



THE MULBERRY HOUSE SCHOOL

This policy must be read in conjunction with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, Race Equality Policy and Inclusion Policy, as well as the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Allergy Management Procedures, Health & Safety Policy, and the School Food Standards Compliance Statement.

HEALTHY AND SAFER EATING POLICY

This Policy of Mulberry House School applies to all sections of the school including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Rationale

As a school, we have always prided ourselves in providing the best education to your children whilst attending our school. We extend this ethos by promoting healthy eating to our children at school, by taking a more pro-active approach to improving their health and wellbeing, while attending school. The school follows the **School Food Standards (updated 2025)** and promotes a whole-school healthy eating culture. Our belief is that a balanced, healthy, nutritious diet is important for the development of a child's physical well-being, as well as for their intellectual abilities creating a pleasant dining environment. 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, Drink and Think.

Aims

Our aims are:

- ◆ To provide children with a wide and nutritionally balanced vegetarian diet to develop their health, growth and well-being.
- ◆ To promote environmentally sustainable food choices and reduce food waste in line with national guidance.
- ◆ To ensure food education is embedded across the curriculum and school culture.
- ◆ To show children that meal times are a good time to socialise with each other and to share food together.
- ◆ To ensure children learn good table-manners and etiquette at mealtimes.

Eating a varied diet

We believe that children should eat a varied diet because this is associated with better health as it is more likely to contain all the vitamins and minerals the body needs.

They should eat foods from these main food groups every day.

Fruits and vegetables -
these include fruit and vegetables in all forms (whether fresh, frozen,

◆ Not less than two portions per day per child a week, at least one of which should be salad or vegetables and at least one of which should be fresh fruit, fruit tinned in juice or fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice).



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canned, dried or in the form of juice)

Non-dairy sources of protein

Eggs, beans (other than green beans)

Vegetables must be served every day, not just fruit.

- ◆ A food from this group should be available on a daily basis. Lentils, chickpeas, tofu, Quorn, and other plant proteins must be included weekly.
- ◆ Sources of protein in this group can include dairy sources of protein

Starchy foods

These include all bread, pasta, noodles, rice and potatoes.

- ◆ A food from this group should be available on a daily basis.
- ◆ Wholegrain starchy foods will be provided at least once each week.
- ◆ Fat or oil shall not be used in the cooking process of starchy foods on more than three days in any week
- ◆ On every day that a fat or oil is used in the cooking process of starchy foods, a starchy food for which fat or oil is not used in the cooking process should also be available

Milk and dairy foods

Includes milk, cheese, yoghurt (including frozen and drinking yoghurt), fromage frais and custard

- ◆ A food from this group should be available on a daily basis.
- ◆ Flavoured milk must not contain added sugar.

Drinks

The only drinks available should be:

- ◆ Plain water (still or fizzy);
- ◆ Milk (skimmed or semi-skimmed);
- ◆ Pure fruit juice will be limited to 150ml and only served with meals.
- ◆ Yoghurt or milk drinks (with less than 5% added sugar)

N.B: Artificial sweeteners could be used only in yoghurt and milk drinks; or combinations containing yoghurt or milk

Water

There is easily accessible drinking water throughout the school

Salt and Condiments

Table salt should not be made available. No added salt in cooking unless essential and the condiments must be portion-controlled.



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Confectionary and Savoury Snacks

Confectionery, chocolate and chocolate-coated products (excluding cocoa powder used in chocolate cakes, or low calorie hot drinking chocolate) is discouraged in packed lunches and not provided by the school.

Health eating and healthy teeth

Sugary foods and drinks are avoided as:

- ◆ They can encourage a liking for sweet foods in young children
- ◆ Can lead to tooth decay if consumed frequently
- ◆ Tend to be high in calories and low in vitamins and minerals

The healthy diet provided in the school is the best possible diet for healthy teeth. Foods that contain sugar are eaten as part of a meal. Snacks such as fruit, vegetables, rice cakes and bread sticks are nutritious and free of added sugar. Water and milk, which are the safest drinks for teeth, are provided between meals.

The school aims to prevent dental problems related to diet by adopting this healthy eating policy.

