



# Healthy Eating Policy

Harefield Infant and Nursery School

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# **Harefield Infant School**

## **Healthy Eating Policy**

### **Introduction**

At Harefield Infant and Nursery School, we believe that educating our school community about healthy eating is important. We teach our children that what they eat will affect their growth, resistance to illness, energy levels, ability to learn and their behaviour. We support our parents and carers through a number of programs hosted by our Children Centre

### **The Aims of the Policy**

- To ensure that a consistent approach is adopted by all members of staff with regards to healthy eating
- To promote partnership working with parents and carers and colleagues from health
- To promote healthy eating as part of a healthy lifestyle
- To support parent and carers with children who are faddy or fussy eaters

### **Benefits of Healthy Eating**

- Helps young children develop, grow and do well in school.
- Prevents childhood and adolescent health problems such as obesity, eating disorders, tooth decay and anaemia.
- May prevent health problems in later life, including heart disease and cancer.
- Establishing healthy eating habits at a young age is critical because changing poor eating patterns in adulthood can be difficult.
- Sitting down to a meal with other children is an important part of a child's social education.

### **Consequences of Unhealthy Eating**

- Hungry children are more likely to have behavioural, emotional and academic problems.
- Research suggests that not having breakfast can affect children's intellectual performance.
- Poor eating habits and inactivity are the root cause of overweight and obesity.
- Eating disorders are increasingly common among young children.
- A poor diet is likely to affect children's activity levels and academic performance.

## **Aim**

A healthy diet is essential for maintaining and protecting children's health, for ensuring they perform to their full potential during the school day (both academically and physically) and for their growth and development. Our aim is to help them establish a healthy lifestyle that we hope will continue into adulthood and provide a diet that contains:

MORE – wholemeal bread, cereals and other starchy foods

MORE – fruit and vegetables

LESS – fat, sugar and salty foods

### **1. School milk provision**

Currently, free semi-skimmed milk is provided to school children until their fifth birthday. Milk is an important component of the diets of young children and the school should actively encourage and monitor this uptake.

### **2. Water in school**

Each child has their own water bottle and constant access to clean, cold water. Children should be actively encouraged to drink water throughout the school day. It is also their responsibility to take their bottle home on a weekly basis for sterilising and to return it on the next school day.

### **3. Fruit time**

The school is part of the national fruit scheme – a government initiative to promote healthy eating in young children. All children in KS1 receive a portion of fruit such as an apple, banana, tomato, carrot, or pear, free of charge every day.

### **4. Breakfast club**

The school offers a breakfast club for a small charge allowing children to start their day with a healthy breakfast which has a positive effect on their concentration and performance throughout the day.

### **5. Lunchtime meal provision**

In September 2014 the Government introduced Universal Free School Meals for all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 in state funded schools. Your child can choose to have a healthy and nutritious hot school meal provided free of charge, cooked in our newly fitted and

fully equipped kitchen by our dedicated chef. The meals take into account the health, religious and ethnic preferences of the children. If a child has special dietary requirements for medical purposes e.g. diabetic, low-fat or gluten free, (to name but a few) these are catered for. A doctors or dietician letter is needed in order for us to ensure we get the requirement correct.

### **A healthy and enjoyable lunchtime experience**

The school ensures that children experience a healthy and enjoyable lunchtime. This includes:-

- Clean, comfortable and pleasant surroundings are provided where food, both school meals and packed lunches can be consumed.
- School Meal Supervisors and kitchen service staff give positive encouragement and advice to the children on healthy eating.
- Easy to read menus are available for parents and children to see.
- Adequate time is allowed for the children to eat their lunchtime meal.

### **6. Food brought into school**

- Sweets are not allowed to be brought into school unless for special occasions and celebrations. These should be distributed at the end of the day and not be consumed in the classroom. This allows parents/carers to decide if they want their child to have this treat.
- Children should take any wastage home with them to allow parents to monitor their child's intake of food.
- Positive reinforcement should be given to children who consistently bring a healthy lunch box.
- Parents need to be made aware of the importance of a healthy diet in childhood.

### **7. Dental Health**

Many of our children suffer from tooth decay as a result of eating and drinking too many sugary foods and we aim to educate them to consume less of these. We also work closely with National Health England to bring various dental strategies to our families.

### **8. Health Education in school**

Nutrition, food and health must be given a high priority throughout the school curriculum. Practical involvement in meal planning and food preparation is part of the Foundation and KS1 curriculum in Science, P.S.H.E. and Design Technology. It is important that children are not made to feel guilty about eating high fat and sugar foods and see them

as an occasional treat. The correct approach is to promote the importance of a healthy diet, comprising a variety of food and drink.

We run health and nutrition workshops for nursery parents and work closely with Harefield Children's Centre who run healthy eating and nutrition programs for families with children under five. We promote public health initiatives such as Changes4Life in school newsletters.

### **Recommendations**

- All school staff and Governors need to set a good example when making their own food choices within the school environment. As with the children there will be special occasions when this rule will be broken!
- Fundraising cake sales will continue to take place on an occasional basis.

### **Monitoring**

It is recommended that the Governing Body request an annual report on the provision of school meals with particular regard to nutrition.

### **Conclusion**

Our key message to children is:

- Enjoy your food.
- Eat a variety of foods, from all the food groups each day.
- Don't skip meals – especially breakfast!