

A Policy for Food and Drink in School

Introduction

This Policy has been developed with regard to the requirements of the mandatory nutritional standards. Longwill has worked alongside several agencies to ensure that these standards are met and that Healthy Food and Eating options are embedded in all aspects of school life.

The main areas affected by these standards are School Meals and Snacks but as a small Special School working with Deaf pupils, staff and governors recognise that aspects of how we teach children to make good choices themselves through a rich curriculum is particularly important. In 2013-14 100% of the fifty 2-11 year old pupils on roll ate a hot school lunch each day.

Principles of the Policy

- Food and Drink is part of the whole-school approach to pupils' Life Skills.
- Issues of obesity and poor diet in lunchboxes will be sensitively handled.
- Parents and pupils will be consulted about Food and Drink issues.
- Pupils will be encouraged to make good choices and reasons explained.
- There will be a direct link between curriculum and lunchtime.
- Food provision in school will reflect the cultural and medical requirements of pupils.

Policy Consultation and Development:

This policy was developed in consultation with parents, governors and children. There are regular meetings of school council where school food is discussed. The cook welcomes feedback from all children and staff. Parents are invited to sample school lunches and offer feedback to the policy and it's implementation.

Food in School:

Nutritional Standards

From September 2006 Direct Services have checked all meals for their nutritional content and all menus and options are analysed.

We adhere to the food standards listed below. Children are given....

- Two portions a day of fruit and vegetables
- More oily fish
- Free availability of bread
- Fresh, chilled drinking water
- No sweetened fizzy drinks
- No crisps or sugary, fatty or salty snacks
- No extra salt or condiments (except low-fat ones in sachets)
- Less deep-fried foods
- No 'junk-food' type processed meat products

At Longwill the cook works consistently alongside the teachers to involve the pupils in making healthy food choices at lunch and within the curriculum so that they understand why we make certain food decisions, for their long-term benefit.

Water in school

There are four water-cooling machines around school. Two are by the classrooms, one by the meal counter and another in the staff room. The pupils are encouraged to fill their personal water bottles frequently and drink freely at all times during the day. There is full accessibility to drink all day. The TAs attached to each classroom ensure the labelling, washing and replacement of bottles. The lids are changed if they are damaged or worn. They are all changed each term.

Lunchtime

This is a time for relaxation, fun and conversation and social mixing. The pupils are grouped on family- grouped tables encouraging younger pupils to learn from the older ones and form relationships across the peer groups.

Each table has a 'responsible' prefect who clears and monitors the table.

The Lunchtime Supervisors role encompasses the whole experience of lunchtime, rewarding good manners, healthy food choices and good behaviour. Food is served within an attractive environment and on plates and in bowls. There is a relaxed atmosphere and teachers and TAs and visitors are encouraged to join the children and have conversations and social time.

Lunchtime Menus

The menus are displayed and children are encouraged to make good choices that are balanced and contain protein, carbohydrate and vegetables. They are also encouraged to 'sample' new foods and tastes.

Each pupil gets a choice of main course with bread and a pudding, frequently fruit-based. Tinned foods are checked for salt and sugar content but the main aim is to serve fresh foods as much as possible, at least up to the requirement level and preferably more.

The menus are scanned into the 'Nutmeg' system at the DSS base and checked for nutritional balance and levels of nutrients on offer.

Produce grown in the school garden is frequently incorporated into school meals, when available.

Special Needs at Lunchtime

Some pupils have particular diets and feeding difficulties and need 1:1 feeding or careful monitoring by the dinner staff. The kitchen staff and lunchtime supervisors do everything they can to ensure the pupils are individually considered at lunchtime. This works for special seating, table height, fussy eaters or encouraging an obese child to make a sensible choice very sensitively. Sometimes the children are very fussy eaters and certain pupils with special educational needs, e.g. autistic pupils, will have very specific requirements and behaviours around food. Children are encouraged to sample foods that have not tasted before to encourage variation in nutrition. Special mats and bowls and cutlery are provided to support children with cerebral palsy and for those who have difficulty negotiating the implements and eating independently. Some pupils may need to be supported to feed themselves with a staff member.

Packed Lunches, provided by school

The packed lunches for trips also reflect the food standards and are packed in coolbags and in individual packaging as much as possible. The bread in sandwiches is brown/wholemeal and no crisps are allowed. Fruits and yoghurts and a healthy option type of cake or flapjack is packed, along with a juice carton.

Home lunchboxes

We have very high take up (98-100%) of our delicious school-cooked lunches but on the rare occasion that a family chooses a home –prepared lunch, there is regular liaison with parents to encourage Healthy Packed lunches from home.

- Pupils are encouraged to have a school meal by making flexible arrangements whereby they can change options weekly
- Menus are published in Newsletters at times so parents can see the improvements we have made
- Parents are supplied with information about healthy food choices

Lunchboxes are monitored by dinner supervisors who report to the head teacher. Contact will be made with parents if...

- Pupils are not eating food sent for them
- Pupils are regularly provided with unhealthy options
- Pupils are still hungry after eating their packed lunch
- Pupils are unable to eat the quantity of food supplied

At Longwill we do not allow sweets, crisps, chocolate and fizzy drinks in packed lunches unless there is a medical reason.

