

Bristol Healthy Schools

Guidance on completing a Whole School Food Policy



Guidance for creating your food policy

Why is a policy important?

A Whole School Food Policy is your schools opportunity to make a statement about where you stand on all things food and nutrition, your school's culture and the food curriculum.

Developing this in consultation with the wider school community is vital and the final policy will give a clear message to staff, governors, pupils, families and the wider community about what is expected, and why, and progress made in school. It will also support you should any issues arise, such as repeated unhealthy packed lunches or energy drinks being brought into school every day.

It gives your school a chance to support and improve the health of pupils by considering a really wide range of opportunities for innovation and improvement: from healthier tuck provision through to tackling catering issues. You are also ensuring equality and that you are meeting cultural, religious and specific dietary needs.

Lastly, creating a policy is also a stipulation of the Healthy Schools [Food Environment Award](#) and [Dental Health Award](#). As such, the example policy in this document includes the criteria in those awards.

It can take time to write, consult and then finalise but it is important to get it right as this will dictate its success.

What should the aim be?

- Clear, concise policy
- Ideally no more than 4-5 pages
- Accessible to all and avoiding jargon
- Created in consultation with parents/ carers/ pupils / staff and governors
- Promoted to all once complete and published on your website
- If needed, parent-friendly / pupil-friendly versions may be created

Your school should also have a process in place to ensure any new parents/ providers/ staff are shown the policy and understand and adhere to it.



Why is it important to communicate and consult on any policy?

By being open and honest during the process of writing a policy you are more likely to get the school community on board. It may also flag any gaps.

Food and nutrition and eating and drinking, though a universal experience, are emotive topics. People can feel judged as to their own behaviour when being told to change the way they do things. By having clear, positive communication about the changes, and by engaging parents in the work, you are being clear and allowing people an opportunity to share their views. By having a two way communication, you might also get some insight into some barriers people might have – such as affordability or lack of time or knowledge – which the school might also be able to help with.

During any communication, you can also outline your reasons behind decisions, including stipulating that you are proud to be doing this work, that healthy living is a priority for the schools and that you are aiming high by working towards the Healthy Schools awards and/ or government guidelines. This will help people understand better why you are making certain decisions as they are grounded in local and national policy.

Ideas for engagement

Example school newsletter article

We're proud to be part of the Healthy Schools programme because pupil health and wellbeing are a priority for us [this year]. As part of this work we are [developing/ improving/ creating] a food and nutrition policy. This makes it really clear what you can expect from us as a school and what we would like you to do. [This is attached or here are some key changes that you need to be aware of...*list these...*]

We would love to have you involved. Please let us know:

1. If there is any support you need to make this happen, maybe recipe ideas for healthy packed lunches or a new water bottle for your child
2. If you can help at all. We would love to have parents/ carers involved in [gardening on our school allotment/ parents who are chefs or cooks supporting our lessons/ parents who are dentists coming and talking about healthy teeth]
3. If you have any ideas to make this work even better. Maybe you want to help with healthier fundraising ideas or running a campaign.
4. Any worries or concerns you have that we can support you with. [xxxxx] staff are on hand to help you.

What areas should I include?

Below is a list of a range of topics. You could also cover topics that are a particular issue for your setting and that you want to tackle.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Equal opportunities 2. Staff, governors and visitors 3. Special dietary requirements 4. Food safety 5. Dental health 6. Environmental issues | } | <p>These criteria 1-6 are not covered by our awards but we strongly recommend any policy includes</p> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Breastfeeding 8. Curriculum 9. Food and drink provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Breakfast ○ Snacks ○ Drinks ○ Lunches/ packed lunch ○ Meetings, gatherings, celebrations ○ Food as reward | } | <p>These criteria 8-10 are in the 'Essential' award. If you have passed this, you are doing these things.</p> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Fundraising 11. Staff training & development 12. Lunchtime experience 13. Protecting children from marketing | } | <p>These criteria 7, 8, 10-13 are in the 'Food Environment' award, as well as part of 8-curriculum. If you have passed this, you are doing these</p> |

Where can I get further advice and guidance?

Additional advice and guidance can be found at:

- Information around the provision of school food, such as what drinks are allowed and not: [National School Food Standards](#)
- [Change4Life](#): Ideas for healthy drinks and [snacks](#), [healthy packed lunches](#), [recipes](#), key messages for families about staying healthy and [reducing sugar](#). Also lesson ideas and printable [leaflets](#) for parents from the [Change4Life teacher's area](#).

Where can I see example policies? An example policy follows. This is a guide, shaped by our Healthy Schools award criteria.



