

Yorke Mead Primary School

Food Policy

September 2025



Our School Vision Statement

BRINGING LEARNING to LIFE

We are a school dedicated to creating an environment where children are able to grow into happy, well-rounded individuals with a love of learning through which they can achieve to the best of their abilities.

We want our pupils to enter the wider world as

- o Happy, positive individuals*
- o Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution*
- o Confident, resilient, healthy & life-long learners.*

DARE TO...

D - Determination

A - Ambition

R - Resilience

E – Enjoyment

T - Trust

O - Openness

RATIONALE

As a school, we pride ourselves in providing the best education to your children, within available resources, whilst they attend our school. We now wish to extend this ethos by promoting healthy eating patterns to our children at school, by taking a more pro-active approach to improving the health and wellbeing of children.

In the past, as part of the curriculum and to improve the well-being of our children, we have incorporated:

- Healthy eating days
- Provision of water containers and drinking water for children
- Offered a wealth of after school activities including cooking and gardening club
- Sports week; focussed on the joy and importance of being active
- Healthy snacks at break times
- Breakfast club and After School club
- Visits to the allotments
- Achieved accreditation as a Healthy School

We are now taking the work, already done on food in our school, a stage further by introducing a Yorke Mead School Food Policy. This policy will cover the following:

- School meals
- Non-school lunch packs
- Food provided at the school, other than school meals
- Healthy eating, as part of the curriculum
- Extra curriculum activities, such as cookery clubs, etc.

Our belief is that a balanced healthy, nutritious diet is important for the development of a child's physical state, as well as for their intellectual abilities. Feeding the body with the proper nutrients helps fuel the mind to be more receptive to learning new skills, hence 'Feed the Body, Fuel the Mind'.

AIM

To ensure that all aspects of food and drink in school promote the health and well-being of pupils, staff and visitors to our school.

OBJECTIVES

Working with the school's caterer

The school and its caterer must meet the nutritional standards for school meals as set out in 'The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014'.

Management of Pupils with special diets/allergies

The school works very closely with families and the school's caterer (Herts Catering Ltd), to ensure special diets and allergies are catered for. All information is collected from parents/carers on a child's admission to Yorke Mead Primary School and input to the Management Information System (SIMS). Herts Catering Ltd also have their own online reporting system. Communication then takes place between the school, caterers and parent/carers to ensure all parties are aware of their responsibilities.

Parents are required to flag any allergies/dietary requirements on the schools breakfast club and afterschool club booking forms. Staff are aware of the children with allergies and special seating arrangements are made where necessary.

The school and its caterer will introduce 'Taster Days'

On an intermittent basis the school will invite parents to eat a school lunch with their child.

The school has in the past and will continue to include in the curriculum work associated with healthy balanced diets.

As part of the work that children do for sciences, and for personal, social, health education (PSHE), they will be taught:

- The components of a healthy diet
- The importance of healthy eating both now and in the future
- Design a menu for school/at home lunch/breakfast/evening meal
- Cost of menus, etc.
- Measuring and weighing recipe ingredients
- Have a gardening club where vegetables can be grown by the children
- Food on the plate games
- Food in history
- Celebrity eating habits
- Design a healthy menu for your favourite celebrity/for yourself/
- Extra curriculum activities, including:
 - After school cookery clubs
 - Breakfast clubs
 - Healthy foods as well as more traditional treats at Christmas parties

The school will enlist the help of its school caterer/school nurse/ or another professional to help promote healthy eating habits. The school will also arrange for advice and assistance about healthy eating issues to be provided to parents, if there is sufficient interest.

The school will provide information on healthy foods that should be included in lunch boxes from home

The school recognises the benefits of a well-balanced hot school meal for children, in the middle of the day, and would recommend to parents that this as the best option. However, should parents decide to send in a packed lunch from home, please note the following recommended guidelines set out by the British Nutrition Foundation.

A child's lunch should include only the following:

- A portion of starchy food, e.g. wholegrain bap/bread, sesame seed pitta bread, plain crackers, pasta or rice salad
- Fresh fruit and vegetables, e.g. apple/orange/banana, cherry tomatoes, carrots sticks, mini fruit chunks, etc.
- A portion of milk or dairy food, e.g. cheese, plain/fruit yoghurt, etc.
- Small portion of lean meat, fish or alternative, e.g. two slices of ham, chicken, beef, Quorn, cheese, tuna or hummus, etc.
- A drink - fruit juice (not fizzy or diluted squash), water (not flavoured) or, milk (not flavoured)
- Parents may include one biscuit treat/ packet of crisps but no sweets or chocolate bars/treats

Parents are advised to include an ice pack. Food products, prepared and stored in ambient temperatures, can after a period of between two to four hours have increased levels of bacteria in them, which may be harmful to your child. Although the school provides ambient storage facilities, the school cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

In addition, the school requests that parents do not include the following items in packed lunches:

- Sweets (including Winders), chocolate, etc.
- Fizzy drinks/sugary drinks
- Sugary cakes, e.g. doughnuts, etc.
- Sweet nut bars, etc.
- Foods containing nuts (due to severe allergies within the school)

- Egg sandwiches or foods that contain a whole/part whole eggs such as scotch eggs/egg bites (due to a severe allergy in school)

Parents who have difficulty following these guidelines are requested to contact the school.

The School will provide a safe and healthy eating environment for pupil, staff and visitors having lunch at midday in the school

The school will provide a clean, sociable environment, indoors and out, for children to eat their lunch. In doing so, the school requests children adhere to the following rules:

- All children will be required to wash their hands before they eat.
- All children are required to sit at a table in order to eat their lunch.
- Children are required to eat all or at least try to eat most of the food provided, either by the school or in their lunch box. They should eat the sandwich/ savoury part of the food first before eating the sweeter foods.
- All litter, from lunch boxes brought in from home, must be taken home at the end of the school day other than drink cartons that may leak if not empty. As part of our work to be more environmentally friendly we encourage parents to use small re-usable containers rather than individual, throw away packs reducing waste in the environment.
- Lunchtime supervisors will help any children who have concerns or cause concern during meal time, e.g. children who may have problems eating their lunch, spill or drop their lunch, cannot find a place to sit, do not eat their lunch or skip lunch, etc.
- Children are expected to behave whilst eating their lunches, be polite, talk and helpful
- Eating is a social activity, children will be encouraged to talk quietly to their peers
- If a child has a problem or wishes to leave they should raise their arm and wait until a lunchtime supervisor speaks to them
- If children are unsure of what the meal, or any meal item, is, they can ask the caterer or supervisory assistant to explain
- Caterers and supervisory assistants should thank children for using the facilities, as children should thank them for their help and assistance
- Children leave the area where they have eaten their lunch in a reasonable clean and tidy condition

The school will positively encourage pupils to show good meal time etiquette and good behaviour

To encourage good behaviour and social interaction during the meal time:

- Children are noted and praised for their positive behaviour at lunchtimes, good manners are noted and any children requiring support will receive this.

The school will ensure their school representative is trained, at least, to Basic food Hygiene Standards

The school will ensure their representative will receive basic food hygiene training either through the school meal provider, Herts Catering, or the local college.

The school will make arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the activities to ensure these objectives are met

This policy, its procedures and activities, used to meet the school's Food Policy, will be monitored and reviewed periodically by the Healthy School Co-ordinator, school council and the governing body. All reports on the Food Policy and its findings will be published in the school's newsletter.