Parents will be encouraged to ensure that packed lunches contain:

- At least one portion of fruit or vegetables
- A starchy food such as bread, every day
- A source of protein every day
- An item of dairy food each day

Liaison with Direct Services

The Kitchen, Staff and catering are provided by DSS and bought in through Longwill School Budget Share. There are regular meetings and liaison time is given to checking standards and feeding-back to the supervisor the positive aspects and discussion about how things can improve further. The positive relationship is fostered through the goodwill of the kitchen staff who take a pride in learning to communicate in BSL with the pupils. BSL lessons are provided by Longwill staff so that the best possible communication between Kitchen staff and pupils are fostered.

Breakfast

Breakfast is available for any child who is hungry when they arrive in school.

Either a bagel, fresh fruit juice and a bowl of cereal with milk is available on request in the dining room. This is funded through the charity 'Magic Breakfast' and staffed by a Transport/Guide for half an hour each morning.

Break time

Fruit and a piece of bagel is provided to all children daily at break time. This is funded through the free fruit scheme and Magic Breakfast for all pupils.

Parties/picnics/treats/ occasional rewards

Party food that includes sweets, pop, biscuits and crisps etc are served to pupils at occasional events. It is agreed that pupils need to learn about treats and moderation of such foods and that a sensible approach means that they will keep a sense of proportion and learn the importance of a healthy diet.

Curriculum Aspects:

Cooking / Design Technology

As part of the normal DT timetable over the year, there is a regular use of cooking and making healthy foods, celebration foods and cooking foods that we have grown. There is a food related DT topic annually for each class. Cooking is also integrated into other curriculum areas. A portable oven with hobs was purchased under the Health for Life scheme. 2 staff will have food hygiene training.

Use of the site - The Orchard and The Allotments

We are fortunate to have a large site with an established orchard with apple, pear, plum trees that give a good opportunity for watching nature cycles and allowing children to have a deep understanding of nature.

The newly dug vegetable plots are planted, tended and harvested by the pupils in their class groups during curriculum time as part of Personal, Social Health and citizenship education. The foods are made into salads or soups or given to the cook to make her own recipes. The Health for Life Award enables us to buy the services of a gardener, when possible, to work on growing projects alongside the classes for a regular session.

Chicken Project

Through 'Hens for Hire' we have two chickens which give us two eggs a day most of the year. Each class takes turns for a week to care for the hens and use the eggs in a variety of ways during cooking sessions.

Orienteering and outdoor play and PE programme

This is an important part of our healthy schools programme and being high on our priorities helps children be aware and learn that good activity levels alongside the best food and drink is all part of the wider healthy choices we make.

Creative Curriculum Projects

Via PSHE and Science, PMFL, Creative Arts Projects

Pupils study in cross-curricula ways, all the aspects of the health, hygiene, food, care of the environment, keeping well and safe. A wide range of resources support the teaching of healthy eating in school and others are borrowed from the health education service library.

There are many opportunities to explore food from different cultures during the Modern Foreign Language programme. Visits to a French restaurant, sampling Japanese, French or German specialities and cooking Asian foods with a parent are creative ways that the curriculum enhances teaching about food.

Achieving Health Standards

Longwill successfully achieved the 'Healthy School Standard' again in November 2010. In 2012 we participated in the 'Health for Life' Project which focussed on ensuring all pupils grew and cooked their own food. The school is sustaining these activities.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Duties of Governors and School Leaders

The Governors have a responsibility to meet the nutritional standards. We, via the Head teacher, will ensure full compliance, ensuring that we follow the guidance. Regular monitoring meetings between the Head teacher and the procured service will be the vehicle.

Involving Parents

It is important to involve parents at all stages of the development of food policy. Regular updates and consultation are sought. Parents' evenings, newsletters and workshops will be the main vehicle for this.

The food standards are mandatory and school is legally bound to comply but it is recognised that a shared approach will be the one that works the best.

Sample menus are sent home on a regular basis.

OFSTED and the Local Authority

These bodies are responsible for seeing that standards are being followed.

Monitoring the way we approach Healthy Eating will be part of their inspections.

The Headteacher will work to ensure that minutes of meetings are retained to demonstrate compliance.

Role of Class teachers

Teachers will ensure that they are familiar with eating and drinking programmes for children in their class and that these programmes are available to (and followed by) all other staff working with these children.

Teachers will notify the head teacher if there are concerns regarding the eating and drinking of children in their class.

Role of support staff

Non-teaching staff will read the school food policy and ensure that they are familiar with roles and procedures. They will read any individual pupil programmes before offering food and drink and will report concerns to class teachers.

Equal Opportunities

This policy refers to all pupils regardless of disability, race, gender, sexuality or faith. Longwill will ensure that pupils' religious and medical dietary needs are met. We will ensure that pupils entitled to free school meals are not identified by their peers.

Monitoring, evaluation and dissemination

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Pupils' menu choices will be monitored and used to inform policy development. Lunchtime supervisors will monitor food choices and report any concerns to the head teacher. This forms part of their Performance Management targets. Children 's views will be surveyed annually and feedback will be given to Governors and the Cook and Direct Services. Direct services will monitor compliance and report to the governors annually.

Longwill's Food policy will be available on the school website and the school will utilise opportunities to promote the policy to parents wherever possible, eg at parents' evenings. All staff will be informed of this policy and support its implementation.

Review of Policy

The policy will be reviewed bi-annually in the Spring term.

Date of this policy: February 2013

Policy agreed by: Head in consultation with Governors, Parents, Staff and School Council

Date of next review: February 2015

Babs Day, Headteacher