

Food and drink Policy



A community inspiring lifelong learning

**Spinfield School
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Signed:	Jane Marr
Position:	Governor
Date:	26 February 2025

Introduction

This policy was written with input from pupils (via the School Council), Spinfield staff, catering staff and parents (via the Class reps).

This policy has been consulted on with parents and Governors. Information was shared with parent reps and this was disseminated to the wider parent/carer body.

This policy demonstrates how our school is working alongside the key recommendations in the '[School Food Plan](#)' and supports the Buckinghamshire Whole Systems Approach to Obesity.

Our food culture and healthy eating ethos is based on key principals from the [Eatwell Guide](#) and [Change4life](#) messages.

Aim and objectives:

We recognise the importance of ensuring every child has access to a healthy and well-balanced diet, supporting them in leading a healthy lifestyle and in developing a healthy relationship with their nutritional choices. We also recognise the link between a healthy diet and children's ability to learn. Our school is currently working towards the Healthy School Award, in collaboration with Buckinghamshire Council.

Objectives:

To support pupils to make healthy nutritional choices both in and out of school.

To support them to develop healthy relationships with their nutritional choices that lead to balanced health and wellbeing, so that they are better prepared to learn and achieve.

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To ensure that the food and drink available throughout the school day meet government standards for food in school and to make the provision and consumption of food an enjoyable and safe experience.

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To ensure a consistent approach to healthy eating across the school community including pupils, staff and parents/carers



Food provision and consumption across the school day

Wrap around club: Marlow After School Club (MASC)

This is provided by an external provider who rents our rooms. Fruit and simple after school meals are provided in line with this policy.

Break time provision:

At break time all pupils are encouraged to eat a healthy snack to keep their energy levels up till lunch time.

In KS1 the school provides children with a piece of fruit or a vegetable (part of the national school fruit and vegetable scheme.) There is a wide range provided throughout the weeks, e.g. apples, tangerines, carrots, sultanas, tomatoes, bananas, sugar snap peas etc.

In KS2, pupils bring their own fruit / vegetables.

Our 'Little Rotters' monitors in Year 6 look after and empty special composting bins for disposal of banana skins, apple cores etc.

Milk is available free at KS1 and paid for in KS2.

Drink & access to water:

Drinking water regularly is promoted throughout school.

Every child is encouraged to bring their own water bottle, ideally refilled every evening at home.

Pupils are encouraged to drink regularly throughout the day as their teachers direct, in transitions during lessons, before and after break times. The frequency will increase in hot weather.

If a child has forgotten their water bottle, the teacher is happy to lend a bottle or cup for that day.

Fruit juice and sugary drinks are not allowed. A clear link is made between healthy drinks and hydration and sugary drinks and oral health. A practical science experiment in Year 4 is a memorable demonstration of this.

At lunchtimes we encourage children to drink water rather than sugary drinks.

School meals:

Our lunchtime catering provider is The Kids Lunch Company. <https://kidslunch.co.uk/>

They provide a good quality cold food selection of rolls, wraps with protein fillings such as cheese and ham. Multiple fruit options are always available. A sweet option for desert is available on a Friday only, on other days the children have fruit for desert. Children bring their own water bottle to the lunch hall to drink from.

In September 2014 the government introduced Universal Infant Free School Meals. This means that every child of infant school age is entitled to a Free School Meal.

Up until last year, we were able to provide hot school meals for the children. At the moment we are only offering a cold buffet type lunch. It is our aim to source hot meals again as soon as we can. We took the decision to ensure a quality cold option in the summer term when our existing hot lunch supplier closed their local hub. At the time, there were no other hot lunch suppliers that had the capacity to provide the 22 schools that found themselves in the same situation as us.

While we look for another hot lunch supplier, we are using a company called The Kids Lunch Company.

The children have the opportunity to choose their lunch from the selection of sandwiches and other food items, with help from our lunchtime staff. There will always be 6 different sandwich fillings to choose from each day, and they may vary from day to day. Sandwiches are made mostly with 50/50 bread or bread rolls. There is a variety of yoghurts, cheese, fruit and vegetables & savoury snacks available each day, and cakes / treats are provided on a Friday.

Free School Meals (FSM):

As a free school meal (FSM) could save families up to £450 each year, our school encourages and supports pupils to claim their entitlement and communicates this at the point of admission to the school and at regular intervals during the year.

Packed lunches:

Parents have the option to purchase the school meal lunch or for children to bring a healthy packed lunch from home.

Children learn in lessons (using the Eatwell Guide plate) that a healthy lunch contains some carbohydrate, some protein and some fruit / vegetable.