Example Whole School Food Policy

Advice: Please note that this is a guide only and wording, tone and content are to be adapted by the school in consultation with staff, parents, carers, governors and pupils. Some of the policy may take time to implement so you might also want to include an action plan and/ or timeline with your final policy.

Remember to add in a review date – ideally this should be no longer than 24 months.

St. Agnessa School's Whole School Food Policy

Published: July 2019

The School consulted and communicated with:

- Parents/ carers via the PTA, parent and carers coffee mornings, the school newsletter and governors meetings (April – May 2017)
- Staff via staff meetings (Jan 2017)
- Pupils by a class project lead by the school council (March 2017)

Introduction

Our school is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes healthy eating and drinking and enables pupils to make informed choices about the food and drink they eat. This will be achieved by the whole school approach to food and nutrition documented in this whole school food policy.

The policy was formulated between members of staff, governors, parents/ carers, pupils, and our school nurse. It was led by our Healthy Schools team.

(Include details of any healthy eating working groups and consultation with parents/carers etc. Any headline issues raised and how these were either addressed or dismissed.)

Food Policy Co-ordinator

This school food policy and healthy eating strategy is co-ordinated by

Name of Co-ordinator:.....

Food Policy Aims

The main aims of our school food policy are:

- To provide access for all to great tasting, varied and healthy food choices throughout the school day (meeting the current National School Food Standards).

- To enable pupils/ and their families / staff / governors and visitors to make healthy food choices through the provision of information and development of appropriate skills.
- To ensure all cultural and specific dietary needs are met.

These aims will be addressed throughout the following areas:

1. Equal Opportunities

In Food and nutrition, as in all other areas of the curriculum, we recognise the value of the individual and strive to provide equal access of opportunity for all.

2. Staff, governors and training: Leading by example

Teachers, governors, caterers and school nurses have a key role in influencing pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes about food, so it is important that they are familiar with healthy eating guidelines and this policy. Ways in which staff can be kept up to date with food in School issues include:

- *To fill in*

Our school encourage all staff / governors to role model good food behaviours by:

- *To fill in*

e.g. 2 members of staff eat with the children in the dining hall every day

Visitors in the classroom

We believe it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that the contributions made by visitors reflect our own philosophy on food and nutrition. As such, all visitors are asked to adhere to this policy and role model healthy eating and drinking. The status of visitors to the school is always checked, ensuring that the content of the visitor's talk/ class is suitable for the ages of the pupils and adheres to our food policy. The school's code of practice for visiting speakers is adopted.

For more information, please refer to.....

3. Special Dietary Requirements

Special Diets for Religious and Ethnic Groups

The school is proud to provide food in accordance with pupils' religious beliefs and cultural practices

Vegetarians and Vegans

The school caterers offer a vegetarian option at lunch every day. When necessary the school can also provide a vegan option.

Specific dietary need - food Allergy and Intolerance

Individual care plans are created for pupils with specific dietary requirements and or food allergies. These documents are a requirement for each child and contain any signs and symptoms / adverse reactions for the allergies and intolerances, actions to be taken in an emergency, and emergency contact details. School caterers are made aware of any food

allergies/food intolerance and requests for special diets are submitted according to an agreed process.

4. Food Safety

Appropriate food safety precautions are taken when food is prepared or stored. These vary depending on the food on offer and include: ensuring that adequate storage and washing facilities are available; that food handlers undergo appropriate food hygiene training; and that suitable equipment and protective clothing are available. Any food safety hazards are identified and controlled. We consult our local Environmental Health Department about legal requirements.

Mobile caterers serving food on school premises

To operate on school premises, mobile caterers must demonstrate that staff have undergone appropriate food hygiene training; that their facilities meet appropriate food safety requirements; and that they meet National school food standards / the school does not allow mobile caterers on site.

5. Dental Health

The school recognises the link between food and drink and dental health and will be undertaking the following work to support the promotion of good dental health:

- *To fill in*

(E.g. signing the Sugar Smart pledge / implementing a ban on _____ drinks/ foods / enhancing teaching around dental health / undertaking supervised tooth brushing etc.)

We comply with National School Food Standards. Water is accessible to all throughout the school day.

6. The environment and sustainability

Where possible the school will consider sustainable procurement such as:

- *To fill in*

(E.g. supporting local producers / taking children to visit local farm / ensuring xx% of food is seasonal / undertaking the Eco Schools / Food for Life award etc.).

The school also has a policy of:

- *To fill in*

(E.g. recycling all food waste / providing recycling bins throughout the school setting / promoting the use of reusable bottles/ cutlery etc.)

