

Cottesbrooke Infant & Nursery School

Food Policy

Rationale

This Policy has been developed as part of our Healthy School Initiative and should be read in conjunction with the DfE 'School Food in England' advice issued in January 2015.

At Cottesbrooke Infant & Nursery School we recognise the importance of food in our lives. We know that eating is vital for good health and we understand that there is a strong link between a healthy diet and effective learning. We also recognise the importance of food related knowledge in enriching social development, and in celebrating and increasing our appreciation of cultural diversity. Additionally, we recognise that sharing food is a fundamental experience for all people and that it is an excellent opportunity to be sociable and build friendships. We aim to offer children both social and learning experiences through food, building life skills which allow our children to develop into responsible and healthy citizens. This is evident in our Healthy Schools award and is proof that we appreciate the importance of being healthy with life-long healthy eating habits, along with the necessary skills and 'food education'.

Since September 2014 we have been successfully implementing the government scheme to provide every Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 child with a free school lunch. Parents are not required to provide a packed lunch from home. We are confident that our carefully planned delivery of the government initiative is having a positive outcome for our children.

We are committed to ensuring all our children have access to a healthy and nutritious diet and have therefore ensured all our children are offered semi skimmed milk free of charge at lunchtime. All under-fives are entitled to milk free of charge until the end of the term in which they turn five from additional government funding.

Aims

At Cottesbrooke Infant & Nursery School we aim to:

- Improve the health of our school community by influencing children's eating habits through increasing their knowledge and awareness of a healthy diet and how to ensure the food is prepared hygienically.
- To provide access to tasty, nutritious food and an easily available water supply throughout the school day.
- To increase the children's knowledge of where food comes from, food production, manufacturing, distribution and marketing and how these impact upon their lives and the environment.
- To ensure that food provision in school reflects the ethical and medical needs of staff and pupils e.g. catering for the needs of religious groups, vegetarians and people with specific food related allergies.
- To make the provision and consumption of food an enjoyable and safe experience.
- To ensure that all government statutory standards are met with regard to free school lunches for all infant children (*see DfE requirements for School Food Regulations 2014*)
- To introduce and promote practices (by all stakeholders) within the school to reinforce these aims.

Objectives

- We will work towards these aims in lessons through a cross-curricular approach, through shared eating times and through social and pastoral activities.
- We will adhere to government guidelines to ensure school lunches meet the necessary standards as well as reflecting the ethos set out in the rationale.

Curriculum

Within the PSHE curriculum, healthy eating, food safety and an understanding of where food comes from will be taught. Where possible, this will also be linked with other curriculum areas such as science and topics.

Opportunities to extend the curriculum will be made through:

1. Visits to local shops, supermarkets etc.
2. Healthy eating projects
3. School Health Weeks
4. Visitors/Cooking demonstrations
5. Purposeful learning about different cultures and festivals and the traditional foods associated with them

Eating Together

- All children are provided with a piece of fruit each day which is funded by the Government National Free Fruit scheme and they eat this during 'snack time', or throughout the day at the snack table
- At lunchtime children are encouraged to sit down with others in the dining room to eat the school dinner provided for them free of charge. The school only allows meals from home in exceptional circumstances e.g. SEND children or extreme allergies
- The children will develop their skills in using utensils and be expected to use items such as knife, fork and spoon correctly
- Meals are prepared on site in the school kitchens and offer a range of options both hot and cold
- The school will endeavour to meet the dietary requirements for all children and can produce a bespoke menu for specific dietary needs. On the rare occasion where this is unsuitable due to special needs, children may bring a healthy packed lunch following consultation with the Inclusion Leader or Head Teacher
- Regular meetings are held with the catering staff to review provision
- Menus are published on the school website, in the dining room and in the school foyer
- Occasionally children find the dining room stressful. In the short term, we may withdraw these children from the dining room and allow them to eat somewhere within the school and work with the child to build up their tolerance to the dining room

Health and Safety

- It is part of our normal school procedure that the children will be reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating
- Children are provided with a named water bottle which they refill in school. New lids/spouts are provided termly or if there is a need due to wear and tear

- Semi skimmed milk, orange juice or water are provided as a morning drink and water is available throughout the day
- Fizzy drinks are not permitted in school
- Sweets are not usually allowed in school although children may bring them in for classmates to celebrate their birthday and occasionally as a special treat at the end of term, particularly Easter, but they must not be eaten at school.
- Food will not be offered as prizes
- Food will be stored appropriately and in compliance with legal and cultural directives
- Parents are asked to complete a dietary requirement form when the child starts school and update the school should circumstances change
- Salt will not be provided at the table at meal times and there are strict limits to the amounts used in cooking throughout the school
- Individual children's allergy sheets are displayed in classrooms, the dining room, and the school office
- Where parents are concerned about their child's eating habits, we will keep a daily food diary on request
- Special consideration is made to children in Reception classes and when children are new to the school. If required these children will wear badges that describe any dietary requirements, e.g. No Nuts, Halal Only, No Beef, Cold Meal Only, etc. Badges will be worn for at least one half term until the kitchen staff get to know the child and their requirements. Children's names and dietary requirements are also displayed in the kitchen

Equal Opportunities

- We will endeavour to provide food that caters for each child's individual needs
- The food provided will reflect the diversity of the community which the setting serves, i.e. Black History Month, Eid, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Saints days etc.
- Halal meat is offered as an option most days to children whose parents who have specifically requested it. Supplier details are available on request
- There is a fish option every day
- Vegetarian food is offered daily
- Children with allergies are catered for as part of their care plan
- Parents may request that their child only eat a hot or a cold option
- When requested or when appropriate, staff will keep parents informed about the food the children have eaten or if there are changes in their child's pattern of eating, such as a loss of appetite

Complaints

- If parents/carers have a complaint regarding the standard or quality of school meals in the first instance, they should contact the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher who will investigate the matter