Lunchtime supervisors encourage sociable and polite eating habits. Children sit around tables where they can talk to each other. Lunchtime supervisors are knowledgeable about which children will benefit from some encouragement to finish off their packed lunch.

Teachers encourage the children to take more responsibility for their packed lunch as they get older, talking with their parent / carer about food choices and making the packed lunch themselves.

Spinfield Global Citizens (peer elected) encourage everyone to avoid single use plastic in their lunchboxes. We have 'Waste Free Wednesday' where the Global Citizens in each class check the lunch boxes and there is a reward of extra playtime for the class with the highest % of qualifying lunchboxes. This is announced weekly in a whole school assembly. This has helped us become a 'Plastic Free School.'

Spinfield is an allergy aware school.

Frequent reminders are emailed to parents that all nuts and nut-containing foods should be avoided e.g. humous, peanut butter.

Pupils who bring in a packed lunch are able to eat in the main dining room with pupils who eat a school dinner.

Dining Environment:

Lunchtimes start at 11.45am for reception pupils. For all other pupils, lunchtimes start at 12.00pm or 12.15pm and finish at 1.15pm. The older year groups eat on a rotational basis.

We have a designated dining room (the hall) that is an attractive, well kept area and pupils are able to sit with their friends in or out of their year-group during lunch. Children having school meals queue up to choose their options from a food trolley served by staff.

We have a split lunch in order to provide a calmer lunch period. Classes are called in rotation to each in the hall.

In summer and good weather, classes enjoy eating their lunch outside, at picnic tables/benches, supervised by the lunchtime supervisors.

Cultural, age appropriate and special diets

Spinfield is an allergy aware school and we frequently remind parents / carers and children what foods should not be brought to school.

Whilst we recognise nuts are part of a balanced diet, we do have several pupils and staff with a severe nut allergy so we ask that you support us by not sending nuts into school as part of packed lunches or for snacks. All members of staff are fully aware of pupils with food allergies.

We acknowledge that there are downsides to having a ban on certain foods for the reasons such as giving children a false sense of security both in school and out; taking the onus away from that child becoming independently able to manage their allergy outside of school; unwittingly exacerbating the problem of allergies and health at the collective level by vastly reducing the number of plants per week that kids consume and are exposed to. We minimise the risk of cross contamination by repeatedly reminding children that they should only eat and touch their own food.

All pupils' dietary needs are recorded and communicated sensitively with the school staff and catering team.

Parents are expected to inform and update the school regarding any food allergies/intolerances. Where appropriate, a health care plan would be formulated.

Special occasions, rewards and school events:

We understand and recognise the importance of celebrating birthdays. Spinfield took the decision a few years ago to ask parents not to send sweets into school on their children's birthday. Everyone's birthday is now celebrated jointly with an ice cream visit in the summer term.

Food is often discussed and sometimes tasted in the context of religious and cultural festivals e.g. Jewish synagogue visit in Year 2 - Challah bread, Shrove Tuesday (Christian) pancakes, in Year 1: unleavened bread - Matzah - Passover.

We encourage a healthy relationship with food by eating special foods together in celebrations for example, a hot chocolate and croissant morning in the autumn term, pancakes in the spring term and icecreams to celebrate everyone's birthday in the summer term.

Food education and the curriculum:

Healthy eating in the curriculum:

Our curriculum will enrich children's relationship with their nutritional choices and experience of food, physical activity and healthy balanced diets through Science, PSHE, PE and beyond.

Our school delivers healthy eating education through the curriculum including statutory health education/PSHE, science and DT. Schemes of work and pupil assessment are reviewed termly across the school. This ensures learning is in line with current guidance, and that pupils receive the high quality of health education

needed to make informed choices about lifestyle choices which affect their own health and wellbeing.

The Eatwell Guide is used throughout school and underpins all food related learning.

Food and Cooking in the curriculum:

Our school is meeting the statutory requirements introduced in September 2014, for all pupils to learn cooking skills as a part of the D&T curriculum.

We have a well-equipped resources room which enables pupils to learn to cook and taste simple foods. (e.g. winter vegetable soup in year 3) In addition, Year 5 and 6 may go for a day of cooking at a local secondary school.

Cooking food on an outdoor fire is an exciting activity in our forest school program.

Children are taught that making your own meal from raw ingredients as often as you can is a more healthy option than eating ready meals and processed foods, which may contain many preservatives and flavourings. The year 3 soup-making is a great example of this.

Design and Technology curriculum:

Here are some examples from the curriculum

Year Group/Term	
Year 1	Food – where it comes from / what to eat on holiday.
Year 2	Design a menu for different locations around the world.
Year 3	Understand seasonality and design a winter soup
Year 4	Design a product to reuse plastic and/or make water filter Create a Greek mezze plate using Greek ingredients.

Year 5	Prepare and cook a variety of dishes (GMS visit)
Year 6	Create new packaging for product of Fairtrade using own design criteria Prepare and cook a variety of Fairtrade dishes.

Attitudes to food

Our staff are reminded not to call any foods unhealthy, but rather 'treat foods'. (see Spinfield PSHE policy). Terms such as 'good' and 'bad' foods should be avoided and instead, we aim to talk about food as fuel and having 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' relationships with food and eating.

Growing, sustainability and farming

Pupils learn where different foods come from in the Year 3 Geography curriculum and in Year 2 science. Fairtrade is encouraged as a whole school initiative led by the Global Citizens. Harvest Festival provides an annual opportunity to reinforce how crops are grown and for us all to be grateful for the food we have and think about how we can help others. Spinfield is active in asking for One Can Trust donations on a regular basis and a staff member coordinates and promotes this to staff and children.

Pupil involvement:

To gather pupil opinions and help with developing this policy, the School Council members were tasked with finding out ideas from their classes. Feedback from Years 4 and 6 was also used from their November 2023 Survey: SHEU Schools Health Education Unit (PSHE, Health and Behaviour)

Parent/carer involvement and communication

Parents are kept up to date on food issues within school via the Friday Update email, as well as the School Newsletter.

Menus for school meals (The Kids Lunch Company) are available online for parents to see.

From time to time, parents are offered healthy eating advice via after-school speakers such as how to create a healthy packed lunch.

We will communicate and share our policy with parents/carers each year and listen and act on views and opinions through class reps meetings and surveys.

Action Planning:

Our policy is reviewed each year by senior leadership and the Healthy Schools Coordinator. A full review and consultation with all stakeholders is carried out every 3 years.

This year the main priority for our school will be involving the School Council in developing ideas from the pupils.

Findings from our health and wellbeing survey (November 2023, Years 4 and 6) revealed a slightly lower 31% than Buckinghamshire average (37%) responded that they ate at least 5 portions of fruit, beans and vegetables on the day before the survey. Therefore, our focus for the year(s) ahead will be on educating pupils about five-a-day.

Links with any other policies

Behaviour policy

Anti-bullying policy

Inclusion policy

Physical activity, DT, science (see Curriculum policy)

Health and safety

PSHE policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Litter and food wastage:

Composting bins have been purchased for the playground for apple cores, banana skins etc. These are emptied several times a week onto the school compost heap by the Little Rotter monitors.

Displays:

We aim to have at least one healthy eating or food display up in school. At the time of writing there is a healthy eating display up in the cloisters.

Other supporting resources and further reading

- [Eatwell Guide](#)
- [The School Food Standards](#)

Buckinghamshire information and resources

- The Buckinghamshire Healthy Schools Award is funded by Buckinghamshire Council until April 2025. The online toolkit, commissioned from Leeds City Council contains four comprehensive self-evaluation tools to support Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, PSHE, and Social Emotional and Mental Health. <https://schoolsweb.buckscc.gov.uk/public-health/buckinghamshire-healthy-schools-award/> Please see guidance on Healthy Eating for schools <https://schoolsweb.buckscc.gov.uk/public-health/healthy-eating-guidance/>
- Buckinghamshire Whole Systems Approach to Obesity [Level 1 Template](#) (healthandwellbeingbucks.org)
- Buckinghamshire local offer <https://www.healthandwellbeingbucks.org/s4s/WhereLive/Council?pagelId=2016>
- Buckinghamshire life course infographic <https://www.healthandwellbeingbucks.org/Resources/Councils/bucks-public-health/local-profile/2023/lifecourse-infographic-23.pdf>
- Community board level data <https://www.healthandwellbeingbucks.org/local-profiles> please select your area for community board level data

National resources

- Change4life School Zone: <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools>
- The Eatwell Guide: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>
- <https://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/> information on healthy eating, teaching resources and CPD
- The School Food Standards: <http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/actions/school-food-standards/>
- <https://bodyhappyorg.com> The organisation 'Body Happy' provides helpful resources around food education in schools
- <https://www.allergyuk.org/> Allergy UK is the national charity providing support for people living with allergies

Government Guidance

- [School food standards practical guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/> checklist-for-headteachers
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/schoolfood-guidance-for-governors>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/> preparing-varied-and-tasty-menus
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/portionsizes-and-food-groups>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/allergyguidance-for-schools>