7. Breastfeeding

We are a breastfeeding friendly school, ensuring that anyone who needs to, feels comfortable to breastfed in our school. This includes the parents of pupils, members of staff and visitors. We:

- ensure that all our staff know about the Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme
- display a Bristol Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme window sticker and poster in an obvious place in our school
- uphold a woman's right to breastfeed by ensuring that if someone complains, the complainant is moved, not the mother

8. Curriculum

We have a progressive scheme of work with age appropriate lesson plans across all age phases. The curriculum implemented in September 2014 states that all KS1, 2 and 3 children should have access to a practical cooking education.

This is addressed through:

- Practical cooking sessions being offered [state how regularly and any relevant information you would like to share]
- An emphasis on savoury choices.

The school also recognises the value of children being aware of where food originates from and growing and gardening opportunities are included [state regularity, if applicable].

9. Food and drink provision throughout the school day

Breakfast

We provide free/low cost breakfast for those that need it either on an individual basis or through a breakfast club, and which complies with the National School Food Standards.

The breakfast menu includes: *Chose to include example menu*

For on-site childcare-related breakfast clubs, we can confirm that their menus comply with the National School Food Standards

Snacks

We support healthy snacking by ensuring that foods high in fat, sugar and salt are not provided or brought in at times other than lunchtime (fruit and vegetables are recommended). The [School Food Standards](#) state that confectionary (chewing gum, cereal bars, processed fruit bars, sweets, chocolate bars or chocolate coated products) and sugary drinks should not be provided on site during the school day. This school supports this. Please note any child who has specific dietary requirements can let the school staff know and this will be recognised and handled appropriately.

(You may include advice you give to parents on healthy snacks here. Also consider this section in the context of TUCK SHOPS and VENDING MACHINES)

Drinks

We are a water and milk only school and will only provide this for children. We respectfully ask that parents and carers provide a water bottle for their children each day. We have free tap water available for pupils throughout the whole school day and pupils are actively, and regularly, encouraged to drink throughout the day.

Meetings, gatherings and celebrations

We only use healthier food options for meetings, gatherings and celebrations. We do not allow food to be brought in for children's birthdays.

Food as reward

The school does not use unhealthy food or drink as a reward for good behaviour or academic or other achievements. Our behaviour and reward policy includes:

- To fill in

Lunch provided by the school: National Standards for School Food

Food prepared by the school catering team meets the [National Standards for School Food](#).
 monitors food served and monitors feedback from children, staff and parents / carers.

Packed Lunches

Packed lunches prepared by the school caterers adhere to the National School Food Standards.

The school supports and encourages parents, carers and children to bring healthy packed lunches by asking parents not to include [confectionary](#) (cereal bars, processed fruit bars, sweets, chocolate bars or chocolate coated products) in packed lunch boxes.

Ideas for healthy lunches are available on the [Change 4 Life website](#).

(You may include advice you give to parents on healthy packed lunches or initiatives you have in place here or hyperlink to a website)

Food provided by after school clubs: National Standards for School Food

Food provided by after school clubs meet the [National Standards for School Food](#).
 monitors food served and monitors feedback from children, staff and parents / carers.

Bristol Eating Better

Additionally, our xxx service/ caterer has achieved the xxxbronze/silver/goldxxx Bristol Eating Better Award. [Delete if not relevant, though this is a requirement of the Essential Award.]

10. Healthy fundraising

We only allow healthy food options when fundraising. This means no high fat (particularly saturated fat), high sugar or high salt items.

11. Staff training and development

We support our teaching and non-teaching staff to develop their knowledge and skills on healthy lifestyles, food and nutrition, cooking and growing.

12. The dining environment

We have worked to ensure that pupils have a positive lunchtime experience. We:

- To fill in

E.g. Pupils designed our lunch hall / we have family dining meaning sitting in small, sociable groups / we let children sit with their friends regardless what lunch they're having / we have a staggered lunchtime to avoid queues

13. Increasing the uptake of school meals

Our school is aiming high and want to have 65% of pupils, and 90% of pupils entitled to free school meals, accessing school meals. At date of publication, our uptake is as follows:

Total pupils:

Those entitled to school meals:

We have worked with pupils/ staff/ families to better understand barriers to accessing school lunch and have done / are doing the following to improve things:

- *To fill in*

E.g. The school identified many children were bringing packed lunch to sit next to a friend, the school now operates an open table policy and children sit with friends regardless of whether they choose packed lunch or school meals -this has been positive and resulted in a 5% increase in school meal

14. We protect our children from inappropriate marketing by the food and drink industry such as...‘giveaways’ and promotions within schools.

Action Plans

(Action plans for each of the key areas should be inserted here)

Monitoring and Evaluation

Parents/carers are invited to an annual review of this policy and to contribute to a positive food and nutrition and healthy eating approach where appropriate.

(Details of how the policy will be implemented and evaluated should be entered here).

Review. Review Date: