HEALTHY EATING POLICY
September 2026

Date of adoption of this policy	1st September 2026
Date of last review of this policy	1st September 2026
Date for next review of this policy	1st September 2027
Policy owner (SLT)	Headteacher
Authorised by	Headteacher and Proprietor

Statement of intent

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children in our care are provided with a safe eating environment that supports healthy eating, minimises food-related risks, and ensures compliance with food standards and legal obligations, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework (2025).

LPEBL is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes healthy eating and enables pupils to make informed food choices. We follow DFE guidance which endorses the adoption of a 'whole school' approach to food provision and food education. To ensure that children eat well, it is not enough to simply provide nutritious food. In our school, we are committed to giving all our pupils consistent messages about all aspects of health to help them understand the impact of their behaviours, and encourage them to take responsibility for the choices they make. We encourage pupils to eat healthily and keep hydrated while in school. We also aim to teach pupils to make healthy food and drink choices using the curriculum and to reflect these principles in the school's food menu and cooking provisions.

We acknowledge the important connection between a healthy diet and a pupil's ability to learn, concentrate, and achieve high standards in school. We are, therefore, committed to promoting a lasting healthy lifestyle for everyone. As part of our healthy eating and living campaign, our catering will uphold the highest standards of quality, nutrition and cleanliness; adhering, without exception, to food standards and legal obligations. As such, this policy has been implemented to help staff and parents deliver consistent messages to pupils, enabling them to develop a positive and independent approach to a healthy lifestyle.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014
- The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019 (Natasha's Law)
- Food Safety Act 1990
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998

This policy operates in conjunction with the following non-statutory guidance:

- DfE (2025) 'EYFS Nutrition Guidance'
- DfE (2023) 'School food in England'
- DfE (2025) 'School food standards practical guide'
- The School Plan (2014) 'School Food Standards: A practical guide for schools, their cooks and caterers'

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The proprietor will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the school promotes healthy eating and drinking habits to pupils.
- Ensuring the school meets the requirements of the School Food Standards.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Managing, or appointing a member of staff to manage, the school's approach to healthy eating and drinking.
- Putting measures in place to ensure the school meets the requirements of the School Food Standards and other related legislation.

Our aims

The school will adopt the following aims:

- Integrate a whole-school ethos towards healthy eating; therefore, helping both staff and pupils to perform well, concentrate better and improve general wellbeing.
- Ensure all pupils to be well nourished and hydrated, and to ensure they have access to nutritious food and safe drinking water during the school day.
- Ensure all meals and snacks are healthy, nutritious, well-balanced, and cater to the individual dietary needs of children.
- Promote healthy eating habits from an early age.
- Safeguard children from food-related risks, including choking hazards and food allergies.
- Encourage pupils to make informed food and drink choices in school and at home, contributing to life-long healthy eating habits.
- Use the curriculum to teach pupils safe, hygienic methods of preparing, handling and storing food, and to inform them about the benefits of choosing healthy options.
- Ensure there are consistent messages about healthy eating throughout the school.

- Ensure the school reflects the ethical, medical, and religious dietary requirements of staff and pupils, and that suitable provisions are available.
- Celebrate diversity with cuisines from different cultures and other individual choices, e.g. vegetarianism, encouraging pupils to learn about and try new foods.
- Encourage fluid intake and help pupils keep hydrated, maintain concentration, reduce lethargy, and learn effectively.
- Encourage staff to participate in our healthy eating ethos and act as role models to pupils.

Healthy eating statement

The school will use healthier cooking methods to contribute to healthy eating, such as the following:

- Using less fat in cooking
- Baking foods rather than frying them
- Where fats are used, increasing the use of healthier varieties
- Reducing the use of sugar in recipes
- Avoiding using additional salt in cooking processes
- Avoiding the use of processed and ultra-processed foods
- Increasing the use of food items containing high amounts of fibre

All menus will be developed in accordance with the nutritional standards set by The School Food Plan in School Food Standards: A practical guide for schools, their cooks and caterers , the DFE guidance 'School Food Standards: A practical guide for schools' and DFE EYFS Nutrition Guidance. The school will encourage pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles, both through a nutritional diet and regular exercise, and during assemblies, PE lessons and PSHE. The school will adopt a healthy eating strategy and embeds its principles throughout the curriculum.

Drinks

The school will teach pupils the importance of drinking plenty of fluids and how hydration helps contribute to effective learning, good health and improved physical performance.

Each pupil is required to have a labelled water bottle which they will be encouraged to refill as needed from taps labelled 'drinking water'. Water will be served at lunch and pupils will be encouraged to drink from their water bottles throughout the school day, in particular during breaks. The school will encourage pupils to consume extra fluids on hot days and during and after physical activity, e.g. PE and sports days. Drinks with added sugar will not be available with school meals or in afterschool care. The school will not permit fizzy drinks on the premises at any time.

The school understands the importance of healthy development for pupils under the age of five. In line with the Nursery Milk Scheme set by the Department of Health and Social Care, one third of a pint of milk will be offered, once per day, for early years pupils.

