



Mayespark Primary School

Healthy Eating / Lunch Policy

Introduction

As a school that promotes good health and well-being, Mayespark is committed to encouraging and developing positive attitudes towards food and a healthy diet. Promoting a healthy life style is integral to our curriculum and we recognise the importance of offering children the opportunity to make informed choices about what, when, where and why they eat.

As a school we know that food is fundamental to the quality of a child's life, not just in providing essential nutrition but in communicating and sharing positive values, attitudes and experiences with each other. We believe that adults (staff, parents and carers) should be good role models and should support the children in understanding how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and general well-being.

1. Aims and Objectives

1.1 To improve the health of pupils, staff and the whole school community by helping to influence eating habits through increasing knowledge and awareness of food issues including what constitutes a healthy diet.

1.2 To ensure pupils are well nourished at school and that every pupil has access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and a safe, easily available water supply during the school day.

1.3 To ensure that food provision in the school acknowledges the ethical and medical requirements of staff and pupils e.g. religious, vegetarian, medical and allergenic needs.

1.4 To introduce and promote practices within the school to reinforce these aims and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

1.5 To contribute to addressing the disproportionate number of children classified as obese at the school

2. Organisation – Curriculum

2.1 We regard healthy eating education as a whole-school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum.

2.2 Healthy eating education forms an important part of our school's curriculum. The importance of balanced nutrition and healthy food choices is explicitly taught through the science, D.T. and PSHE curriculum.

2.3 All pupils have the opportunity to learn about safe food preparation and to learn about where food has come from. Pupils learn about the requirements for plant growth, the food chain and the components of a healthy diet through the science curriculum.

3. Organisation – Management of Eating

At Mayespark, we have agreed the following statements:

3.1 Pupils in EYFS and KS1 will benefit from the free fruit and vegetables scheme. These pupils will be encouraged to eat their piece of fruit as part of their daily break time. In addition, children in EYFS benefit daily from a carton of milk.

3.2 To ensure consistency across the school, KS2 children will also be encouraged to eat only fruit or vegetables at break time.

3.3 All children are allowed to bring in a water of bottle so they can have access to water throughout the day. All classrooms have a supply of drinking water and water fountains are also provided in the playground for additional access to drinking water.

3.4 Pupils' lunch boxes should offer balanced nutrition. Across a week parents are encouraged to offer a variety of healthy foods in accordance with the lunchbox guidance leaflet which is available for parents at their admissions meeting and in the school foyer. This guidance recommends a balanced selection of foods which should be available to the children in their lunch box.

3.5 Because we recognise that there is no such thing as "bad food", we teach the children to enjoy treats in moderation. Wednesday is the one day in the week where children can enjoy 'treats' as part of their packed lunch. These treats should still be limited to two, relatively healthy and not excessive e.g. a couple of biscuits, a muffin, a scone or a small chocolate bar. On all other days, children's lunch boxes should contain healthy snacks only such as plain popcorn, raisins, cheese or baked crackers. Sweets, chewing gum and fizzy drinks are not permitted on any day.

3.6 During lunchtime midday supervisors along with a member of the senior leadership team and children from the Healthy Lunch Hunter Team monitor the contents of children's lunch boxes. Good news notes are distributed to those children who have a balanced packed lunch. The following procedure will be followed if a child has an item of food not in accordance with our healthy eating policy:

- the child will be reminded of our policy
- the child will be asked not to eat the item of food
- a sticker will be put on the item of food saying 'Your child was not able to eat this item today as treats are only permitted on Wednesday.'
- if a child's lunch box consists of unhealthy food only, they will either be allowed to eat part of their lunch or they will be offered a school dinner. In either case the child's parent / carer will be contacted.
- members of staff will monitor packed lunches over a period of time and contact parents where there is a concern

3.7 Birthdays and special events such as Christmas parties in class are also times where food contributes to a sense of celebration and sharing. On these occasions foods other than fruit or vegetables may be offered, but the staff will remind the children that this is an “occasional, celebratory” treat and not “every day food”.

3.8 The school community is aware of the possibility of food allergies within the school population, particularly nut allergies. Mayespark is therefore a nut free school. Pupils are taught not to share packed lunches and parents are reminded about the need to avoid sending in packed lunches containing nuts. Parents or carers of children who are on special diets for medical or religious reasons, or who have allergies, will be asked to provide as much information as possible about which foods are suitable or foods which must be avoided. This information will be displayed in the staff room and in the school kitchen. Further, advice from allergies’ web-sites suggest that it is in the interest of pupils longer term safety, that they learn to be aware of the risks of cross contamination and that they learn to manage the risks themselves.

