

## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cheshire East Catering

#### CATERING

### FOOD POLICY

#### 1. FOOD ADDITIVE AND INGREDIENT POLICY

Cheshire East Catering has a policy of not using foods that contain certain additives that have been found to have an adverse effect on a small number of children and adults.

The following harmful additives have not been permitted in any foodstuffs for some time.

<b>Number</b>	<b>Name</b>
E102	Tartrazine
E110	Sunset Yellow

We changed to using only natural food colourings for icing four years ago.

Cheshire East Catering has worked in partnership with a paediatrics dietician from a local hospital to review our Food Additive and Ingredient Policy. It was identified that artificial colourings are the biggest cause of reactions to those individuals who are sensitive to additives.

Any food that is identified by an E number has been considered to be safe to use in the food industry and some E numbers are natural products. The concern is in the sensitivity of individuals and the quantities they are exposed to.

**This is the list of additives which cause the most concern.**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Name</b>
E104	Quinoline Yellow
E120	Cochineal
E122	Carmoisine/Azorubine
E123	Amaranth
E124	Ponceau 4R
E127	Erythrosine
E128	Red 2G
E129	Allura Red Ac
E131	Patent Blue V
E133	Brilliant Blue FCF
E142	Green S
E151	Black PN
E154	Brown F.K
E155	BrownH.T
E211	Sodium Benzoate

Each new product that is introduced into the menu is checked that it does not contain food additives from the above list.

## 2. GOVERNMENT NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES

Cheshire East Catering are following the new Government nutritional guidelines introduced from September 2006 which are called “Turning the Tables”. The government want to bring about a “Whole School” approach to food in schools and for schools to adopt their own “Food in Schools” policy.

More guidelines affecting the nutrient standards were brought into force by September 2008 for Primary Schools and 2009 for High Schools.

The 9 food based standards, introduced in September 2006, are aimed to maximise access to healthier foods (like fruit, vegetables and bread) and remove the availability of less healthy foods (like confectionary, pre-packaged savoury snacks and high sugar or sweetened fizzy drinks).

### **Food Based Standards** (from September 2006)

1. Only two deep fried foods to be on the menu per week;
2. No “meat slurry” products to be served;
3. Oily fish on the menu once in every three weeks;
4. Bread (without spread) to be available throughout lunch time;
5. No salt at tables or lunch counter;
6. Free, fresh, chilled drinking water to be available;
7. The only drinks to be available should be water (still or fizzy), skimmed or semi-skimmed milk, pure fruit juices, yogurt and milk drinks with less than 10% added sugar, or combinations of these e.g. smoothies
8. Confectionary and savoury snacks not to be available through school lunches
9. Not less than two portions of fruit and vegetables/salads per child per day (one fruit, one vegetable/salad item)

**Target Nutrient Specifications** have been given by the government to food manufacturers for each food group with maximum fat, saturated fat, salt, sugar and minimum protein content to adhere to. New products are checked for this information before being purchased.

### **NUTRIENT-BASED STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES FROM SEPTEMBER 2008 (PRIMARY SCHOOLS) OR SEPTEMBER 2009 (SECONDARY AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS)**

*This table summarises the proportion of nutrients that children and young people should receive from a school lunch. The figures are for the required nutrient content of an average lunch over five consecutive school days.*

Energy	30% of the EAR*
Protein	Not less than 30% RNI**
Total carbohydrate	Not less than 50% of food energy
Non-milk extrinsic sugars	Not more than 11% of food energy
Fat	Not more than 35% of food energy
Saturated fat	Not more than 11% of food energy

Fibre	Not less than 30% of the calculated reference value NSP (non starch polysaccharide)
Sodium	Not more than 30% of the SACN <sub>2</sub> recommendation
Vitamin A	Not less than 40% of the RNI
Vitamin C	Not less than 40% of the RNI
Folate/folic acid	Not less than 40% of the RNI
Calcium	Not less than 40% of the RNI
Iron	Not less than 40% of the RNI
Zinc	Not less than 40% of the RNI

\* EAR is the Estimated Average Requirement

\*\*RNI is the Reference Nutrient Intake

### 3. OTHER TOPICS

#### ❖ Special Diets

Cheshire East Catering is responsible for the provision of special diets for all schools for which we provide a catering service. These are wide ranging and vary from diabetic to food allergies: gluten, crustaceans, eggs, milk (including lactose), fish, peanuts, soybeans, tree nuts, celery and celeriac, mustard, sesame seeds and sulphites at concentrations of over ten parts per million.

