

Whole School Food Policy



Meadowhead Junior School governors have agreed to adopted Blackburn with Darwen Council Policies.

Approved by:	Local Authority and School Governors
Date approved:	March 2026
Date of next review:	March 2028

Whole School Food Policy

Introduction

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

This policy was formulated through consultation between members of staff, governors, parents, pupils, and our school nurse.

The nutritional principles of this policy are based on the findings of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) rolling programme for 2012 to 2013 and 2013 to 2014.

Food Policy Co-ordinator

This school food policy and healthy eating strategy is co-ordinated by Mrs Hartley School Business Manager.

Aims

The main aims of our school food policy are:

1. To provide healthy food/drink choices throughout the school day, aligning with the mandatory School Food Standards, and to ensure food stuffs brought into school are healthy;
2. To enable pupils to make healthy food choices through the provision of information and the development of appropriate skills, behaviours and attitudes; and
3. To ensure a consistent and engaged approach to healthy eating across the school community, including pupils, staff and parents/carers considering children with complex health needs such i.e. coeliac disease or severe allergies

These aims will be addressed through the following areas:

1. Equal Opportunities:

In healthy eating, 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. This includes the equitable provision of school meals, helping to encourage maximum support and uptake.

2. Curriculum

Food and nutrition is taught at an appropriate level throughout each key stage in science, PSHE and Design Technology (cooking and nutrition) Ingredients required for cooking in curriculum are provided for by the school for all pupils and, where possible, recipes not requiring non-basic pieces of equipment (e.g., garlic crushers, cheese graters, etc.) are prioritised. Cultural consideration should be given to the ingredients in recipes.

Ensuring consistent messages, the Eat well Guide (*see Appendix 1*) is used throughout the school – across subjects – as a model of understanding a balanced diet. Communication is facilitated through agreed effective teaching methods (e.g. debating issues, group discussions, role-play and interactive sessions), and leading by example and appropriate staff training.

Extra-curricular activities/groups available through the school will also support the teaching of skills/understandings, behaviours and attitudes associated with healthier eating habits, including Cooking with Parents and children club, allotment sessions planting, growing and eating our own produce. Such activities will seek to engage children and their families and the wider community.

3. Food & Drink Provision Throughout The School Day

Fundamentally, the School Food Standards will be adhered to for school lunches and school food other than lunch (including breakfast club, mid-morning break, and after school clubs). In addition, the following policies apply:

1. Breakfast

Breakfast is an important meal that should provide 25% of a child's energy requirement and contribute significantly to their vitamin and mineral requirements, supporting pupils to be ready to learn at the start of each day.

The school operates 2 breakfast clubs, early bird club that runs 7.30 to 8.30 which includes sports activities and a nutritious meal at a cost of £1 per day bookable in advance via Arbor app. Our 2nd club runs from 8.15 for those children who just want breakfast and a chat before school, this club is free courtesy of Majic Breakfast.

2. School Lunches

School lunches are provided by our dedicated catering team and served between 12 O'clock and 1 p.m. in the dining hall. In addition to compliance with the School Food Standards our school holds a catering award 5 Stars for Hygiene, and has a regular external audit to ensure our menus meet the school food Standards.

School lunches are planned on a three-week menu cycle that can be found on our school website under the Parent tab.

Children eligible for free school meals are identified according to local policy, and criteria linked to benefits payments. The school actively encourages and supports parents/carers to apply for free school meals to ensure those in need are adequately supported.

3. Packed Lunches

Developed using guidance from the Change4life programme the school employs a packed lunch policy ([available via the school website](#)). The guidance aims to support pupils in consuming a balanced lunch and to best prepare them for learning in the afternoon. The school encourages parents and carers to provide children with packed lunches that complement this policy and its standards.

Sweet The school will review packed lunches through regular inspections and reward students who constantly bring in a healthy packed lunch.

All children who are having packed lunches will be provided with a leaflet with guidance on healthier packed lunches, for example the Change4life programme '[Healthier Lunchbox ideas](#)'

Where children are consuming packed lunches that aren't in line with the policy the school will investigate the reasoning for this, including children's food preferences, parent's perceptions of a healthier packed lunches, affordability of healthier options, uncertainties on healthier options, and attempt to support behavioural change through offering a number of options e.g., recommending school meals, involvement in extra-curricular activities that support cooking and food growing skills, etc.

The school expresses a commitment to supporting parents and their children before concerns develop for noncompliance with policy stipulations and will ensure the provision of educational/promotional materials via the school website and links to provision of support by external Eat Well strategy partners.

4. Snacks

The school understands that snacks can be an important part of the diet of young people and can contribute positively towards a balanced diet.

Children can purchase a piece of fruit at break time each school day for 20p as part of Healthy Eating.

We only permit fruit for consumption at break-times and/or for after school, please **don't** send in sugary snacks:

5. Drinks

Per the School Food Standards free, fresh drinking water is available at all times and promoted as the drink of choice for keeping children well hydrated. The only other drinks permitted are: plain water (still or carbonated); lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk; fruit or vegetable juice (max 150mls); plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (e.g. yoghurt) drinks; combinations of fruit or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated, with no added sugars or honey);

combinations of fruit juice and lower fat milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and lower fat milk; flavoured lower fat milk, all with less than 5% added sugars.

1. Rewards & Special Occasions

The school does not encourage the regular eating of sweets or other foods high in fat, sugar or salt, especially as a reward for good behaviour or academic or other achievements. Other methods of positive reinforcement are used in school, including certificates, dojo shop small gifts, greentime and whole class awards for attendance.

The school recognises the importance of celebrating birthdays and other special occasions. For birthday celebrations, children will receive: **a Birthday card in assembly** However, parents/carers are welcome (and invited) to share healthier, cultural foods for birthdays and other special occasions, with chocolates, sweets and cakes discouraged.

Occasional fund-raising events may include the sale of cakes and confectionery but the inclusion of healthier alternatives is strongly encouraged.

2. Food Waste & Sustainability

The school is committed to the prevention of avoidable food waste, regularly auditing food waste and trialling initiatives to reduce food waste, including educational methods such as cooking sessions using up leftovers.

The school is aware of the environmental impact associated with food stuffs; where possible, locally sourced, fresh and seasonal ingredients are used when preparing meals. Regularly sourced ingredients fitting these criteria – as agreed with suppliers.

The Food Environment

To overcome the stigma attached to free school meals the school seeks to anonymise the process of meal purchases, this is achieved via School Money, a cashless catering system.

The school promotes an inclusive environment allowing all children to sit together at lunchtime.

1. Special Dietary Requirements

The school does everything possible to accommodate pupils' special dietary requirements including allergies, intolerances, and religious or cultural practices.

Individual care plans are created for pupils with food allergies – coordinated by SENCO and the Catering Manager. These plans document symptoms and adverse reactions, actions to be taken in an emergency, and emergency contact details. Schools should review these contact details annually for accuracy. School caterers are made aware of any food allergies/intolerances and requests for special diets are submitted according to an agreed process.

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.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Parents and stakeholders are invited to an annual review of the Whole School Food Policy and to contribute to a healthy eating approach where appropriate.

Details of how the policy will be implemented and evaluated are to be entered here.

Review

Date of policy implementation: 1.1.2024

Proposed review date: March 2026

Appendix 1



**Public Health
England**

Protecting and improving the nation's health

The Eatwell Guide

Helping you eat a healthy, balanced diet



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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Get started now

Eating well and having a healthy lifestyle can help us feel our best – and make a big difference to our long-term health. So why not make a change today?

The Eatwell Guide shows the proportions in which different types of foods are needed to have a well-balanced and healthy diet. The proportions shown are representative of your food consumption over the period of a day or even a week, not necessarily each meal time.

Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

Special diets and allergies:

The school is aware of food allergies, has a procedure in place to manage food allergies and other special dietary requirements within school.

Visit www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/schools/help-for-schools for information on managing allergies in schools.

Assessment, evaluation and reviewing

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by teaching staff / catering staff / midday meal supervisors / pre-identified pupil packed lunch helpers (delete as appropriate).

Healthy lunches will be rewarded by.... (stickers / certificates / congratulatory letters home / etc).

Where packed lunches that aren't in line with the packed lunch policy are brought into school, leaflets will be included in the packed lunch to go home. If a child regularly brings a packed lunch that does not conform to the policy then the school will contact the parents to discuss this.

Link to Healthier Lunchboxes Change for Life

<https://change4life.service.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes>