Food and Nutrition Policy



At Tardebigge CE First School, we recognise the important role that healthy eating and good nutrition play in supporting children's wellbeing, development and readiness to learn. Rooted in our Christian vision of enabling all to experience "life in all its fullness" (John 10:10), we are committed to promoting positive attitudes towards food and encouraging healthy choices that support lifelong wellbeing.

Through our curriculum and wider school life, we aim to develop pupils' understanding of nutrition, develop healthy habits and create an environment where every child can grow, learn and flourish. Working in partnership with families, we seek to promote a culture of wellbeing, responsibility and informed decision-making across our school community.

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1. Aims

- This policy has been developed in partnership with the staff, and aims to ensure that our school provides an environment that encourages healthy food and eating, and helps our pupils make healthy food choices
- Food allergies and dietary needs are managed effectively
- Younger children are kept healthy and safe by meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework standards around food and nutrition
- Food safety and hygiene practices are followed, including proper food preparation to prevent choking
- All staff and parents/carers are aware of their roles in making sure that our pupils consume healthy, nutritious and safe food and drink

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the following legislation:

- Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework
- The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014
- Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019

It is also based on the following Department for Education (DfE) guidance:

- Early years foundation stage (EYFS) nutrition guidance
- School Food Standards practical guidance
- Allergy guidance for schools

This policy also follows guidance provided by our local authority.

3. Responsibilities of the school

The governing board and headteacher will make sure that this food and nutrition policy is properly implemented, and that food preparation, provision and nutrition procedures are followed in accordance with this policy.

All staff are responsible for following the policy and ensuring the health and safety of the children.

4. Responsibilities of parents/carers

We work in partnership with parents/carers to make sure all children receive appropriate and nutritious food while at school.

We ask all parents/carers to:

- Inform the school of any allergies, medical dietary needs, food intolerances and religious or cultural dietary requirements.
- Encourage their child to try a variety of foods and eat a balanced diet at home and in school
- Give their child a healthy breakfast before arriving at school
- Keep the school informed of any changes to their child's dietary needs, progress with eating, and/or any other concerns or information around their eating

5. Communicating with parents/carers

We contact parents/carers promptly if our staff notice any issues with their child's food consumption or habits at school, such as:

- Significant changes in eating habits, such as consistently eating very little food or showing a sudden aversion to certain foods or food groups
- Specific food-related problems, such as having trouble chewing or swallowing
- Concerns about wellbeing, such as a child's eating habits appearing to affect their mood, energy level or general wellbeing

We work together with parents/carers to address any problems promptly.

6. Sourcing food and ingredients

We work with Cupcakes Early Years Catering to provide healthy and nutritious meals.

We collaborate with our catering partner by:

- Carrying out regular checks to make sure the food provided is of a high standard, meets all relevant nutritional guidance, and is prepared safely and hygienically

The contract with our catering provider is reviewed and re-tendered every few years to make sure we receive the best possible service and value for money.

In buying food and ingredients, our catering company follows the government's guidance on sustainable procurement. Where possible, our catering company buys seasonal and local food, and fish from verifiably sustainable sources (such as products certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)).

7. Providing food and drink at school

We follow the School Food Standards, except in relation to food provided in the following circumstances, to which the standards don't apply:

- At parties or celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions
- At fundraising events
- As rewards for achievement, good behaviour or effort
- When teaching food preparation and cookery skills, including when the food prepared is served to pupils as part of a school lunch
- On an occasional basis by parents/carers or pupils

We provide healthy, balanced, varied and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks at the following times:

Reception, Year 1, Year 2: Free fruit and vegetables provided at morning break time.

Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4: Milk (free up to age 5, then must be paid for by parents/carers) at morning break time.

Reception, Year 1: Bread & spread (if paid for by parents/carers) at morning break time.

We support all our pupils to develop positive eating habits, helping them to get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need for growth and development.

Our menus are:

- Planned for a term at a time to make sure all meals, snacks and drinks are balanced, varied and nutritious, and include different foods, tastes and textures, including global cuisines
- Planned to include substitutions and replacement ingredients for pupils with special dietary requirements
- Reviewed **at least** twice a year, to include seasonal produce
- Shared termly, on the school website with parents/carers to:
    - Provide allergen information
    - Help them balance food at home by providing varied meals
    - Reassure them that their child is getting an appropriate, varied, nutritious and balanced diet at school
    - Seek their feedback, particularly regarding cultural preferences

7.1 For all pupils

All meals, snacks and drinks provided are healthy, balanced and nutritious.

Our staff:

- Make tap water available and accessible throughout the day, and provide fresh tap water at mealtimes
- Encourage pupils to eat balanced meals containing a wide variety of foods from the 4 main food groups:
    - Fruit and vegetables
    - Starchy carbohydrates, such as bread, rice and pasta
    - Dairy or dairy alternatives
    - Protein, such as meat, fish and beans

We have a designated eating space with suitable chairs where:

- The children eat together in a social setting to encourage adventurous food choices
- Distractions are minimised, allowing children to focus on their food and social interactions

8. Food safety and hygiene

Staff at our catering company use our food preparation area to prepare meals, snacks and drinks.

Staff with responsibility for food preparation and handling are competent and receive food hygiene training.

All staff wash their hands regularly, particularly after helping unwell children or handling their belongings.

8.1 Procedures for managing food poisoning

If any child shows symptoms of food poisoning, we will:

- Contact parents/carers immediately to collect their child as soon as possible

Parents/carers are advised not to return their children to school until they have been symptom free for at least 48 hours.

Ofsted will be notified by Joe Hartshorn (Headteacher) of any food poisoning affecting 2 or more children as soon as possible, and **always within 14 days** of the incident.