With the increase in potentially worrying allergies, particularly those involving nuts it is important that unofficial diets are not provided for pupils at lunchtime. For this reason a reminder of the procedure to follow for those pupils with special dietary requirements is sent out annually to all schools.

In order for a special diet to be arranged, the parent or guardian must obtain written permission from a hospital, clinic or own doctor, together with the necessary dietary information. Once this information is received, a letter authorising the diet will be sent to the school concerned and the appropriate Manager will contact the Head of Kitchen to discuss arrangements for implementing the diet.

Cheshire East Catering is able to cater for cultural diets by offering vegetarian food and some Halal products.

Cheshire East Catering does recognise that as a result of the complexity of some diets there may be occasions when we are unable to provide this service.

*Cheshire East Catering's policy has been to remove nut products such as mixed nuts and peanut butter from the kitchens. No other nut products have been used.*

### ❖ **Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)**

It has always been policy that pupils and staff who do not wish to eat beef or beef products should be offered a non - beef alternative. In 1996 following considerable media interest in and public concern about possible links between BSE in cows and Creutzfeldt - Jakob disease in humans, the Authority decided to remove beef from its menus in schools. In 2000 when it was identified that beef was safe this decision was reversed. The current situation is that beef is provided as part of a wider choice menu and individual schools can make the decision to implement a beef ban in their establishment.

### ❖ **Genetically Modified Food (GMO)**

Based on the declarations received from our many suppliers none of the products which we specify for use in our school catering service contain any genetically modified protein or DNA.

### ❖ **Fair Trade**

We are constantly looking for Fair Trade products that we can cost effectively make available to our customers.

Currently the products we purchase across the whole sector of our business include:-

Orange juice

Apple Juice

Tea

Coffee

Confectionery (for County Restaurants only).

### ❖ **Use of Eggs**

Raw eggs are not used in dishes which will be eaten without further cooking e.g. Home – made Mayonnaises, Mousse, Royal Icing, Almond paste. It should be noted that commercially produced mayonnaise in bottles or jars does not present a risk. Additionally, meringues must be made from pasteurised egg whites not fresh. The eggs we purchase are Free Range from a Shropshire Farm.

### ❖ **Mechanically Reformed Meat (MRM) –**

What is MRM? This is mechanically recovered meat which is a product obtained by recovering residual raw meat from bones under high pressure after other boning processes have been completed. It has been made from beef, pig, sheep or chicken bones. It is known to have been used in products such as cheaper burgers, sausages and pies and cannot legally be added to minced meat.

It is the policy of Cheshire East Catering that MRM is not used in any of the foodstuffs purchased. With the move to “whole muscle” products this minimizes the risk of MRM being used.

## ❖ **Healthy Eating**

Cheshire East Catering is committed to providing Healthy Eating to the pupils and staff of Cheshire East. The School Catering Service supports and adheres to the Nutritional Standards for School Lunches that recommend a diet high in fibre, low in fat, sugar and salt.

### **Salt**

Following the reports by the Committee on Medical Aspects of Food Policy (COMA) and the National Advisory Committee on Nutrition Education (NACNE) in the 1980's and 1990's we have endeavoured – in the midst of many other guidelines – always to be conscious of the health implications of sodium in the diet and (where we have had an influence) to reduce the salt content of products used in our kitchens.

A prime example is our insistence on specifying the use of Low Sugar/Low Salt Baked Beans, even in the face of a cost premium.