Breaktime snacks

The school offers pupils a snack once a day at breaktime. As part of our healthy eating ethos, this will be fruit or vegetable based with no added sugar, fat or salt. In line with the government's 'School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme', a piece of fresh fruit or vegetable will be made available to all pupils at breaktime.

School lunches

All school meals will meet the national guidelines for nutritional standards and food safety regulations. Our meals are prepared on site by our own catering staff. School meals will include two portions of fruit, vegetables or salad per meal. Portion sizes will be in line with the School Food Standards to help provide pupils with a nutritionally balanced meal and prevent excessive calorie intake. School meals will include foods that are naturally rich in vitamins and minerals to support pupils' health and physical development. The school will serve water at lunchtime. Dining staff will monitor pupils' food intake during lunchtime by allowing them only to leave their table once they are finished eating. If a member of staff has any concerns, the school will notify the headteacher or the child's class teacher who will then speak to the parents. School meals should not include drinks with added sugar, crisps, chocolates or sweets or include more than two portions of deep fried, battered or breaded food a week.

Pupils will not be permitted to share or swap any food, including that provided from home in a packed lunch or snacks.

Packed lunches and snacks provided from home

Some children may need to bring their own meals for medical or religious reasons. Children who stay in afterschool care will bring their own snack. The school will apply its healthy eating principles to packed lunches and snacks and will be committed to improving the quality of packed lunches or snacks that pupils consume. The standards of packed lunches and snacks will comply with the nutrition standards of school lunches. Parents will be provided with clear guidance on providing a healthy packed lunch/ snack, and will be expected to provide their child with healthy packed lunches containing recommended food groups.

In line with the School Food Standards, packed lunches will contain the following:

- One portion of fruit, vegetable or salad
- Meat, fish or another source of non-dairy protein
- Carbohydrates, such as bread, pasta, rice or potatoes
- Dairy, such as cheese, yoghurt or custard
- Oily fish, e.g. smoked salmon, at least once every three weeks
- Only water, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk

Snacks in packed lunches will comply with this policy. The following food and drink are not permitted:

- Sweets, chocolate bars and chocolate spreads
- Carbonated drinks or those containing high levels of caffeine
- Nuts, nut products
- Popcorn, marshmallows, jelly cubes and hard sweets are never permitted for children under 5 and are to be avoided for older children
- Avoid sugary drinks, including fruit juices, squash or smoothies
- Avoid sweetened yoghurt
- Avoid dried fruit as a snack, including raisins

We are a 'NUT FREE' school. Any food sent into school must NOT contain nuts of any kind, for example: cereal bars, some biscuits and chocolate. In order to assist as much as we can, we have identified a list of foods that would definitely cause the most serious harm:

- Fruit and cereal bars that contain nuts
- Chocolate bars or sweets that contain nuts
- Nutella
- Peanut butter

- Cakes made with nuts
- Muesli bars
- Any nuts, peanuts, almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts etc.
- Nougat
- Biscuits that contain nuts
- Lecithin and nut products such as oils

This isn't a definitive list as there are many items with hidden nuts and sesame ingredients, but these are some of the very worst offenders. As staff will need to be making regular checks on the children's snacks and lunch boxes to ensure these rules are being followed and parents will be notified where a food item containing nuts is present.

Staff will regularly monitor the contents of pupils' snacks and packed lunches to ensure they are healthy and balanced and comply with this policy. Concerns about the contents of a pupil's snacks and packed lunch will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately. The pupil's parent will be contacted to remind them of the need to follow the school's policy. If a pupil's snack or packed lunch continues to not be appropriate, the school will contact the parents to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter further.

Exemptions

The school recognises the following exemptions to the Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy:

- Food, drink and treats at parties or celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions
- Provisions at fund-raising events
- Provisions used when teaching food preparation and cookery skills, including where the food is served to pupils as part of a school lunch.

Mealtime Hygiene and Safety

To ensure the safety and hygiene of food, the following procedures will be followed:

- *Food Storage and Preparatio*n: All food will be stored at the correct temperature, in compliance with food safety regulations. Food preparation areas will be kept clean, and staff will adhere to strict handwashing procedures before handling food.
- *Safe Utensils and Equipment*: All kitchen utensils and eating equipment will be safe and age appropriate for the children. Any broken or damaged items will be immediately replaced.
- *Hand Hygiene*: Children will wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Staff will ensure that all children have clean hands before meals and snack are served.

Training and Awareness

Relevant staff will receive regular training in paediatric first aid, food safety, allergy management, and safe eating practices. This includes:

- First Aid and Emergency Procedures: All staff will be trained in first aid procedures specific to food related incidents, including how to handle allergic reactions and choking. Whilst children are eating there will be at least one member of staff with a valid full paediatric first aid certificate present in the room. Paediatric First Aid will be updated at least every three years as a minimum.

