



Hazelwood Schools

Food in School Policy

Reviewed and Adopted: **Summer 2026**

Reviewed by: FGB

Next Review: **Summer 2029**

Review every three years

BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

This policy has been formulated to enable Hazelwood Schools to develop and maintain a shared philosophy on all aspects of food and drink. This policy aims to meet statutory Early Years Foundation Stage safer eating, nutrition and welfare requirements outlined in the EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (July 2025) and reflects our vision and values across the whole school. Its key aim is to develop healthy eating and drinking activities within the school that benefit pupils, staff, parents, caterers and others associated with the school.

This policy covers: school meals, packed lunches, snacks, Breakfast and After School Clubs, cookery/gardening activities, school events/trips, food hygiene, allergies and medical diets, recording and statutory notifications.

This policy ensures compliance with EYFS safer eating and welfare requirements (July 2025), national school food standards, recognised food safety guidance and allergy management best practice (BSACI/NHS/FSA).

PURPOSE

- Ensure all food and drink provided or consumed on school premises is safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate.
- Reduce choking and allergy risks, with particular attention to Nursery (3–4-year olds) and other early years children.
- Ensure statutory compliance (EYFS safer eating, food hygiene training, notifications) and clear lines of accountability.
- Support learning about nutrition and positive relationships with food through the curriculum.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Hazelwood Schools recognise the important connection between a healthy, balanced diet and a child's ability to learn effectively and achieve well in school.
- The schools aim to ensure that children are well nourished at school, and that every child has access to safe, tasty, and nutritious food, and a safe, easily available water supply during the school day.
- The schools recognise that it has a responsibility to ensure that all members of the community are able to make informed choices about the importance of food and its production.
- The schools also recognise the role it can play, as part of the larger community, to promote family health, and sustainable food and farming practices.
- The schools are committed to providing a welcoming eating environment that encourages the positive social and cultural interaction of children and adults.
- The schools are committed to ensuring that food provision in the schools reflect the ethical and medical requirements of staff and children e.g. religious, ethnic, vegetarian, medical, and allergenic needs. The schools are committed to ensuring that our children receive consistent and coherent messages about food and its role in their long-term health.
- The schools are committed to ensuring that it involves children and parents in guiding food policy and practice within the school, and enables them to contribute to healthy eating, and acts on their feedback.
- The schools are committed to provision of training in practical food education for staff in food safety and hygiene.

SETTINGS FOR THE FOOD POLICY

In accordance with the aims and objectives of this policy, the following settings will apply to the food policy and provision in the school.

Free Fruit

Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1 children receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day from the Government Fruit and Vegetables scheme.

Free Milk

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage also receive free milk each day from the Government scheme.

Water

Plentiful drinking of water by school children has been recognised in improving behaviour and concentration. Every classroom has drinking water which is available to all children and staff. Children are encouraged to bring in a refillable bottle from home which can be taken into the playground too.

Where children do not have access to a refillable bottle, the school provides them with a cup and access to water in their classroom. Children are regularly reminded to drink water at break times especially during hot weather. The school also provides drinking water in the staffroom for staff. Water is available in the dining hall for children to help themselves too. Water is also available from drinking fountains in the playground.

School Lunches

Children are offered a carbohydrate, protein and vegetables on their plate every day. Every effort must be made to ensure that appropriate choices are available for all children throughout lunchtime. Children are also provided with a salad bar from which they can choose from a selection of salads.

We are committed to our school lunches meeting the healthy, sustainable practices listed in the aims and objectives. The school is committed to keeping parents and carers informed about recent and future changes to the nutritional content of school lunches, whether brought about by local or national initiatives. Children are regularly consulted about the menu offered for lunches and changes made when necessary. Menus are displayed on notice boards in the hall and are available for parents on the school website and through the School Grid App. Parents can select the different menu options with their child in advance, which also helps to eliminate food waste.

Currently, all our school meals are provided by staff from Herts Catering Limited (HCL). All meals provided must meet the Government's Minimum Nutritional Guidelines for school Catering. It is noted that the school lunches are prepared using produce approved by HCL suppliers. Lunch menus will follow a three-week cycle and the menu changes each term. All meat is Halal in order to support the efficient preparation of service and in recognition of the demographic at Hazelwood Schools. The menus are shared with parents on a termly basis and are also available on the school website.

Full time children in Early Years as well as KS1 are entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals. Currently, due to the London Mayor funding, children in KS2 are also entitled to a free hot school dinner. We will be notified each year if the free meals for KS2 pupils is to continue.

Packed Lunches

The Food Standards Agency survey of packed lunchboxes showed that many children's lunchboxes contained too much sugar, salt and fat and little fruit and vegetables. The schools are committed to encouraging parents

to provide healthier lunchboxes for children at Hazelwood. To support this, we will provide guidance to parents based on the Food in Schools recommendations of what constitutes a healthier lunchbox; the guidance should be consistent, realistic, and stress the importance of a balanced and varied diet.

We will be encouraging children to have healthy options from the following:

- Sandwich or bread
- Pasta or rice dish
- Salad
- Fruit
- Cooked vegetable dish
- Yoghurt
- Water which is also available in the dining hall if children want.

The school actively discourages some packed lunch foods. A list of foods considered to be in this category includes the following:

- Crisps
- Sweet Desserts
- 'Squash' or Added-Sugar and/or Sweetened Drinks. Fizzy Drinks are not allowed in school, on grounds of health and safety.

The schools do not recommend sweets or chocolate in packed lunches in school or on trips.

