



# Whole School Food Policy

<b>Name of Headteacher:</b>	T. Johnston
<b>Date Policy approved and adopted:</b>	July 2025
<b>Date Due for review:</b>	July 2027

This policy sets out the expectations of food provision in school, on school trips and extra-curricular events.

### **Why is a policy needed?**

At Merdon Junior School, we recognise the importance that a healthy diet plays in a child's well-being and their ability to learn and achieve effectively. We believe that the school, in partnership within parents and carers, can make a major contribution to improving children's health by increasing their knowledge and understanding of food and helping them make healthy food choices. We wish to provide an environment that promotes healthy eating and enables pupils to make informed choices about the food they eat.

### **National Guidance**

This guidance has been written to reflect the School Food Standards which were revised in January 2015. It has also been written to reflect the Eatwell Plate Model of Healthy Eating and supports key outcomes of the School Food Plan. The policy supports Ofsted's commitment to assess pupils' knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy and reflect our school's ethos around healthy eating.

### **Application**

This policy covers the areas of:

- Allergies
- Break time snack including those brought in from home
- Water
- School lunches including packed lunches
- School trips
- Curriculum
- Events and celebrations

The policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents, governors and partner agencies working within the school.

### **Allergies**

Merdon Junior School aims to be a Nut-Aware school. This policy serves to set out all measures to reduce the risk to those children and adults who may suffer an anaphylactic reaction if exposed to nuts to which they are sensitive. The school aims to protect children who have allergies to nuts yet also help them, as they grow up, to take responsibility as to what foods they can eat and to be aware of where they may be put at risk. We do not allow nuts or nut products in school lunch boxes.

Our "Nut-Aware Policy" means that the following items should not be brought into school:

- Packs of nuts
- Peanut butter sandwiches
- Fruit and cereal bars that contain nuts
- Chocolate bars or sweets that contain nuts
- Sesame seed rolls (children allergic to nuts may also have a severe reaction to sesame)
- Cakes made with nuts

We have a policy to not use nuts in any of our food prepared on site at our school. Our suppliers provide us with nut-free products. However, we cannot guarantee freedom from nut traces. We cannot give out any sweets brought in from home to be given out as birthday treats.

### Staff

Staff and volunteers must ensure they do not bring in or consume nut products in school and ensure they follow good hand washing practice.

Caution must be taken at certain times of year such as Easter and Christmas. If staff distribute confectionary, care must be taken to ensure that no nuts are included in the product.

Particular products that are a cause for concern are:

- Celebrations
- Roses
- Heroes
- Quality Street

All product packaging must be checked for warnings directed at nut allergy sufferers and if the following or similar are displayed, the product must not be used in school.

Packaging must be checked for:

- Not suitable for nut allergy sufferers
- This product contains nuts
- This product may contain traces nuts
- Indicating this is unsuitable for school consumption

Epi Pen trained staff are named First Aiders. Please check with the school office for a list of qualified staff.

### Parents and Carers

Parents and carers must notify office staff of any known or suspected allergy to nuts and provide all medical and necessary information. This will be added to the child's care plan and if necessary a meeting organised with the school nurse. If you are unsure about a selection please speak to a staff member before bringing the food item into school. The school requests that parents and carers observe the nut-free policy and therefore do not include nuts, or any traces of nuts, in packed lunches.

### Children

All children are regularly reminded about the good hygiene practice of washing hands before and after eating which helps to reduce the risk of secondary contamination. Likewise, children are reminded and carefully supervised to minimise the act of food sharing with their friends.

### Health Plans and Emergency Response

We have individual Healthcare plans for children with allergies and allergy lists are displayed highlighting Healthcare plans in place, triggers and medication (medication will be stored, administered and documented in accordance with our Administering Medicine Policy).

### Symptoms

The symptoms of anaphylaxis usually start between three and sixty minutes after contact with the allergen. Less commonly they can occur a few hours or even days after contact. An anaphylactic reaction may lead to feeling unwell or dizzy or may cause fainting due to a sudden drop in blood pressure. Narrowing of the airways can also occur at the same time, with or without the drop in blood pressure. This can cause breathing difficulties and wheezing.

Other symptoms:

- Swollen eyes, lips, genitals, hands, feet and other areas (this is called angioedema)
- Itching
- Sore, red, itchy eyes
- Changes in heart rate
- A sudden feeling of extreme anxiety or apprehension
- Itchy skin or nettle-rash (hives)
- Unconsciousness due to very low blood pressure
- Abdominal cramps, vomiting or diarrhoea, or nausea and fever

Anaphylaxis varies in severity. Sometimes it causes only mild itchiness and swelling, but in some people it can cause sudden death. If symptoms start soon after contact with the allergen and rapidly worsens, this indicates that the reaction is more severe.