3.9 No child is made to finish all the food that they are offered because we know that appetites vary from person to person and that food-based issues can easily occur. However, we do actively encourage the children to “try a little bit more” if they can to ensure that they are not hungry later on in the day.

4. School Meals

4.1 The hot meals service is offered through ISS Food Company. We work closely with the school cook to ensure the healthiest meals possible. Each day a choice of salads and fresh fruit are offered as possible choices. There are strict guidelines determining the meals that are available through the course of the week, these are planned by a nutritionist and in accordance with the new Healthy Food Standards in Schools, which came into force in 2006.

4.2 Payment for school meals can be made online, or by cheque or cash (dinner money envelopes are available in the school office and payments go in the ISS dinner money box at the reception desk). Either payment method is acceptable but all children eating school meals must register on the following website: <https://parents.feedinghungryminds.co.uk/login>

To avoid getting into arrears, payments can be made and balances can be checked regularly by registering online. The school cannot be held responsible for the failure of payment and it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure there is sufficient credit for children to be provided with a school meal. If an account falls into arrears a letter will be sent home with the child. Payment must be made the following day or parents/carers must provide a packed lunch until the debt is settled.

4.3 Free School Meals – To ensure the correct funding is received at school, pupils in all year groups eligible for free meals must be registered at:
http://www2.redbridge.gov.uk/cms/children_and_schools/school_support_information/financial_support_and_awards/free_school_meals/apply_for_free_school_meals_on.aspx.

Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) and no payment is required, as these are funded by the government. Even if parents are entitled to UFSM

they must still register their eligibility as this will entitle them to extra benefits at school, including free educational visits, uniform, music lessons and after school clubs.

4.4 The weekly school lunch menu is displayed in the front entrance for parents and on the school website. The weekly lunch menu is set termly to enable parents and children to discuss meal choices.

4.5 Midday supervisors:

- Respect the children as valued customers
- Give the children time and space to eat in a calm and attractive environment
- Help the children to see that enjoying food and eating meals with others contributes to a happy lifestyle
- Encourage the children to find out more about achieving a healthy balance
- Encourage the children to try new foods and flavours in a supportive environment
- Promote school food to children and parents
- Listen to and accept constructive feedback and respond accordingly

4.6 The dining room is well staffed with midday supervisors who assist the children in a variety of ways such as cutting up food for young children, opening yogurt lids or helping the children to salad, keeping table surfaces clean and tidy.

4.7 The tables and chairs allow for the pupils to sit in friendship groups promoting the idea that lunch times are a happy, social occasion. A well-stocked salad bar is located for the children to help themselves.

4.8 Children will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners at lunch time and will be given plenty of time to eat. This will be achieved by:

- sitting freely with their friends so packed lunches and school dinners sitting together
- older Year 6 buddies may help younger children with their lunch in a variety of ways including accessing the salad bar, taking a drink etc
- being encouraged to try a wide range of foods at lunchtimes to develop a taste for a greater variety of foods and achieve a balanced diet
- entering and leaving the dining hall in an orderly way; to show respect for other diners
- parents or carers will be advised if their child is not eating well
- demonstrating good manners in the hall e.g. using quiet partner voices and saying “please” and “thank you” to the cooks, MDAs and other pupils

5. The Role of Parents:

5.1 The school is aware that the primary role model in children’s healthy eating education lies with parents. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we will:

- inform parents about the school healthy eating education policy and practice
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing school policy and making modifications to it as necessary

- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to healthy eating so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school
- expect parents to provide children with a healthy packed lunch and supply treats only on Wednesdays

6. The Role of Governors:

6.1 The governing body has approved the healthy eating policy. The governors support the Headteacher in following guidelines from external agencies. Governors inform and consult with parents about the healthy eating policy as required.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation:

7.1 The effective implementation of this policy will be supported by all staff and monitored by PSHE leader and the Headteacher. The governing body will support the school in its implementation.

7.2 The policy shall be evaluated after 2 years through a survey of the views of the whole school community, particularly the views of pupils. This will take place through assemblies, in class discussion and school council.

Policy reviewed: September 2019