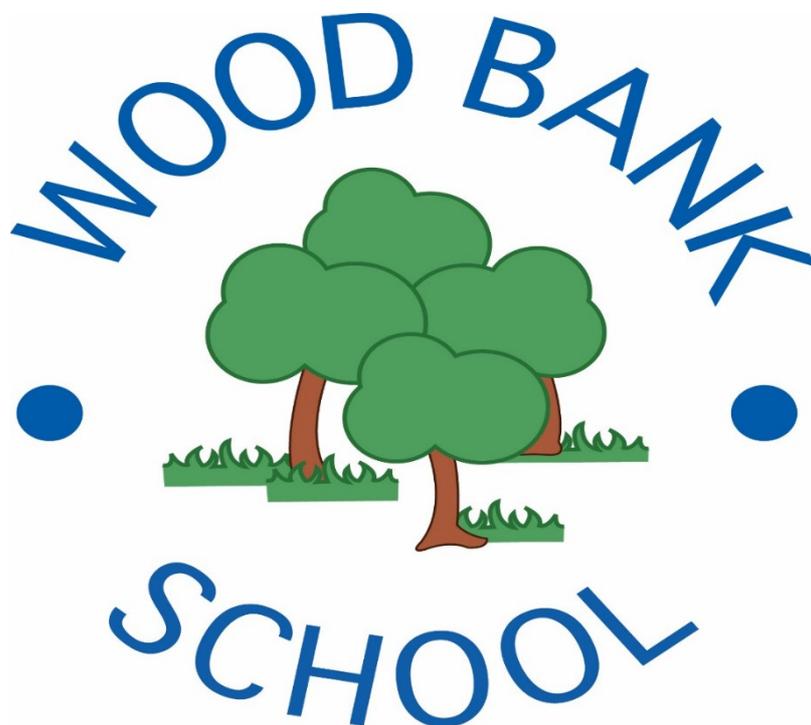


WOOD BANK SCHOOL



FEEDING POLICY

Policy Ratification	April 2018
Review Date	March 2021
Signed (Headteacher)	
Signed (Chair of Governors)	

Equality Statement

At Wood Bank School we intend to provide a safe, secure, caring environment where everyone is valued and respected equally. We aim to provide an inclusive education where children develop independent learning skills and are taught according to need whatever their age, gender, background, beliefs or abilities. National legislation re disabilities, race relations and special education needs underpin this policy, which has also taken into consideration national, local and school policies on Special Educational Needs, Gifted and Talented, Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety.

Related Legislation/Documentation/Policies

We believe this policy relates to the following legislation:

- Rotherham Doncaster & South Humber - Policy for the Management of children and Young People in Community with an Enteral Tube
- School Food Standards 2017

Philosophy

In order for all our children to be ready to learn there are certain requirements that need to be addressed:

- For the child to be sat comfortably- good posture, head control, hand-eye co-ordination
- To have their nutritional needs met – whether orally or enterally

For some of our children with physical needs the early experiences of feeding have not been positive. The difficulties that present may be due to:

- Developmental aspects of weaning/feeding
- Individual components required for feeding; suck, bite, chew, swallow
- Positioning
- Possible reflux and aspiration
- Utensils
- Associated reflexes
- Self/independent feeding
- Communication
- Social behaviours

The origins and causes of feeding difficulties may include:

- Developmental delays
- Neurological aspects
- Physical difficulties
- Aspects of behaviour
- Fears, phobias and anxieties
- Specific diagnoses and syndromes.

We then need to strive to overcome these barriers by working closely with parents and other professionals.

Mealtimes provides an opportunity to support the development of communication. Children can be encouraged to express their likes, dislikes, choice and opinions as well as support the social aspect of mealtimes. Everyone who supports mealtimes at Wood Bank has the potential to support the improvement of skills in any areas of development.

Procedures/Practice

- To liaise with and support parents/carers regarding the child's individual difficulties
- To ensure that advice is sought from all the relevant professionals (dietician, SALT regarding dysphagia, occupational therapists and physiotherapists and any recommendations from reports included in the child's feeding plan.
- By ensuring that comprehensive feeding plans are maintained- this provides detailed information about utensils, dishes, consistency, seating, positioning, safe eating etc.
- To ensure all our pupils are seated comfortably at mealtimes
- To ensure a range of different cutlery is available to meet individual needs
- To offer food and drink that supports special diets and cultural requirements and to ensure water is available to drink as required.
- To ensure that children who have food allergies or food intolerance are kept safe and we maintain a **NUT FREE** school
- To strive to encourage children to try new foods without any undue pressure. Taster plates to be available for those children with limited diets.
- Positive reinforcement to be used to encourage children to eat their dinners.
- To ensure that staff who support children with feeding difficulties have an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding and ensuring that all school staff have some knowledge and experience at an awareness level.
- Drinks are offered regularly at all meal and snack times and more frequently during hot weather, particularly since many of the children do not, or are not able to, request or help themselves to drinks. The importance of an adequate fluid intake for the more fragile children to avoid dehydration and in the management of constipation is recognised.
- It is important when feeding children and weaning them onto more solid foods that the items in the meal are kept separate on the plate. Foods should never be mixed together since it is then impossible to ascertain likes and dislikes and to appreciate

flavours and textures. This is particularly important with gravy, custard and tinned tomatoes or baked beans, which are frequently used to soften or mash solid foods.

Positioning

- Every effort is made to ensure that all the children are seated in the specific position, and with the equipment and utensils, best suited to their needs.
- The ideal position is a "functional" sitting posture, upright, with good back support and facing the table with right angles at feet knees, hips, and elbows. The bottom should be well back and the feet flat on the floor or on a box or footrest.

Enteral Feeding

Some children are unable to feed orally and receive their nutrition via a gastrostomy, jeujostomy or nasogastric feed. There are many reasons why children may be fed in this way:

- They may use more energy than normal intake provides
- Unable to digest food to obtain nutrition
- Child has an unsafe swallow and at risk of aspiration

Gastrostomy feeds are administered throughout the school day as dictated by the particular programme for each child. All staff giving these feeds will have been trained by the school nurse, specifically to feed that child.

Staff & Training

- All staff to be aware that feeding and decisions and judgements made related to feeding should be to ensure the child's safety and that any errors could cause the child significant stress and harm
- Any clinical decisions must be made by trained practitioners following a referral by the school. A written report must have been received by the school before any change in feeding techniques, for example, from nil by mouth to tastes.
- The knowledge and skills of staff involved in feeding our children need to be maintained and built upon.
- All staff should have regular training opportunities including a basic awareness and understanding.
- New staff must not feed any children with more complex feeding issues until internal training from class staff is given.
- Staff that support children who are fed enterally are trained by the school nurse. This is completed every two years if the child remains in the same class with the same staff. However if they move class or new staff go into the class then this is revisited as needed.
- By training staff to support with enteral feeds it supports inclusivity as all children can access school trips without a nurse present. It also allows for less disruption in class when children are learning.

- Visitors or volunteers/students are not to feed at lunchtime or give food/drink at snack times

Responsibilities for Leading, Monitoring & Evaluating

Effective feeding will have been achieved when:

- We can show that children are fed safely
- Children are fed in a relaxed, quiet, stress free environment
- Good seating is achieved to support the neck and head posture which can then support good lip, tongue and jaw movements. This also supports communication.
- We can show progression in development of feeding skills
- Demonstrate that a child's diet and nutritional requirements are successfully met
- A range of equipment is available to support safe feeding
- Children are able to experience a variety of food, tastes, textures and temperatures
- Good interdisciplinary co-operation for effective assessment and provision of children's feeding needs is achieved

This policy will be reviewed every three years but will be reviewed more frequently if a child joins our school with specific feeding requirements not included in this policy. The policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Head Teacher in consultation with the School Nurse and Paediatric Therapy Services.