Equal Opportunities

All children and their parents / carers should be respected as individuals and their food preferences and religious requirements should be accommodated. This is done by celebrating different festivals and encouraging families to share how they celebrate the festival and the food, which is associated with it. All that children bring with them to school - their race, gender and other protected groups as listed in Equality Act 2010, must be valued in order for children to feel accepted and accepting of themselves. It is important to value the contributions which different cultures and nationalities make to the variety of foods eaten.

Involving Parents/Carers

As in all aspects of our work, we seek to enter into a partnership with parents.

We do this by:

- ◆ Making sure parents/carers are aware that we are committed to promoting healthy, varied and enjoyable food
- ◆ Making menus available by displaying on noticeboards and on our website
- ◆ Asking parents for suggestions for lunch and snack menus
- ◆ Giving clear information on what children eat each day



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- ◆ Finding out about special diets before the child starts, or any nutritional developments as they happen e.g. allergies
- ◆ Working with parents to celebrate festivals
- ◆ Providing information evenings on health and nutrition

Adult Role

Adults have a key role in influencing children's attitudes and choices. Adults at Mulberry House School seek to do this by:

- ◆ Being a positive role model, by providing opportunities for children to learn about food, food sources, nutrition, health, seasons and growing cycles and other people's ways of life.
- ◆ Talking about holidays and festivals as food plays an important part in most people's celebrations.
- ◆ Developing children's social skills, sitting in small groups at lunch times
- ◆ Adults sitting with and eating the same foods and drinking the same drinks as the children so as to encourage children to taste new and different foods.
- ◆ Encouraging a pleasant and social atmosphere and environment.
- ◆ Promoting the concept that mealtime is for eating but it is also a time for learning and socialising.
- ◆ Encouraging children to listen and take turns, speaking to each other without shouting.
- ◆ Supporting children with special needs when eating i.e. children with diabetes, tracheotomy, allergies, cystic fibrosis etc.
- ◆ Supporting and developing independence and confidence when children are table setting and clearing.
- ◆ Encouraging children to try foods offered.
- ◆ Using mealtimes as an opportunity to talk about healthy eating.
- ◆ Teaching table manners, i.e. to be seated, to encourage children not to talk with food in their mouths, to give children enough time to eat, to encourage children to use please and thank you.
- ◆ Encouraging health and safety when eating e.g. when using utensils.
- ◆ Ensure that the food provision in the school reflects the ethical, cultural and medical requirements of staff and pupils e.g. religious, ethnic, medical, and allergenic needs.
- ◆ To make the provision and consumption of food an enjoyable and safe experience in a pleasurable and dedicated environment.
- ◆ To monitor menus and food choices to inform policy development and provision.



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- ◆ The catering department receives adequate training to provide tasty, nutritious foods and hygiene.
- ◆ Encouraging the children to use the 'Gro' app for healthy choices.

Children's Role

Children are encouraged to take an active role when they:

- ◆ Take turns putting out name cards and clearing tables.
- ◆ Learn to use knife, fork and spoon appropriately.
- ◆ Participate in menu writing and planning.
- ◆ Minister for Health and Wellbeing checking that everyone is bringing healthy snacks.
- ◆ Develop skills and increase knowledge of healthy eating through exploration, cooking and discussion.
- ◆ Share experiences with peers and adults.
- ◆ Behave appropriately at the dinner table.
- ◆ Develop social skills with reference to their age and stage of development.
- ◆ Develop understanding of healthy foods and confidence to explore new tastes.
- ◆ Learn about food production, manufacturing, distribution and marketing practices.
- ◆ Understand the importance of drinking fresh water throughout the day.
- ◆ Pupil Parliament completing hands up survey for favourite choices of lunches.

Meals Provided

Morning snack time: 10.30am Lunch time: 12 noon Afternoon snack time: 4pm

Snacks

Snack time is an important social time where children learn from each other. Water and milk are provided for drinking. Snacks such as fruit and vegetables, sushi and vegetable muffins are available throughout the week. The snack menu is displayed on the noticeboard in both schools and on the website.

Lunchtime

Our lunchtime menus operate on a termly two-week cycle. The school menu is displayed on the noticeboard in both schools and is available to view on the website. Parents are advised on suitable foods to provide as a packed lunch.

