



Burghfield Common Federation

Mrs Bland's Infant and Nursery School

and

Garland Junior School

Whole School Food and Nutrition Policy

(Nut Free School)

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1. Aims

- This policy has been developed in partnership with stakeholders, 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 role in making sure that our pupils consume healthy, nutritious and safe food and drink

The federation is 'nut free.' We have many children who have severe allergies and so we ask that no nuts or nut products are brought into school at breaktime or lunchtime.

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](#)

3. Responsibilities of the Federation

The governing board and Executive 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, unless they are attending breakfast club
- Read and respond to food-related communication, including school menus
- Keep the school informed of any changes to their child's dietary needs, progress with eating, and/or any other concerns or information about their eating
- Take note of the school's scheduled mealtimes (see section 7) and understand that food will only be provided to pupils who are present at these times

We recognise the benefits of a well-balanced hot school meal for children at lunchtime and would recommend to parents that this as the best option. However, should parents decide to send in a packed lunch from home, the following recommended guidelines set out by the British Nutrition Foundation apply:

A child's packed lunch should include only the following:

- a portion of starchy food, e.g. wholegrain bap/bread, sesame seed pitta bread, plain crackers, pasta, or rice salad
- fresh fruit and vegetables, e.g. apple/orange/banana, cherry tomatoes, carrots sticks, mini fruit chunks, etc.
- a portion of milk or dairy food, e.g. cheese, plain/fruit yoghurt, etc.
- a small portion of lean meat, fish or alternative, e.g. two slices of ham, chicken, beef, Quorn, cheese, tuna, egg, or hummus, etc.
- a drink - fruit juice (not fizzy or diluted squash), water (not flavoured), milk (not flavoured)

Parents are advised to include an ice pack in packed lunch boxes in warm weather. Food products prepared and stored at ambient temperatures can have increased levels of bacteria in them, after a period of between two to four hours, which may be harmful to children. Although the Federation provides storage facilities, the Federation cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school. (See 13.2)

We ask that parents/carers ensure they label lunch bags and their contents with the child's name and make sure that the food is suitable for the child's developmental needs and is prepared in a way to prevent choking.

In addition, we ask that parents **do not include the following items in packed lunches:**

- Sweets (including Winders), chocolate, etc.
- Crisps or any packet savoury snacks that are high in salt and fat
- Fizzy drinks/sugary drinks
- Sweet cakes, e.g. sugary cakes, doughnuts, chocolate biscuits etc.
- Sweet/treat/cereal bars
- Any **nuts or food containing nuts** (e.g. hazelnut spread, Nutella, nut snacks)

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

Food not eaten in a packed lunch will be taken home by the child to ensure that parents know what their child has, or has not, eaten. We will encourage parents to include in lunchboxes those foods which are known to have a positive impact on the child's physical development and ability to concentrate and thus learn effectively. Lunch time staff will engage with children and chat to them about what they are eating to encourage healthy eating habits.

5. Communicating with parents/carers

We tell parents/carers by Parentmail 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.

Partnership with parents, carers, and pupils

The partnership of home and school is critical in shaping how children and young people behave, particularly where health is concerned.

Each must reinforce the other.

This is not always easy, but our Federation is well placed to lead by example.

6. Sourcing food and ingredients

We work with **Crumbs (Educatering)** at MBS and **Dolce** at GJS to provide healthy and nutritious meals.

We collaborate with our catering partners by:

- Holding regular meetings with our catering companies to review menus, discuss feedback, and plan future requirements
- 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
- Participating in the menu planning process to make sure our food is appealing, balanced, varied and caters to the dietary requirements that our pupils have
- The contracts with our catering providers are reviewed and re-tendered regularly to make sure we receive the best possible service and value for money.

In buying food and ingredients, we/our catering companies follow the [government's guidance on sustainable procurement](#). Where possible, our catering companies buy 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
- 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 timetabled mealtimes at the following times:

Break times (mid-morning):

All Nursery children will be provided with a healthy snack.

All Infant aged children, (YR, 1 & 2), have the option of free fruit and vegetables as part of the government school fruit and vegetables scheme.

Junior aged children (Y3-6) are welcome to bring into school a healthy snack such as fruit, vegetables, or cheese/cheese biscuits for the morning break time.

Water:

The benefits of drinking plentiful amounts of water are widely recognised in improving children's behaviour and concentration. All children are expected to bring their own, named, water bottle to school every day. Children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day - drinking water is provided in all classrooms and water dispensers are available in the staff rooms.

School Lunches (between 12 and 1pm)

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 approximately 3 weeks 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
- Adapted to include the same meal for children of various ages
- Reviewed at least twice a year, to include seasonal produce
- Shared termly, on our 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

We also have our Wrap Around Care Clubs in both schools before and after school, which have their own menus – please see our website for information - [Burghfield Common Federation - Wrap Around Care](#)

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

The dining environment

Children eat together in each of the schools' halls. We are committed to providing a welcoming eating environment that encourages the positive social and cultural interaction of pupils, lunch time play leaders and teachers. Once children have eaten their lunch they play in their respective playground (or play first if they are in the second sitting).

We will encourage children to eat as much of their lunch as they can manage. We will ensure that children receive practical help with carrying trays, opening tubs, or packets. We will provide children with plentiful clean drinking water. Children will also be expected to wash their hands before eating.

Due to the size of the school halls, the children are given year group time slots in the hall.

Nursery children eat in their classrooms, supervised by the nursery teams.

Timings may vary if children attend lunchtime clubs.

