Whitecote Primary School



Healthy Eating Policy

Approved: September 2026 **Review: September 2028**

Healthy Eating Policy

At Whitecote Primary School, we recognise the important connection between a healthy diet and children's ability to learn effectively, achieve high standards and maintain good physical and mental wellbeing.
Sharing food is a fundamental experience that helps nurture relationships, celebrate cultural diversity and promote positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyles. We are committed to developing healthy eating habits that children can sustain throughout their lives.

This policy reflects current School Food Standards, Breakfast Club requirements and Department for Education guidance relating to healthy eating, nutrition, food safety, allergies and early years provision.

Aims

Proper nutrition is essential for good health and effective learning. To improve the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and families we aim to:

- Provide knowledge and awareness of food issues, including what constitutes a healthy, balanced diet and safe food practices.
- Deliver a consistent programme of nutrition education through the curriculum.
- Encourage children to make informed choices about food and healthy lifestyles.
- Work in partnership with catering staff to ensure meals meet national nutritional standards.
- Provide attractive, nutritious and culturally appropriate food choices.
- Meet the medical, religious, ethical and cultural dietary requirements of all pupils and staff.
- Ensure breakfast provision meets current School Food Standards and National School Breakfast Programme requirements.
- Promote positive attitudes towards healthy eating and physical wellbeing.
- Create a positive, sociable dining experience that contributes to children's social development.
- Involve pupils, parents, staff and governors in promoting healthy eating.

Promoting Healthy Eating

We promote healthy and balanced eating by:

- Encouraging children to choose a variety of foods from all food groups.
- Promoting the principles of the NHS Eatwell Guide.
- Encouraging daily consumption of fruit and vegetables.
- Encouraging foods rich in vitamins, minerals, iron and calcium.
- Promoting wholegrain and higher-fibre foods where appropriate.
- Encouraging healthy sources of protein including meat, fish, eggs, beans and pulses.
- Encouraging lower-fat dairy products.
- Discouraging foods and drinks that are high in sugar, salt and saturated fat.
- Promoting water and milk as the preferred drinks throughout the school day.

School Catering

We believe that the messages children receive about food and health through everyday school life are as important as those delivered through classroom teaching.

The school will:

- Ensure all meals comply with current School Food Standards.

- Consult with pupils regarding menu choices through School Council and pupil voice activities.
- Provide a variety of foods across the week.
- Offer vegetables and/or salad every day.
- Provide a daily fruit option.
- Ensure appropriate portion sizes for different age groups.
- Promote school meals as a healthy and balanced option.
- Consider cultural, medical and dietary requirements when planning menus.

Subsidised school milk is promoted and available in line with national arrangements.

Breakfast Provision

Whitecote Primary School participates in the National School Breakfast Programme and is committed to providing healthy, balanced and nutritious breakfasts.

Breakfast provision may include:
- Lower-sugar cereals such as porridge, wheat biscuits and shredded wholewheat cereals.
- Wholemeal, seeded or higher-fibre bread products.
- Toast.
- Fresh fruit.
- Semi-skimmed milk.
- Approved unsweetened dairy or plant-based alternatives where appropriate.

Breakfast provision will not routinely include:
- Sugary cereals.
- Chocolate-coated products.
- Confectionery.
- Pastries and croissants.
- Fruit juice and smoothies.
- Sugary drinks.

Children are encouraged to make healthy choices while staff promote healthy eating habits and minimise food waste.

Packed Lunches

Whitecote Primary School encourages packed lunches that reflect healthy eating principles and contain a balanced range of foods.

Packed lunches should:
- Include at least one portion of fruit and/or vegetables.
- Include a healthy source of protein.
- Include a starchy carbohydrate such as bread, wraps, pasta or rice.
- Contain water or a suitable no-added-sugar drink.

Packed lunches should not contain:
- Energy drinks.
- Fizzy drinks.
- Sweets, chocolate or confectionery.

Monitoring of Packed Lunches and Non-Compliant Items

Whitecote Primary School is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting children to develop positive lifelong eating habits. We value working in partnership with parents and carers to encourage healthy lunchbox choices that reflect the principles of our Healthy Eating Policy. Our Healthy Eating Policy states that packed lunches should not contain sweets, chocolate, confectionery, fizzy drinks or energy drinks.

Where a packed lunch contains items that are specifically prohibited within school policy, staff may remove those items and return them to parents/carers at the end of the school day.

The school will ensure that no child goes without food as a result of this process. Where a prohibited item is removed, a simple healthy alternative may be provided by the school, such as fruit, crackers, breadsticks or another suitable item.