The schools recognise that parents provide packed lunches for a variety of reasons, including dietary requirements or intolerances, and religious observance. For this reason, no food may be swapped or shared from packed lunches. Food swapped or shared may be confiscated.

The Dining Environment

The schools are committed to providing a welcoming eating environment that encourages positive social interaction between children and adults. We aim to provide a calm, ordered environment conducive to mutual respect and good behaviour.

We are also committed to the following:

- Active help for children (particularly young children) who find the physical process of school dinners or packed lunch difficult – for example, carrying trays, opening tubs or packets, using a knife and fork.
- Encouraging all children to eat the food they have been provided with.
- Equal treatment of children having School Dinners and Packed Lunches, in terms of provision and supervision.
- Provision of water, easily accessible for all children.

The schools will also undertake regular surveys of the children to allow them to comment on the Dining Hall environment.

Extended School (Wrap-Around Care)

Breakfast Club: Breakfast Club operates on a daily basis in the school. We will actively promote Breakfast Club to those children who may have little or no time for breakfast in the mornings at home. Food offered includes healthy choices and is consistent with a healthy diet.

After School Club: After School Club operates on a daily basis in the school. Parents are asked to provide a healthy packed tea for their children.

Extra-Curricular Clubs: Some extra-curricular activities allow children to develop their understanding of food. These include a Cooking Club in our Children's Kitchen.

SAFE EATING PRACTICE IN EYFS

- During mealtimes in Nursery, staffing levels will ensure all children are within sight and hearing of a paediatric first-aid qualified adult. Where 1:1 or enhanced supervision is required (as identified in an individual risk assessment or Allergy/Healthcare Plan), this must be documented and resourced.
- Meals take place in a designated eating space that minimises distractions and encourages a calm, social mealtime. Staff will, where practicable, sit facing children.
- We will prepare and serve food to minimise choking risk by ensuring they are cut carefully and appropriately. We will avoid high-risk food items and will not assume that a child can manage a texture by age alone.
- We aim to encourage independence but will support children with using utensils where needed, modelling safe chewing.
- We will maintain a central choking and safer-eating incident log recording: child (initials), date/time, setting, food type/texture, supervision level, immediate actions, outcome and follow-up. The EYFS Lead and/or Inclusion Manager as appropriate will review this log regularly for trends and mitigations.

CELEBRATIONS & FESTIVALS

At Hazelwood, we recognise that food plays an important role in the celebration of cultural, personal or community milestones, such as religious festivals, birthdays or the end of term. Whilst we understand that sweet treats are the preferred option amongst children and parents, we ask parents to be mindful of religious dietary requirements (e.g. Halal) and sugar content. All food should be individually packaged and containing no nuts. Food handed out will be at the teacher's discretion.

FOOD IN THE CURRICULUM

At Hazelwood, we are proud of our Children's Kitchen which enables children to learn and participate in a range of cooking activities throughout the academic year. We believe that the curriculum can be used to enrich children's experience of food and healthy eating. We use our Children's Kitchen to teach children the essential skills for cooking (e.g. mixing, chopping, frying, baking) and provide them with a range of experiences linked to their learning. Internet technology makes available a range of useful teaching and learning materials in most subject areas. Every child is given the opportunity to cook in the kitchen at least once per term.

Our Curriculum Content will focus on:

- The importance of food groups and the role they play in promoting growth
- The development of strong healthy bodies
- What constitutes a balanced diet
- An understanding of cultural diversity
- The development of respect and understanding towards the beliefs and attitudes of others
- How food is grown and produced
- How to store and prepare food
- How to make the best food choices.

FOOD ALLERGIES

- Hazelwood is a nut free school.
- Individual children with specific food allergies have their needs met through a care plan. We will work with parents and the child to ensure that it is a safe environment for them to eat and cook.
- We will keep written records of accidents, choking interventions, allergic reactions and first aid treatment. Parents will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable.

TRAINING FOR STAFF

- At Hazelwood, we ensure that an adequate number of our staff are Paediatric First Aid trained.
- All staff are Anaphylaxis and allergy trained on an annual basis.
- Staff who work directly with food in school and a number of other staff who support children with curriculum activities hold a Food Hygiene Certificate.
- At Hazelwood, we aim to continually develop staff in this area by disseminating information and by further training.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Headteacher ensures statutory compliance, authorises statutory notifications to public health and provides reports to governors as appropriate.
- The School Business Manager (SBM) maintains catering contract oversight, food hygiene and training records, and contact details for local public health.
- The Inclusion Manager / SENCO leads individual feeding/swallowing risk assessments, co-ordinates SEND adaptations with therapists, parents and staff, and reviews choking/safer eating logs.
- The EYFS lead leads individual feeding/swallowing risk assessments and ensures ratios and food standard are compliant with EYFS statutory guidance.
- The DSL ensures safeguarding follow up for any food related incidents.
- The Catering provider provides menus that meet national nutritional standards, supplies allergen information and demonstrates food hygiene competence.
- School staff implement safer eating practice, follow individual care plans, supervise mealtimes and record incidents.
- Paediatric first aid trained staff: at least one must be present in rooms where under 5s eat; those named on Allergy/Healthcare Plans must be competent in emergency administration.

ROLE OF THE GOVERNORS

Governors monitor and check that the school policy is upheld and are responsible for developing this policy in line with the [School food: guidance for governors](#)

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Evaluation of the progress made by the school in implementing and sustaining the aims and objectives of this policy will be made by the Governor with responsibility for Healthy Schools and the Deputy Headteacher who has responsibility for National Healthy Schools Status with the support of the Design Technology, PSHE and School Parliament Subject Leaders.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if necessary.