In addition, Cheshire East's policy is to keep any salt additions in recipes to a minimum with current recipes being reviewed as required.

Other initiatives include:-

- The removal of salt cellars from tables (primary schools)
- Where possible replacing salt in cooking with herbs, spices, lemon juice etc to enhance the flavours of foods.
- Where possible replacing salt in cooking with LoSalt (a low sodium substitute).

As part of the 2006 Guidelines food manufacturers have been asked to reduce the salt content of their products.

### **Fat**

National concerns regarding the Health of the Nation clearly identify that too much harmful fat in the diet can contribute to both obesity and other associated health problems. Cheshire East Catering is working closely with our suppliers to continually reduce the amount of fat that is present in the foodstuffs we purchase.

Other initiatives that we have implemented are:-

- Offering a reduced number of fried foods
- Controlling the frequency of chips
- Grilling, baking, poaching or steaming instead of frying
- Omitting butter or margarine to cooked vegetables
- Cutting down on hidden fats by looking carefully at food specifications
- Use of reduced fat spread for sandwiches.
- Cooking oil used contains only  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the maximum saturated fat recommended under Government Guidelines
- Reducing saturated fat in dessert recipes by using reduced fat spread or oil in place of hard margarine.
- Reducing/removing the amount of oil used to fry off meat for such dishes as Cottage Pie and Spaghetti Bolognaise.

## **Sugar**

Excessive sugar in the diet can contribute to obesity and dental problems. Back in 1982 there was a review of all homemade desserts. In view of the Nutrient Group Guidelines to be introduced in 2008 for Primary Schools and 2009 for High Schools we are working towards to reducing the sugar content of the meal even further.

### **Additional Measures to Ensure a More Healthy Approach**

- All fish products (breaded and in batter) have a natural coloured coating are oven bake able and do not contain Monosodium Glutamate
- Tinned baked beans have a reduced sugar and salt content.
- Sausages have had their fat content reduced and burgers contain 80% meat. Both products can be oven baked.
- Fresh semi- skimmed milk is supplied and is at subsidised prices in primary schools for drinking milk
- Cheshire East Catering supports serving milk under the WFRU scheme
- Frozen or fresh vegetables are used instead of tinned vegetables that contain artificial colouring, salt, and sugar.
- All dessert whips are free from artificial colouring
- Instant custard powder mix is free from artificial colouring
- Pot yoghurts are reduced in fat and contain real fruit pulp
- Fresh fruit is on the menu daily
- Salad items are on the menu daily
- Frozen Potato products (sauté, roast, hash browns etc) are oven baked and must not be on the menu more than twice a week.
- Jacket potatoes are available daily/weekly (dependant on the type of service)

### **❖ Food & Sustainable Development**

Much effort has been made to source local food and to ensure the best use of sustainable resources. All suppliers are required to avoid non-vital transportation of goods and are asked to offer Cheshire sourced products wherever possible.

A meat tender process has been carried out so that we could engage local butchers to deliver fresh meat into our schools. As part of this process we asked that all meat products supplied are Farm Assured. By doing this we have been awarded the Soil Association's Food for Life Bronze Award for our primary school menu.

Our major food distributors are based at local distribution centres in Runcorn and Manchester. Our Preston based fruit and vegetables supplier has committed to support Cheshire growers wherever possible and, for example, virtually all the baking potatoes that they supply come from Cheshire growers.

Our bread is supplied by Roberts Bakery in Northwich .

Our range of fish products are MSC certified under the Marine Stewardship Council scheme for sustainability.

Most of our drink range is supplied by Calypso, who used to be based in Tattenhall but have relocated to nearby Wrexham.

Within the kitchens we require our staff to deploy our energy conservation policies to help avoid excess consumption of energy. While for a number of years we have been working with a local company to recycle waste food oil.

We continue to seek local and environmentally sustainable sourcing of all products within our range and expect that the list of locally sourced foods will continue to grow.