Staff will always take account of:

- Medical conditions
- Allergies
- SEND needs
- Sensory needs
- Cultural, ethical or religious dietary requirements
- Individual healthcare plans
- EHCPs and other agreed support plans

The school recognises that some children may require personalised dietary approaches. Where this is the case, arrangements will be agreed in partnership with parents/carers and, where appropriate, external professionals.

Parents/carers will be informed where prohibited items are identified. Where concerns persist, the school will work collaboratively with families to support packed lunch choices that align with school policy.

The school's approach is intended to educate and support rather than penalise children or families.

Children are encouraged to take uneaten food home so parents can monitor what has been eaten. Please refer to the school's separate Packed Lunch Policy for full details.

Mid-Morning Snacks

In consultation with parents, fruit and vegetables remain the only snack items that children may bring to school for break time.

This supports healthy eating habits, reduces litter and encourages children to maintain a healthy appetite for lunch.
Children in Reception and Key Stage 1 continue to receive fruit through the Government School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme.

Drinks Policy

- Fresh drinking water is available throughout the school day.
- Children may bring water to school in a clearly labelled bottle.

- Water bottles may be refilled during the school day.
- Classrooms provide access to drinking water for all children.
- Milk may be provided as part of breakfast or other approved provision.
- Fizzy drinks and energy drinks are not permitted.
- Fruit juice and smoothies are not routinely provided by the school.
- School drinks provision will comply with current School Food Standards.

Allergies and Dietary Requirements

Whitecote Primary School is committed to ensuring all pupils can access food safely.

The school will:
- Maintain up-to-date records of allergies and dietary requirements.
- Work closely with parents, catering providers and healthcare professionals.
- Implement Individual Healthcare Plans where required.
- Support pupils with allergies, intolerances, medical conditions and special diets.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate allergy awareness information and training.
- Discourage food sharing between pupils.

All food provision will take account of medical, religious and cultural requirements.

Food Safety and Safer Eating

The school promotes safe eating practices and follows current food safety guidance.

Staff supervising food consumption will:
- Encourage children to remain seated whilst eating.
- Promote good hygiene practices.
- Supervise pupils appropriately.
- Be alert to choking risks.
- Follow allergy and medical care procedures.
- Support safer eating practices throughout the school day.

EYFS staff will additionally follow the school's EYFS Safer Eating Policy.

School Ethos, Environment and Organisation

The school recognises:
- The importance of lunchtime organisation on behaviour and wellbeing.
- The value of social interaction during mealtimes.
- The importance of promoting positive table manners.

Staff, lunchtime supervisors and catering teams work together to create a calm, positive and enjoyable dining environment.

Reception children are encouraged to access school meals to support social development and widen food experiences.

Free School Meals

The school actively promotes Free School Meal eligibility and ensures an inclusive, non-discriminatory process.

The school recognises the importance of school meals in supporting children's health, wellbeing and educational achievement.

Information regarding Free School Meal eligibility is shared with families regularly.

Treats and Rewards

Whitecote Primary School promotes non-food rewards wherever possible.

Food may occasionally be used during celebrations, curriculum activities or special events; however:

- Healthy eating principles will be considered.
- Allergies and dietary requirements will always be taken into account.
- Treats will be provided in moderation.
- Children will never be excluded because of dietary needs.

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

Teaching about food, nutrition, healthy lifestyles and food safety is delivered primarily through:

- PSHE
- Design and Technology
- Science
- Physical Education

Links are also made through Geography, History, RE and other subjects where appropriate.

Children are given opportunities to:

- Learn about healthy eating.
- Taste and prepare a variety of foods.
- Learn about food hygiene and food safety.
- Understand cultural diversity through food.
- Develop cooking and food preparation skills.
- Learn about allergies and why food sharing can be dangerous.

Parental Involvement

The school values the support of parents and carers in promoting healthy eating.

The school will:

- Share relevant policy information with families.
- Communicate menu information and themed meal opportunities.
- Provide information regarding school meals and Free School Meals.
- Encourage feedback from parents and carers.
- Work in partnership with families to promote healthy lifestyles.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if national guidance changes.

The Headteacher and Governing Board will monitor:

- Compliance with School Food Standards.
- Breakfast provision.
- Packed lunch expectations.
- Food safety arrangements.
- Allergy management procedures.
- Pupil voice and parental feedback.

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Packed Lunch Policy
- Allergy Safety Policy
- EYFS Safer Eating Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.