7.2 For children aged 2 to 5 years (Nursery)

We provide a healthy, balanced diet, based on the 4 main food groups:

- Fruit and vegetables
- Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates
- Dairy or dairy alternatives
- Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein sources

We avoid foods that contain artificial sweeteners or that are high in fat, saturated fat, salt and sugars. We use traffic light food labels as a guide, where possible, choosing foods mostly with green labels, which indicates a healthier choice.

We serve appropriately sized portions, never force children to finish their meals, and do not use food as a reward.

We make sure that:

- Each main meal includes 1 portion of vegetables and/or fruit
- Each main meal and at least 1 daily snack includes 1 portion of starchy food, which is frequently wholegrain
- We provide 3 portions of milk or unsweetened dairy foods each day
- We provide 1 portion of protein at lunch each day, including plant-based proteins (e.g. beans and pulses)
- We offer oily fish at least once every 3 weeks, and no more than twice a week
- We limit processed meat/fish products and meat alternatives to once a week

8. Food safety and hygiene

- Our staff at our catering companies use our food preparation area to prepare meals, snacks and drinks.
- Our staff use colour-coded equipment and utensils.
- 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
- Prevent the spread of infection by isolating the child in a quiet area with easy access to a sick bowl and toilet
- Monitor the child for signs of dehydration, including a dry mouth or crying without tears
- Encourage the child to take small, frequent sips of water
- Parents/carers are advised not to return their children to school until they have been symptom free for at least 48 hours
- The Local Authority will be notified by the Executive 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 regularly to identify trends.

9.3 One-to-one supervision

We offer children with [physical, developmental, or sensory 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 Medicines Policy.

10. Managing allergies and food intolerances

We take allergy and food intolerance management seriously and follow strict procedures to ensure that all children can eat safely.

Before a child joins our school, we gather detailed information about any known food allergies or intolerances

All staff are trained to be aware of and understand information about food allergies by:

- Knowing the symptoms and treatments for allergies and anaphylaxis
- Understanding the difference between allergies and intolerances
- Being aware that children can develop allergies at any time, particularly during the introduction of solid foods

We share information about food allergies with all staff and make them aware of which children have allergies or intolerances so they can ensure that the child is given an alternative where the food served contains an allergen.

All staff who handle food follow strict measures to avoid cross-contamination, including washing hands, using colour-coded equipment and sharing clear rules around visitors bringing food into school.

10.1 Procedures to manage allergies and intolerances

Our caterers plan menus to include food substitutions, where necessary, for children with allergies or intolerances in mind.

We make sure that our food is safe for pupils with an allergy or intolerance by:

- Showing allergen ingredients information for the meals served, as outlined in this policy
- Checking any product changes with our food suppliers
- Ensuring our staff/caterers read labels and product information before using a product
- Through ongoing discussions with parents/carers and health professionals, if appropriate, we create an allergy action plan for each child to help manage their allergy or intolerance.
- This information is kept up-to-date and shared with all staff

We refer to the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) allergy action plans and NHS advice

10.2 Procedures for managing allergic reactions and intolerances

Staff members suspecting food intolerance will work alongside parents/carers to keep a diary of foods eaten in school and at home, including any symptoms experienced.

If a staff member suspects food intolerance, or is the first to identify an allergic reaction in a child, they will:

- Administer the child's prescribed medication immediately in line with our Medicines Policy
- Contact emergency services immediately after administering the medication
- Monitor the child and administer a second dose of medication, if required
- Safely move the child to a location away from the allergen and stay with them at all times

If a staff member suspects that a child has reacted to a food for the first time, they will:

- Immediately tell the senior member of staff on duty, who will contact the child's parents/carers
- Safely move the child away from the allergen and stay with them at all times
- Comfort and reassure the child to keep them calm

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 federation 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
- Being sensitive to certain customs, and how these affect meal and snack times
- Adapting menus to include foods from different cultures
- Always having a vegetarian option available
- Encouraging parents/carers to share traditional recipes and give feedback on our menus.

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:

- Adapt food preparation methods
- 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 on the website, specifically e.g. before children join the school, and 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:

Any **nuts or food containing nuts** (e.g. hazelnut spread, Nutella, nut snacks) – **we are a nut-free federation of schools.**

13.1 Packed lunches (see section 4)

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

13.2 Safety and hygiene (see also section 4)

- For children with allergies, staff will store packed lunches separately to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. (Children must hand their lunch to their class teacher when they come into the classroom to ensure this).
- 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.
- As no refrigeration is available for packed lunches, we only store food outside of chilled conditions for up to a maximum of 4 hours, and never more than once.

13.2 Celebrations

If parents/carers, visitors, volunteers or school staff wish to bring in food for special occasions, we ask that they only do this on 1 of the following:

- For their own child's birthday
- When asked to by the school
- When it has been agreed in advance with the class teacher

Food brought into school must not contain:

Any **nuts or food containing nuts** (e.g. hazelnut spread, Nutella, nut snacks)

We ask that they follow the following guidelines:

- Provide healthy birthday celebration options (e.g. fruit platters) or non-edible items (e.g. stickers) to share with the children, to promote consistent healthy eating messages
- Consider sharing healthy dishes during wider school celebrations, such as cake sales and cultural celebrations.

14. Learning about food

Our curriculum includes engaging food-related activities, including:

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

We involve parents/carers by:

- Inviting them to take part in cooking activities in school
- Suggesting recipes and activities they can do at home with their child

Food in the curriculum

Food represents many things to us all: energy, nutrition, commodity, livelihood, communal activity, and pleasure, to name but a few. Its significance in our lives means that it can and should be used to enrich the school curriculum, which can in turn be used to enrich pupils' experience of food and healthy eating.

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, and
- how food is produced.