Curriculum

As part of the curriculum the children will learn about the importance of healthy eating. They will also take part in cooking lessons as part of DT and create dishes that are healthy



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and nutritional. They will be involved in planning their own recipes and have an understanding of the budget available for specific food types.

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

As part of the work that children do for sciences, and for personal, social, health and citizenship education 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 games
- ◆ Have a growing club where vegetables can be grown by the children
- ◆ Food in history
- ◆ Monitoring and reducing food waste
- ◆ Design a healthy menu for your favourite celebrity

The school will enlist the help of its school caterer/dietician/eco co-ordinator or other 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 promotes themes for celebratory foods/eating:

- ◆ Harvest
- ◆ Chinese new year
- ◆ International themes
- ◆ Make your own dish with the cook (e.g. healthy pizza making)
- ◆ Parental contributions to cooking classes
- ◆ Eid/Ramadan
- ◆ Historical themes
- ◆ Farm day, etc.
- ◆ Taster days
- ◆ Curriculum Theme days
- ◆ Christmas
- ◆ Shrove Tuesday
- ◆ Diwali

Festivals and Celebrations

Festivals provide a valuable opportunity to include special occasion foods and to extend knowledge and awareness of other cultures. Parents are welcome to bring specialised foods to share but are encouraged to reflect our Healthy School Status and discuss this with the key person prior to the celebration so as the children with special diets can be included and their parents informed.

All celebratory foods will comply with the School Food Standards (2025), ensuring that cultural and festival events do not include foods high in fat, sugar or salt.



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Celebrations will prioritise healthier traditional foods, tasting experiences, and curriculum-linked activities rather than confectionery.

Any food brought in by parents must meet the school's healthy eating expectations and allergy policy.

All foods provided for celebrations must comply with the school's allergy management procedures and the 2025 DfE allergy guidance. Ingredient lists must be provided in advance.

Supporting our healthy eating policy

Training and Career Progression and Development is provided for all kitchen staff including food hygiene.

All catering and relevant staff will receive annual training on the School Food Standards (2025), allergy awareness, portion control, and creating a positive dining environment.

Foods we do not use

It is our policy to provide low sugar content honey, low salt, and no glutamates, nuts, meat products, fish, gelatine or palm oil. These exclusions support our sustainability commitments and ethical food policy, which are communicated to parents annually."No condiments such as mayonnaise or tomato ketchup are available to children during snack or lunch times. We encourage parents not to bring sweets or crisps into the school.

- ◆ No confectionery, chocolate, or chocolate-coated items will be provided at any time, including during celebrations."
- ◆ Cakes or biscuits will only be served as part of a meal and must meet the School Food Standards sugar limits.
- ◆ Fruit juice will not be served except in portions of 150ml or less and only with meals.
- ◆ No more than two deep-fried or batter-coated items will be served per week.
- ◆ Salt will not be added during cooking except where essential for food safety, and condiments will be portion-controlled.

The school makes every effort not to use nuts in any form or products known to have nut traces as these can induce severe or even fatal reactions in adults or children. Our nut-free policy aligns with the DfE Allergy School guidance (2025), and we require all parents to avoid sending any products containing nuts or nut traces.

Safer Eating

The Mulberry House School is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and health-conscious environment for all children during mealtimes. This policy has been developed in accordance with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2025 statutory framework**,



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which introduces new mandatory requirements for safer eating practices in early years settings.

We recognise that mealtimes are not only essential for nutrition but also for social development, emotional wellbeing, and safeguarding. This policy outlines our procedures for managing allergies, preventing choking, ensuring staff readiness, and maintaining a safe eating environment across both our First and Second School sites.

AIMS

This school aims to:

- ◆ Ensure that all children eat safely and healthily while in our care.
- ◆ Prevent incidents of choking and allergic reactions through proactive planning and staff training.
- ◆ Support children with dietary requirements, allergies, and medical conditions.
- ◆ Comply fully with the EYFS 2025 safer eating regulations.
- ◆ Promote a calm, respectful, and inclusive mealtime experience.