- All staff are required to complete training as part of their induction covering food hygiene and allergy awareness. All staff are aware of the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis, the differences between allergies and intolerances and that children can develop allergies at any time
- Ongoing Training: Staff will undergo refresher courses on food hygiene and allergy awareness every three years as a minimum.

EYFS Safer Eating Practices

To minimise the risk of choking and ensure safe eating environments for young children, the following practices are implemented for children until the age of 5 years old:

- **Supervision**: All children are supervised during mealtimes and snack time. Children will be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. As far as possible, staff will sit facing children whilst they eat so they can be sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.
- **Choking Hazards**: Staff will prepare food in a way to prevent choking and be vigilant to ensure foods sent in packed lunches have also been prepared safely. Firm, spherical foods like grapes and cherry tomatoes must be sliced into quarters or segments. Cylindrical foods such as cucumber, carrots and cocktail sausages must be cut lengthways into thin batons. This guidance on food safety for young children includes advice on food and drink to avoid, how to reduce the risk of choking and links to other useful resources for early years settings. If a child experiences a choking incident that requires intervention, staff will record details of where and how the child choked and parents and/or carers made aware. The records will be reviewed and risk assessed alongside other accidents / incidents at nursery on a half-termly basis. Appropriate action will be taken to address any identified concerns.
- **Age-Appropriate Food Types**: Foods will be served in a manner suitable for the child's developmental stage (e.g., food will be cut into small, manageable pieces for younger children). Popcorn, marshmallows, jelly cubes and hard sweets are never permitted for children under 5.
- **Mealtime Environment**: Children will sit down and remain seated while eating and be given time to chew and swallow their food properly. Children are discouraged from talking loudly at mealtimes / snack time. Other distractions such as toys at the meal table are, wherever possible, discouraged.
- Food sharing is not allowed.

Curriculum

The school's Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy will be integrated into our curriculum. This will be achieved through the following teaching areas:

- PSHE
- PE
- Science
- D&T

The school will communicate how to lead a healthy lifestyle and make good food choices via the following:

- School assembly
- Guest speakers
- Sending school menus home
- Staff as role models

Allergies and dietary requirements

The school will ensure the correct food safety measures are in place, in line with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the First Aid Policy and Health and Safety Policy, to protect pupils with known allergies, intolerances, anaphylaxis, diabetes and other medical conditions associated with diet.

Parents will be required to provide the school with a written list of any foods their child may have an adverse reaction to, as well as the necessary actions to be taken in the event of an allergic reaction, such as any medication required. This is done in the Back to school questionnaire, which parents are required to complete every year before the start of the school year.

A thorough risk assessment is carried out for children with food allergies, ensuring appropriate precautions are taken, including avoiding allergens in meals and snacks. We will ensure that all staff are aware of the allergy needs of the children in their care. At each mealtime and snack time, staff members are clear about who is responsible for checking that the food being provided meets the requirements for each child.

The school will be responsible for ensuring that the school's policies are adhered to at all times, including those in relation to the preparation of food, taking into account any allergens. Learning activities which involve the use of food, such as food technology lessons, will be planned in accordance with pupils' medical care plans, accounting for any known allergies of the pupils involved.

Communication: Mental health and wellbeing

The school understands that some pupils may develop disordered eating. Staff will be trained to identify potential signs of disordered eating, which can include the following:

- Skipping lunchtime
- Avoiding eating around other people
- Eating very slowly
- Going to the bathroom soon after eating
- Becoming socially withdrawn and isolated
- Not participating in physical activities

Other physical signs can include the following:

- Thinning hair
- Dry skin
- Wearing baggy clothes
- Often saying they are cold
- Persistent low mood
- Irritability
- Unpredictable mood swings

If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil, they will speak to the DSL and headteacher, as appropriate. Depending on the concern raised, support will be delivered in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy or Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, or a combination of both. The school will strive to protect pupils from developing disordered eating through a variety of methods, including the following:

- Developing pupils' social and emotional skills
- Teaching pupils about physical health
- Teaching pupils about body image

Pupils will be encouraged to speak to a trusted adult if they have concerns about their eating behaviour or relationship with food.

Communication with parents

We believe that parents and carers play a key role in the nutritional care of their children. We encourage parents to share any concerns or preferences related to their child's diet, and we will maintain open lines of communication regarding food and meal times.

The school will communicate any changes and updates to this policy. The school will inform parents if concerns are raised about their child's eating habits. The school will involve parents in the healthy eating ethos, enabling them to provide consistent messaging about healthy choices at home.

Parents will keep the school updated with any changes to their child's dietary requirements, including allergies, and any cultural, religious, or ethical food requirements. Parents will inform the class teacher and/or headteacher if they are concerned about their child's eating habits during the school day.

Special Occasions: For special occasions or celebrations (e.g. bake sale or school party), we will work with parents to ensure that any treats brought in align with our safer eating and allergy policies

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher and governing board, or in light of any changes to relevant legislation. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to kitchen staff, parents and other stakeholders, where necessary.