

Ashgrove Primary School

Policy

on

Food  
Within School

1 September 2010  
Version 1-2

# Policy on Food within School

## Rationale

In order to maintain Ashgrove as a happy, healthy school it is important that we promote health awareness in all members of the school community. Through the school ethos and curriculum, and with the support of children and families, the staff endeavours to maintain an environment which supports healthy lifestyles. The messages that pupils receive about food, hygiene and health from the daily life of school are as important as those given during lessons. Learning about food and hygiene, making healthy choices and enjoying good food together are all part of this.

## Aims

We aim to:

- provide an approach to nutrition and hygiene that promotes informed, natural and healthy choices;
- work in partnership with catering staff to ensure that nutritional standards are implemented by providing attractive, value for money meals;
- work in partnership with parents to promote healthy breaks and snacks;
- enable pleasant eating experiences which enhance the development of each pupil through the social aspect of eating; and
- support children and staff with known allergies.

## Mid-Morning Snack

During consultation with parents a majority agreed that children should bring healthy breaks to school. Children are regularly encouraged to do so and most parents are supportive. Glass bottles should not be brought to school.

## Drinks

Children are encouraged to drink water at school particularly after PE, active play and in hot weather. It is available from fountains outside the classrooms in the main school building. Children are also permitted to bring plain water to class in plastic bottles with sports tops. They are reminded to wash the bottle and refill with fresh water regularly.

## School Meals

The monthly menus drawn up by our cook are planned to give variety and interest to the children, while meeting the national Nutritional Standards. They are then

endorsed by the NEELB and made available to parents. Theme days are linked to curriculum areas or calendar events. Bread, fruit, milk and water are available with every meal. Due to the large difference in calorie requirements between infants and juniors, portion sizes are adjusted accordingly. The money for school meals is collected each Monday, with children indicating their choices each morning. School meals are served from 12:30, with classes visiting the canteen in rotation. Children will be given whatever assistance they require but will be encouraged to be independent and responsible for themselves in relation to choices, carrying, choosing where to sit, cutting, tidying, etc. Unless requiring special needs assistance, all children will feed themselves. The school recognises the importance of lunchtime organisation and the promotion of social skills to the behaviour of pupils. Teachers, caterers and lunchtime supervisors work together to develop a positive canteen atmosphere and appropriate table manners.

The school recognises the particular value of school meals to children from low-income families. The system for free school meals is actively promoted to parents by the school and a non-discriminatory process is emphasised.

## Packed Lunches

Parents are encouraged to send healthy lunches with their children. As well as the long-term benefits, it is important to provide food which maximises children's settled working throughout the day.

Packed lunches are eaten by children between 12:30 and 12:45. Normally this will be in the child's own classroom, though supervision may require a class to use the assembly hall. In exceptional circumstances, slower eaters may have additional time supervised in the hall up to 13:00.

Children will be given whatever assistance they require but will be encouraged to be independent and responsible for themselves in relation to opening packets, tidying, etc. Unless requiring special needs assistance, all children will feed themselves. Glass bottles should not be brought to school and children should not bring foods that require boiling water or heating eg Pot Noodles or tinned soup.

## Treats and Rewards

To ensure consistency, sweets are rarely used as rewards, however they may be considered as treats when associated with PTA events such as the decoration of Easter eggs, Christmas selection boxes, disco or Family Fun Night tuck shop, etc. It may also be necessary to sell on surplus tuck after such events. Similarly, seasonal treats such as candy apples may be available from the canteen during a special week.

## Allergies

Several of our children suffer from allergies that are so serious that a reaction is likely to be in the form of anaphylactic shock, a condition requiring emergency medication

and the support of an ambulance. Annual update training is undertaken by staff responsible for children at risk of anaphylaxis.

**The most common allergy is to nuts. In order to minimise the risk of allergic reaction among children and staff, all nuts and nut-products have been banned within the premises and on educational visits outside school. Items prohibited include bags of nuts, cereal bars, hazelnut chocolate spread and satay flavoured foods but parents are encouraged to read the labels of all items sent to school and to avoid sending those containing nuts or nut-traces.**

## Food and Drink within the Curriculum

Looking at, feeling, cooking and tasting foods are important aspects of the human learning experience and on occasions children will be given opportunities to do so in class. This might include lessons working with fruit, vegetables, milk and butter, pancakes, tray-bakes or soup. There will be an emphasis on hygiene and where children are offered the chance to sample foods it will be under the supervision of a teacher, classroom assistant or trained leader. No child will be forced.

## Parental Involvement

From time-to-time it may be necessary to ask parents to send ingredients or small items of food to school for use within a lesson. On occasions such as end-of-term parties parents may wish to send snacks to school. In order to reassure all parents these snacks must be commercially produced, clearly within their “use-by” or “best-before” dates, and appropriate for the children within the class.

Unfortunately it is school policy not to mark children’s birthdays with food. As well as concerns about allergies, etc. it is felt that multiple parties would take away more curriculum time than might be justified; that they might draw attention to differences among children; and that they might put peer pressure on parents.

Parent Teacher Association events may include a barbecue, a supper of sandwiches, tray-bakes, etc, or a cake stall. The generosity and talents of parents are greatly appreciated, however, NEELB advice requires us to display a disclaimer advising the public state that:

*Our food stalls contain homemade items and items which may include gluten, nut traces, soya or wheat.*

## Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.