9. Safer eating

While eating, pupils are always supervised and within sight and sound of a suitably qualified staff member.

9.1 Food preparation to prevent choking

Food is prepared in a suitable way for each child's developmental needs, avoiding round shapes and cutting food appropriately (e.g. cutting carrots into narrow batons).

9.2 Eating environment

When eating, all children are always:

- Seated safely (e.g. in an appropriately sized chair)
- Within sight and hearing of staff

Where possible, staff sit facing children to monitor eating and prevent food sharing.

We record any incidents of choking needing intervention and inform parents/carers.

Our records are reviewed annually to identify trends.

9.3 One-to-one supervision

We offer children with issues affecting their eating one-to-one supervision in consultation with parents/carers and health professionals.

9.4 Paediatric first aiders

At least 1 member of staff with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate is always in the room when children are eating.

Any medicines are given to children as needed and in accordance with our Attendance & Medication Policy, which can be found on the school website.

10. Managing allergies and food intolerances

Please see our Allergy Policy for further information.

11. Allergen food labelling

The 14 allergens that we track and highlight are:

- Celery
- Cereals containing gluten, such as wheat, barley, oats and some flours
- Crustaceans, such as prawns, crabs and lobsters
- Eggs
- Fish
- Lupin, such as bread made with lupin seeds
- Milk
- Molluscs, such as mussels and oysters
- Mustard
- Peanuts
- Sesame
- Soybeans
- Sulphur dioxide and sulphites, if they’re concentrated at more than 10 parts per million
- Tree nuts, such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, pistachios and macadamia nuts

We include information about the presence of any of these allergens in our dishes on our menus, which can be accessed on the school website.

12. Managing other special dietary requirements

We are committed to supporting children with special dietary requirements and food intolerances, ensuring that every child can eat safely and in accordance with their cultural needs and preferences.

Before a child joins our school, we gather detailed information about any special dietary or health requirements, food preferences and intolerances. We share this information with **all** staff involved in preparing and handing food.

Our caterers plan menus to include food substitutions, where necessary, for children with special dietary requirements in mind.

We also:

- Check any product changes with our food suppliers
- Ensure caterers read labels and product information before using a product
- Supervise children at mealtimes to avoid food sharing

12.1 Provision for cultural and dietary preferences

We understand that food preferences can be linked to cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, or personal choices, such as vegetarianism.

An inclusive eating environment that caters to the cultural and dietary needs of all children is created by:

- Communicating openly with parents/carers to understand specific food preferences or needs, such as halal or kosher
- Always having a vegetarian option available

12.2 Children with additional support needs

For children with physical, developmental, or sensory issues affecting their eating, we work with parents/carers and health professionals to:

- Offer one-to-one support if needed
- Adjust the eating environment (e.g. limiting noise)

For medically required special diets not covered in this policy, we need written confirmation from a health professional to ensure we meet the child's specific nutritional needs.

13. Food brought in from home

We share our food and nutrition policy with parents/carers before children join the school, with annual reminders to help them understand our requirements and encourage healthy choices for packed lunches, and any other food brought from home.

The following foods must **not** be brought into school on any occasion:

- Nuts (due to a number of serious allergies)

13.1 Packed lunches

We allow parents/carers to provide packed lunches and breaktime snacks for their child.

Examples of suitable breaktime snacks include:

- Fruit
- Vegetables, such as carrot sticks
- Malt loaf
- Crackers
- Cheese dippers
- Fruit snacks
- Breadsticks
- Rice cakes
- Cheese snacks

  If chocolate bars, sweets, or crisps are brought in as a breaktime snack, children will be asked to return them to their bag and take them home at the end of the day.

Packed lunches may include:

- Sandwich/wrap/other main lunch item
- A packet of crisps
- A small sweet treat
- Fruit
- Yoghurts

Packed lunches must **not** include:

- Nutella or similar chocolate spreads containing nuts
- Peanut butter sandwiches
- Cereal bars containing nuts

  If these items are brought into school, children will not be permitted to eat them.

We inform parents/carers about best practices for packing lunches, and ask them to:

- Use insulated, sealed bags for perishable foods
- Label lunch bags and their contents with the child's name
- Make sure that the food is suitable for the child's developmental needs and is prepared in a way to prevent choking

13.2 Safety and hygiene

Lunchtime staff are vigilant regarding food brought from home for potential allergens to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

All food brought from home will be stored separately in individual lunchboxes to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

Due to food safety reasons, we do not provide refrigeration for packed lunches or reheat food from home unless specifically agreed upon with parents/carers.

13.2 Celebrations

If parents/carers, visitors, volunteers or school staff wish to bring in gifts for special occasions, we ask that they only do this:

- When it has been agreed in advance with Joe Hartshorn (Headteacher)

Food brought into school **must not contain:**

- Nuts

We ask that they follow the following guidelines:

- Provide non-edible items (e.g. books) to share with the children.

14. Learning about food

Our curriculum includes engaging food-related activities, including:

Reception:

- Learning about the importance of eating a balanced diet
- Develop independence and snack and meal times

Year 1:

- Preparing simple meals, such as sandwiches and fruit salads
- Planting easy to grow seeds, such as cress and lettuce

Year 2:

- Discovering the importance of eating the right amounts of different types of food
- Identify food groups and healthy foods

Year 3:

- The Eatwell Guide and balanced meals
- How food choices affect health and wellbeing

Year 4:

- Making informed choices about food and drink
- Exploring the effects of healthy and unhealthy diets on physical health

We involve parents/carers by:

- Hosting an after-school cooking club, where children learn recipes and activities they can take part in at home

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be shared with and approved by the Governing Body.

Date approved and ratified:	November 2026
Review date:	October 2027