

Whole School Food Policy



EPWORTH

EDUCATION TRUST

Reviewed by:	J Buckley (Operations)
Approved by CEO:	25 th September 2023
Next Review Date:	Autumn 2026

Mission Statement

The Epworth Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust established with the aim of providing outstanding learning and opportunities for the children within its care.

Children are our nation's most precious resource. Their school life and learning experience will shape them for the whole of their lives.

Safeguarding Statement

At the Epworth Trust we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We work to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.

The procedures contained in the Safeguarding Policy apply to all staff, volunteers, and governors.

Version Control

Change Record

Date	Author	Version	Section	Reason for Change
Feb 2020	J Buckley	1		Policy adopted using School Bus template as decision made to create 2 separate policies – Allergens and Whole Food (was one before)
Aug 2023	J Buckley	2	Legal Framework	Natasha's Law added
			Throughout	References made to allergies in most sections.

Statement of intent

At the Epworth Trust, we know that what pupils eat and drink at school is important. We aim to have schools where the teaching and learning about food and nutrition that occurs in the curriculum fully supports, and is supported by, the provision and opportunities for eating and drinking within our schools.

We acknowledge the important connection between a healthy diet and a pupil's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in each school. We also acknowledge that we can play a key role in supporting the wider community to adopt a positive attitude to a healthy lifestyle.

As part of our healthy eating and living campaign, our catering will uphold the highest standards of quality, nutrition and cleanliness, adhering, without exception, to the food standards and legal obligations. As such, this policy has been implemented to allow us to provide food in a safe and hygienic manner.

We understand that sharing food is a fundamental experience for all people; a primary way to nurture and celebrate our cultural diversity and an excellent bridge for building friendships, and inter-generational bonds.

We also wish to ensure that pupils with food allergens receive appropriate care and support at each school.

The aims of this policy are to:

- manage and minimise the risk to children, who are affected by food allergens or require special diet consideration.
- make a positive contribution to our children's health.
- ensure that we are giving consistent messages about food and health.
- give our pupils the information they need to make healthy choices.
- promote health awareness.
- contribute to the healthy physical development of all members of our school community.
- encourage all children to take part in the '5 a day' campaign.
- through effective leadership, the school ethos and the curriculum, bring together all elements of the school day to create an environment which supports a healthy lifestyle.
- provide a welcoming eating environment that encourages the positive social and cultural interaction of pupils and teachers.
- recognise that sharing food is a fundamental experience for all people; a primary way to nurture and celebrate our cultural diversity; and an excellent bridge for building friendships, and inter-generational bonds.
- ensure that food provision in each school reflects the ethical and medical requirements of staff and pupils e.g., religious, ethnic, vegetarian, medical, and allergenic needs.
- provide training in practical food education for staff, including diet, nutrition, food safety and hygiene.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014
- The Products Containing Meat etc. (England) Regulations 2014
- The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 (as amended)
- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- The Food Safety Act 1990
- The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019 (Natasha's Law)
- Public Health England (2017) 'Example menus for early years settings in England'
- School Food Plan (2015) 'School Food Standards'
- The Education Act 1996 (as amended)

This policy also has due regard to guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'School food in England' guidance
- The School Food Plan 'School Food Standards: A practical guide for schools their cooks and caterers' 2014
- Allergen and Anaphylaxis Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The Epworth Trust is responsible for:

- The provision of school food at all of its schools.
- Ensuring procedures are in place to provide school lunch for pupils where a meal is requested, and the pupil is eligible for free school meals.
- Deciding on the form that school lunches take, and ensuring that all lunches, and any other food or drink, meets the school food standards.
- Providing hot lunches, wherever possible, to ensure that all pupils can eat one hot meal a day.
- Providing free school meals to a pupil if the pupil and/or their parent meets the eligibility criteria within the Education Act 1996.
- Ensuring that all drinking water is always provided free of charge.
- Providing free-to-use facilities to eat food, including accommodation, furniture, and supervision, so pupils can eat their food in a safe and social environment.
- Providing reduced fat milk at least once a day during school hours.
- Ensuring that milk is provided free of charge to infant and benefits-based free school meals pupils.
- Through the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme, providing a piece of fruit or vegetable outside of school lunch hours for eligible pupils.

- Receiving regular reports on compliance with the school food standards and the take-up of school lunches, as well as the financial aspects of school food provision.
- Ensuring that there is coordination across all catering services sought by the Trust, to guarantee compliance with school food standards including food hygiene certification, cleaning and servicing records, meal plans and risk assessments, allergy information, kitchen safety and registered with the local food safety agency.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Trust's Complaints Policy
- Ensuring that all pupils with food allergies can participate fully in all aspects of school life.
- Ensuring that relevant training is delivered to staff members who take on responsibility to support children with food allergies.
- Keeping written records of all medicines administered to individual pupils because of food allergies.
- Any school staff have appropriate food hygiene training if preparing food.
- The school will use the portion sizes and food groups for school lunches, in accordance with the school food standards.

This policy should be followed for all food and drink given to our children at various times of the day:

Before and After school Childcare including Breakfast Club

Before and After School Childcare including breakfast club operates daily at most of our schools. We target some children who we know have little or no time for breakfast in the mornings at home and pupil premium is used to subsidise these costs.

The food offered is healthy and is consistent with a healthy diet. We provide toast, bread (range of options including white, brown, granary, buns, and rolls), low fat spread, fruit jam, marmite, yoghurt, low salt/low sugar fortified cereals, slices of fresh fruit, baked beans and cheese. Children choose from water or juice to drink.

In line with food safety and hygiene regulations, a food hygiene record will also be kept, demonstrating what the school has done to ensure all food and food preparation areas are safe in line with the food hygiene plan as well as how they control allergens.

Snack

All our schools take advantage of the "Cool Milk" scheme for early years children. Children in Nursery and Reception are offered free milk, water and fruit or raw vegetables. Also, in nursery and in some schools, reception classes, a voluntary contribution is asked for towards other snacks such as wholemeal toast, crackers, or yoghurt.

All our schools take part in the School Fruit and Vegetable scheme which enables fruit and vegetables to be available to children at break times.

Our schools actively discourage children from bringing snacks from home unless it is a healthy snack e.g., fruit or raw vegetable. Commercially bought sweets and chewing gum are also **not** allowed in school.

Early Years

At the Epworth Trust we understand that what children eat, and drink is important, and the habits they develop from a young age will impact their future health. We value the importance of the EYFS in providing children with a nutritious, balanced diet that will encourage them to make healthy, informed choices. We share responsibility with parents to give guidance on the health issues and the risks of unhealthy eating practices.

- Staff are made aware of any pupil allergies and will ensure therefore that children do not share food.
- Portion sizes will be based upon the recommended intake for the age group of the pupils concerned.
- Where pupils are sleeping during mealtimes, their meal will be covered, stored correctly, and served when the child awakens.
- The eating environment will be comfortable and relaxed. Pupils will be given plenty of time to feed themselves and hold feeding utensils.
- Pupils will be provided with utensils that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.
- Staff will sit with pupils while they eat and encourage interaction at each table.
- Pupils will be observed to ensure they are drinking and eating enough, and staff will be aware of the behaviour that may suggest a child is thirsty or hungry.
- Pupils will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners.
- Meals times will be used to help pupils develop independence, through making food choices, serving food and drink, and feeding themselves.
- Parents will be given regular feedback on how well, and what, their children are eating.

Environmental Health Inspections

- The school in conjunction with the catering provider will ensure all the necessary documentation is readily available for inspection for the environmental health officer, including their food hygiene plan and food hygiene record.
- The school will have their food hygiene rating sticker in a visible location within the dining area or kitchen.
- If the school scores less than a five on their hygiene rating sticker, they will implement any recommendations made by the environmental officer as a matter of top priority.
- After each environmental health inspection, the school will display their new food hygiene rating sticker in place of the old one, irrelevant of the score.
- The school will receive a letter after an inspection with 'notices' – the school will comply with the notices with immediate effect.
- All schools who provide snack and/or run Before and After school clubs must register with Environmental Health and keep their own food hygiene records.

School Catering

Daily, pupils must be offered a carbohydrate, protein, and vegetables on their plate. Every effort must be made to ensure that appropriate choices are available for all pupils throughout lunchtime.