OBJECTIVES

- ◆ To ensure a **Paediatric First Aid (PFA)** trained staff member is present during all eating times, in accordance with EYFS 2025.
- ◆ To collect and maintain accurate records of each child's dietary needs, allergies, and medical conditions prior to enrolment.
- ◆ To implement and regularly review **Allergy Action Plans** in collaboration with parents and healthcare professionals.
- ◆ To train all staff in allergy awareness, choking prevention, and emergency response procedures.
- ◆ To prepare and serve food in age-appropriate textures and sizes to reduce choking risk.
- ◆ To ensure all food provided is clearly labelled with allergen information and served in a safe manner.
- ◆ To maintain clear communication with parents regarding food provision, safety protocols, and any incidents.

SAFER EATING ENVIRONMENT

- ◆ Children are seated securely during meals using age-appropriate furniture (e.g. highchairs or low chairs).
- ◆ Staff supervise all mealtimes and encourage children to eat slowly and mindfully.
- ◆ Distractions such as toys, screens, or loud noise are minimised during meals.
- ◆ Food is cut into safe sizes and textures appropriate to each child's age and developmental stage.
- ◆ Children are not permitted to share food to prevent cross-contamination and allergic reactions.
- ◆ Water is available at all mealtimes and children are encouraged to drink regularly.



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ALLERGY & DIETARY MANAGEMENT

- ◆ **Pre-enrolment:** Parents complete a comprehensive **Dietary & Allergy Form** detailing any allergies, intolerances, dietary preferences, and health-related food requirements.
- ◆ **Allergy Action Plans:** Developed for each child with allergies or dietary needs, signed by parents and reviewed termly or as needed.
- ◆ **Staff Briefings:** All staff are briefed on individual dietary needs and allergies at the start of each term and when a new child joins.
- ◆ **Emergency Medication:** EpiPens and other prescribed medications are stored accessibly and administered by trained staff.
- ◆ **Food Labelling:** All food provided by the school or external caterers is labelled with allergen information in accordance with Natasha's Law.

STAFF TRAINING & RESPONSIBILITIES

- ◆ All staff receive training every 2 years on:
 - Allergy awareness and anaphylaxis response
 - Choking prevention and safe food handling
 - Emergency procedures during mealtimes
- ◆ Temporary and supply staff are briefed on relevant dietary needs and emergency protocols.
- ◆ Action plans for common food-related emergencies are displayed in staff rooms, offices, and kitchen areas.
- ◆ The designated Medical Carers responsible for overseeing safer eating practices are:
 - **Carla Garcia Fernandez** – First School
 - **Maria Adela Fojo Nebril** – Second School

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Parents are informed and regularly reminded about the Safer Eating Policy:

- ◆ At the start of each term
- ◆ Upon enrolment
- ◆ Via the school website
- ◆ Through newsletters and school-wide health updates
- ◆ During parent meetings and allergy reviews

Parents are encouraged to:

- ◆ Update the school immediately if their child's dietary needs change
- ◆ Provide detailed information about any food-related medical conditions
- ◆ Collaborate with staff on Allergy Action Plans and emergency procedures



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MONITORING & REVIEW

- ◆ The policy is reviewed annually or following any food-related incident.
- ◆ Compliance is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- ◆ Feedback from parents, staff, and pupils is considered in policy updates.
- ◆ The school maintains a **Safer Eating Audit Log** to track training, incidents, and reviews.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All staff know what action to take in the event of a food-related emergency. This includes:

- ◆ How to contact emergency services
- ◆ What information to provide (child's name, condition, medication)
- ◆ Who to contact within the school (Medical Carers, Headteacher, DSL)

Copies of Allergy Action Plans and relevant medical documentation are sent with the child to emergency care settings when necessary. In serious cases, the pupil will be accompanied by a parent/guardian or transported via ambulance in accordance with the **Health & Safety Policy**

EYFS 2025 COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

The Mulberry House School confirms compliance with the following EYFS 2025 safer eating requirements:

- ◆ PFA-trained staff present during all eating times
- ◆ Allergy and dietary information collected pre-enrolment
- ◆ Allergy Action Plans in place and reviewed termly
- ◆ Staff trained in choking prevention and allergy response
- ◆ Safe food preparation and serving practices
- ◆ Emergency procedures clearly communicated and displayed
- ◆ Parents and staff regularly updated on policy and procedures

The Headteacher (**Erika Billmore**) is responsible for ensuring the full implementation, monitoring, and review of this policy.