Legal framework: The Human Medicines Regulations (2012)

Further guidance: Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings (DfES 2005)

Other useful publications:

- Pre-school Learning Alliance publications
- Medication Record (2010)
- Daily Register and Outings Record (2012)

### **Break time snacks**

We encourage fruit or vegetables snacks brought in from home, unless recommended by a doctor on medical grounds (e.g. dietary need, diabetes). Chocolate bars and nut products are strictly forbidden. Parents and carers are encouraged to provide fruit and vegetable snacks in a re-usable pot to avoid unnecessary packaging and raise awareness with children of sustainability.

### **Water**

Clean drinking water will be available for all pupils throughout the day and pupils will be encouraged to drink water at frequent intervals. All pupils have access to water at lunch time. Pupils are encouraged to bring a transparent water bottle to school every day that they can refill as necessary. Bottles go home at the end of the school day to be washed and returned. Bottles are provided to all children when they start at Merdon Junior School for no cost. Replacement bottles are available to purchase through the school office for a minimal cost.

No drinks other than water will be brought into school by pupils unless recommended by a doctor for medical needs.

### **School Lunches including packed lunches**

At Merdon Junior School, all school meals will be prepared following the government nutritional guidelines, as stated in the Public Health Report, published in 2014 by Public Health England and the NAHT: *A whole school approach to healthy school meals, universally implemented for all pupils, has shown improvements in academic attainment at Key Stages 1 and 2, especially for pupils with lower prior attainment.*

We will provide Free School Meals to children eligible through Pupil Premium funding and encourage parents with children who meet these requirements to take up this offer. We are committed to providing food which is compliant with all national guidelines.

Staff will work with children to provide a clean, safe, attractive and appropriate dining area. We believe that lunchtimes should foster the caring, friendly ethos that governs everything we do. Children are encouraged to be independent during the meal.

Some families prefer to provide a packed lunch and we would encourage parents and carers to ensure these are as healthy as they can be. If children have a packed lunch, our packed lunch guidance supports parents and carers to make informed choices to create it healthily. Support and advice is provided through information on our website.

Lunch times are set up to promote conversation and good manners with children remaining seated for their 'sitting' whilst they eat lunch. Children remain seated during this time. Two year groups eat during the first part whilst the other two year groups have their play time. At the half way point, the four year groups swap. During this time, adults are encouraged to support pupils in making good conversation whilst the children eat. Adult will also support constructive and inclusive play.

### **School Trips**

Packed lunches provided for school trips as part of our Free School Meal provision, comply with National Food Standards.

Packed lunches provided from home are to maintain healthy and informed choices.

Any meals taken as part of on or off school site residential trips will provide a balanced and healthy approach to meals and where possible, we will look to use off site providers that comply with the National Food Standards.

### **Curriculum**

Food, its production and preparation is an important part of the curriculum for all pupils. It is taught across through curriculum through Science, PSHE, PE and Design and Technology and an Outdoor Learning. We share with the children how healthy eating fits into the wider aspects of wellbeing.

### **Events and Celebrations**

We want to give children the opportunity to celebrate their birthdays but to promote healthy eating choices we would ask that parents and carers do not send in birthday cakes or sweets.

At Christmas, Easter and at the end of the school year, children may be provided with a treat. Items provided are checked against the medical requirements of children to ensure an inclusive approach is taken.