All our school meals are cooked on site and are provided by the school's contractor. All meals provided must meet the Government's Minimum Nutritional Guidelines for school Catering. The menus will follow normally a 3-week cycle, and the school notes that the contractor is legally obliged to follow new government regulations concerning the provision of school meals. The menu must also identify all allergens.

All food items are purchased from reputable suppliers to ensure compliance with government buying standards. i.e., nutritional specifications, genetically modified organism requirements, allergen ingredients, favourable trade operating practises and sustainable sourcing.

The children are all provided with fresh drinking water and in some schools, milk is also provided.

Most of our schools have a computerised ordering system whereby each child can order their lunch each morning in class or at home which can be monitored by parents. This helps to reduce waste and assists with allergies.

Menus and prices (where applicable) will be clearly displayed and will contain nutritional information and will also reflect parents' and pupils' preferences, cultural, religious, and special dietary needs.

Food preparation and serving areas will be cleaned before, during and after preparation and cooking, in accordance with The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 (as amended) by the school catering.

Our schools fully support the Universal Infant Free School Meals and we have actively encouraged children to take up this opportunity.

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 school is committed to encouraging parents to provide healthier lunchboxes for children. To facilitate this, each school 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.

The Trust actively discourages and, in some cases, ban some packed lunch foods. A list of foods considered to be in this category includes the following: Sweets & Confectionary, Chocolate Bars. Fizzy drinks/Sparkling water, 'Squash' or Added-Sugar and/or Sweetened Drinks including Energy drinks.

All children on packed lunches will be provided with fresh drinking water.

The Trust 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 by the children. Food swapped or shared may be confiscated. If sweets or chocolate are packed,

staff will ask pupils to leave them, unopened and either speak to the parents concerned or send a note home in the child's lunchbox as these are not allowed. 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.

The Dining Environment

The school is committed to providing a welcoming eating environment that encourages the positive social and cultural interaction of pupils and teachers. It is recognised that the physical constraints of the Main Hall mean that the eating times are staggered throughout school. The school will aim to provide a calm, ordered environment conducive to mutual respect and good behaviour.

It is 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.
- Encouraging all children to eat the food they have been provided with and experience new foods.
- Equal treatment of children having school dinners and packed lunches, in terms of provision and supervision
- Provision of water jugs, containing clean water and cups
- Encouraging the labelling of food served to encourage a balanced, healthy diet as well as outlining ingredients and allergies.
- Encouraging children to wash their hands before eating.
- Ensure pupils do not run whilst eating food.

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. The school curriculum can in turn be used to enrich pupils' experience of food and healthy eating including exploring food from around the world and celebrating food culture.

Internet technology makes available a range of useful teaching and learning materials in most subject areas. These should be exploited by staff on a regular basis. The school will encourage and facilitate the sharing of resources and examples of best practice. Schemes of work will reflect the whole-school emphasis on healthy eating.

Worship also offers an opportunity to explore health and food-related issues. Health focused assemblies will take place regularly throughout the year.

Gardening clubs and Forest schools focus on the creative planting and growing of herbs, small container fruits and vegetables and Cookery clubs provides the opportunity to learn about where food comes from and apply healthy eating messages through practical work with food, including preparation and cooking.

Throughout learning within the curriculum or when celebrating events, food allergens within children must always be taken into account.

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 produced
- nutrition labeling, ingredients calculations for recipes
- allergies

Discos/Special Events/Celebrations

Celebrations such as Easter, Christmas, school discos, Christmas and Summer fayres, bingo, PTA events etc. are classed as “one-off” events where food treats are acceptable. The Trust also recognises 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.

Celebration Praise and Rewards

The Trust recognises that pupil achievement should be celebrated and rewarded when appropriate, and that food can play a role in such celebration. Any food given to children as praise for achievement should form part of a balanced, healthy diet although there is an acknowledgement that at times “treat” foods are appropriate. Where always possible, other forms of praise should be given such as stickers, points and certificates.

Partnership with parents and 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 schools are well placed to lead by example. Parents and carers and pupils will be regularly updated on food policy through school and class newsletters, the school website, and consulted on a regular basis.

Monitoring and review

- This policy is reviewed every 3 years.
- Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff members and parents.