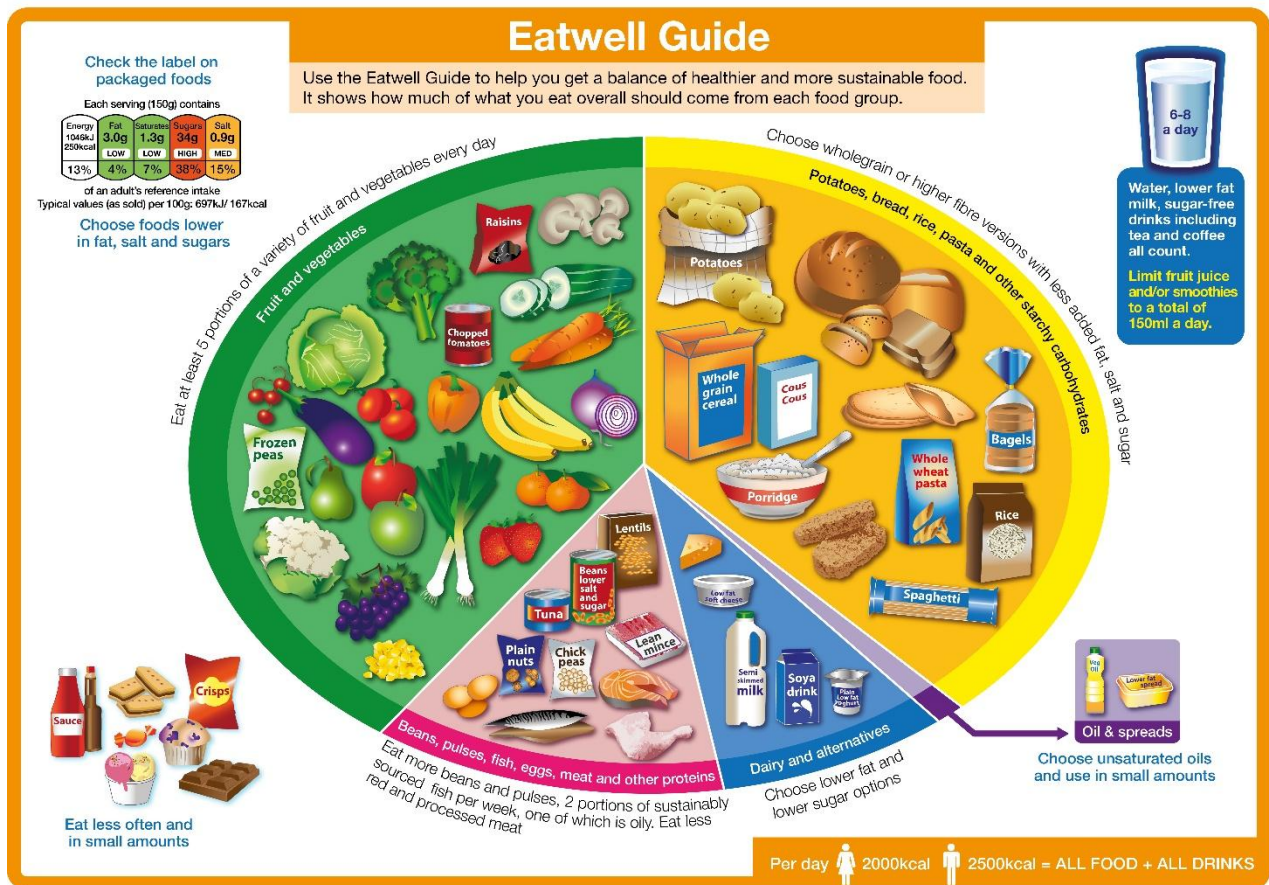
This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

8. Reference and further reading

1. British Nutrition Foundation [A healthy balanced diet | British Nutritional Foundation](#)
2. School Food Plan [Homepage - School Food Plan](#)
3. Heathier families (previously Change4Life) [Healthier Families - Home - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

The following pages provide additional, suggested support on helping to provide a healthy lunchbox and healthy eating lifestyle

Appendix 1:



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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Appendix 2:

Snack Ideas

Here are some healthy snack options:



- Whole pieces of fruit e.g. apples, bananas, oranges, tangerines.
- Cherry tomatoes.
- Chopped up fruit. Why not make fruit kebabs or a fruit salad? Save time with pre-chopped tinned fruit.



- Raw vegetable sticks such as pepper, carrot, cucumber and low-fat houmous.



- Toast with lower fat spread or reduced sugar jam.
- Toasted bread muffin or crumpet with mashed banana.
- Low sugar wholemeal/grain cereals such as wheat bisks with milk.
- Crackers with a thin layer of reduced fat cheese spread.



- **Plain popcorn from kernels, with a little oil, made in a saucepan. Delicious and simple.**
- **Breadsticks.**

Appendix 3:

Lunchbox tips



Keep them fuller for longer

Base the main lunchbox item on foods like bread, rice, pasta and potatoes. Choose wholegrain where you can.



Freeze for variety

Keep a small selection of different types of bread in the freezer so you have a variety of options – like bagels, pittas and wraps, granary, wholemeal and multigrain.



DIY lunches

Wraps and pots of fillings can be more exciting for kids when they get to make them. Dipping foods are also fun and a nice change from a sandwich each day.



Cut back on fat

Pick lower-fat fillings – like lean meats (including chicken or turkey), fish (such as tuna or salmon), lower-fat spread, reduced-fat cream cheese and reduced-fat hard cheese. And try to avoid using mayonnaise in sandwiches.

[See more healthier swap ideas](#)



Mix your slices

If your child does not like wholegrain, try making a sandwich from 1 slice of white bread and 1 slice of brown bread.



Always add veg

Cherry tomatoes, or sticks of carrot, cucumber, celery and peppers all count towards their 5 A Day. Adding a small pot of reduced-fat hummus or other dips may help with getting kids to eat vegetables.



Ever green

Always add salad to sandwiches and wraps too – it all counts towards your child's 5 A Day!



Cheesy does it...

Cheese can be high in fat and salt, so choose stronger-tasting ones – and use less of it – or try reduced-fat varieties.



Cut down on crisps

If your child really likes their crisps try reducing the number of times you include them in their lunchbox, and swap for homemade plain popcorn or plain rice cakes instead.



Tinned fruit counts too

A small pot of tinned fruit in juice – not syrup – is perfect for a lunchbox and easily stored in the cupboard.



Switch the sweets

Swap cakes, chocolate, cereal bars and biscuits for malt loaf, fruited teacakes, fruit breads or fruit (fresh, dried or tinned – in juice not syrup).



Get them involved

Get your kids involved in preparing and choosing what goes in their lunchbox. They are more likely to eat it if they helped make it.



Plan to Eatwell

The guide shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet. It can be really useful when thinking about what goes into kids' lunchboxes.

[The Eatwell Guide](#)



Add bite-sized fruit

Try chopped apple, peeled satsuma segments, strawberries, blueberries, halved grapes or melon slices to make it easier for them to eat. Add a squeeze of lemon juice to stop it from going brown.



Swap the fruit bars

Dried fruit like raisins, sultanas and dried apricots are not only cheaper than processed fruit bars and snacks but can be healthier too. Just remember to keep dried fruit to mealtimes as it can be bad for teeth.



Yoghurts: go low-fat and lower-sugar

Pop in low-fat and lower-sugar yoghurts or fromage frais and add your own fruit.



Variety is the spice of lunch!

Be adventurous and get creative to mix up what goes in their lunchbox. Keeping them guessing with healthier ideas will keep them interested and more open to trying things.