### **Monitoring**

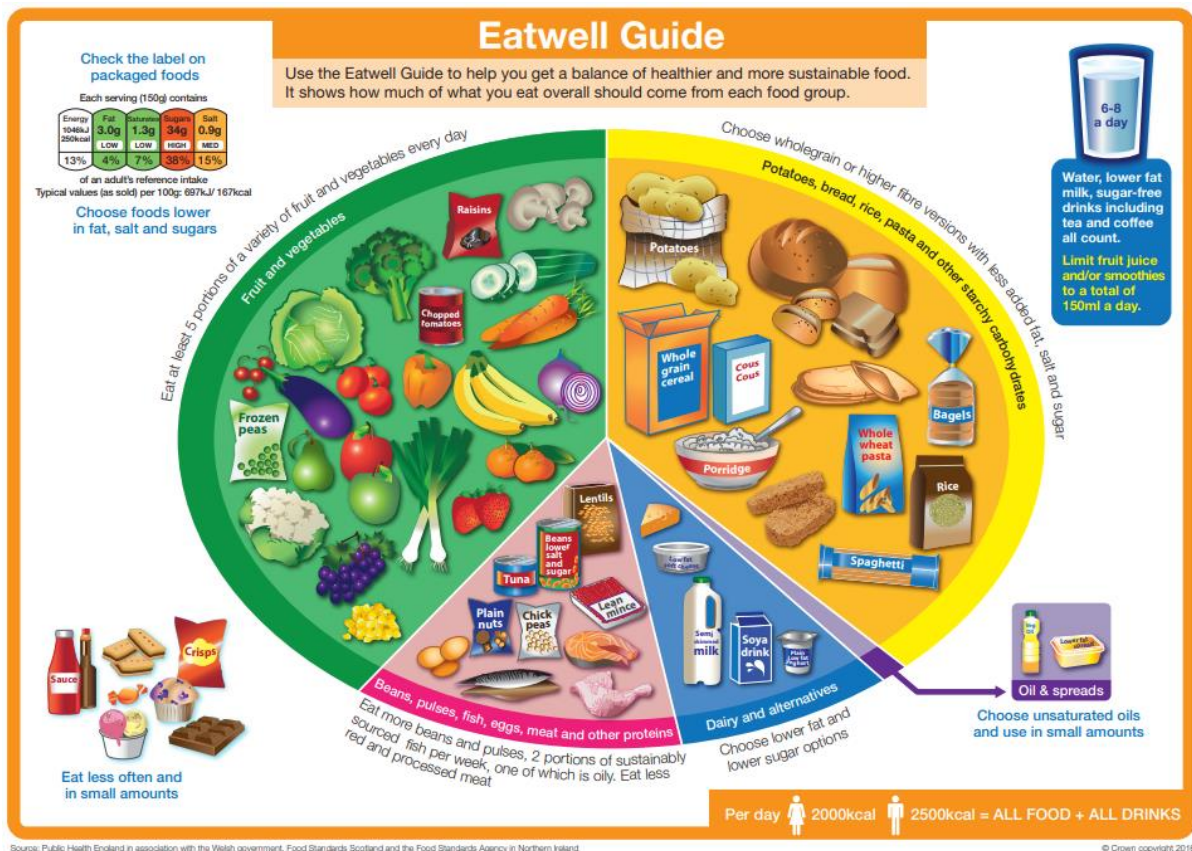
We will consult annually with caterers, pupils, parents/carers and staff to include them in reviewing school meals. The results are used to evaluate the impact of the food policy and to further improve school meals.

### Hygiene compliance

Staff and children regularly hand sanitise when serving and clearing away school dinners and have the option to wear gloves. Children’s tables are wiped thoroughly before and after eating.

### Appendix 1:

#### NHS Eat well Guide



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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### Appendix 2:

### National Criteria:

Students have the confidence, skills and understanding to make healthy food choices. Healthy and nutritious food and drink is available across the school day.

### A healthy school:

- Has identified a member of SLT to oversee all aspects of food in schools
- Ensures provision of training in practical food education, including diet, nutrition, food safety and hygiene for staff
- Has a whole school food policy – developed through wide consultation, implemented, monitored and evaluated for impact
- Involves students and parents in guiding food policy and practice within the school and enables them to contribute to healthy eating and acts on their feedback
- Has a welcoming eating environment that encourages positive social interaction of students (see Food in Schools guidance)
- Ensures healthier food and drink options are available and promoted at break and lunchtimes
- Has meals that are nutritious and healthy (see Food in Schools guidance) and meet or exceed national standards and are working towards the latest Department for Education's guidance on improving school meals service
- Monitors children's menus and food choices to inform policy development and provision
- Ensures that students have opportunities to learn about different types of food in the context of a balanced diet and how to plan, budget, prepare and cook meals. Children are taught to understand the need to avoid the consumption of foods high in salt, sugar and fat and increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables
- Has easy access to free, clean and palatable drinking water, using the Food in Schools guidance
- Consults pupils about food choices throughout the school day using school councils, healthy school task group or other representative student bodies

## **Useful Links:**

School Food Standards Guidance

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/847621/School-Food-Standards-Guidance-FINAL-V3.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/847621/School-Food-Standards-Guidance-FINAL-V3.pdf)

School Food Standards Poster:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/945863/School\\_Food\\_Standards-poster.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945863/School_Food_Standards-poster.pdf)

Creating a culture of healthy eating:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/945864/SFP-Ofsted-Guidance-Creating\\_a\\_culture\\_and\\_ethos\\_of\\_healthy\\_eating.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945864/SFP-Ofsted-Guidance-Creating_a_culture_and_ethos_of_healthy_eating.pdf)

Checklist for headteachers:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/945860/SFP-Headteacher-Checklist.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945860/SFP-Headteacher-Checklist.pdf)

Checklist for school lunches:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/945857/Checklist-for-school-lunches.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945857/Checklist-for-school-lunches.pdf)

Allergy guidance for schools:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/allergy-guidance-for-schools>

School food in England Guidance:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/788884/School-food-in-England-April2019-FINAL.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788884/School-food-in-England-April2019-FINAL.pdf)