



BALFOUR

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Healthy Eating & Lifestyle Policy

Agreed by the Local Governing Board: 10th October 2023

Date of next review: October 2026

At Balfour Junior School we recognise the important part that a healthy diet plays in a child's wellbeing and their ability to learn and achieve effectively. We believe that the school, in partnership with parents and carers can make a major contribution to improving children's health by increasing their knowledge and understanding of food and helping them to make healthy food choices.

Proper nutrition is essential for good health and effective learning. The benefits of Healthy Eating include:

- Helps young people develop, grow and do well in school
- Prevents childhood and adolescent health problems such as obesity, eating disorders, tooth decay and anaemia
- May help prevent health problems later in life, including heart disease and cancer
- Establishing healthy eating habits at a young age is critical because changing poor eating patterns in adulthood can be difficult
- Sitting down to a meal with other children is an important part of a child's social education

Consequences of Unhealthy Eating include:

- Hungry children are more likely to have behavioural, emotional and academic problems at school
- Research suggests that not having breakfast can affect children's ability to focus and perform at their best in school
- Poor eating habits and inactivity are the root cause of overweight and obesity.

This policy covers the areas of:

- Water
- Breaktime snacks
- School Lunches including packed lunches
- Curriculum
- Events and celebrations



Water

Research indicates that if children do not drink enough water during the school day, this affects their concentration and behaviour. The school recognises that children concentrate better, are healthier and more comfortable if they are not dehydrated, and the best way of ensuring adequate fluid intake is to provide access to water as needed.

All children are encouraged to bring a bottle of water to school each day. This is kept in an accessible place according to the rules of each class. Drinking water and cups are available to pupils and water bottles can be re-filled if required.

Break time snacks

If pupils wish to have a break time snack, they are required to bring in something from home

Healthy snacks can include:

- Fruit
- Dried fruit
- Vegetables (e.g. carrot sticks)
- Breadsticks or plain crackers

Please do not send your child to school with any other food for a breaktime snack as they are not permitted.

School lunches including packed lunches

All school meals will be prepared following the government nutritional guidelines. We are committed to providing food which is compliant with all national guidelines. Our school meal provider, Independent Catering Ltd, are committed to using fresh, seasonal and locally grown produce.

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 that we do.

Some families prefer to provide a packed lunch and we are aiming for our packed lunches to be as healthy as they can be. To ensure consistency in the food consumed in school and to support the school's approach to healthy eating, we ask parents and carers to provide their children with nutritious, balanced packed lunches and snacks.

The following items should not be consumed in school:

- Sweets
- Chewing gum/bubble gum
- Chocolate bars
- Fizzy drinks

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



Curriculum

The school provides educational opportunities to address healthy eating and lifestyle topics within the curriculum through various subject areas such as: PSHE, science, PE, etc. Curriculum work reinforces the importance of a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle to pupils and gives them the skills and knowledge to select a healthy balanced diet.

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.

If parents want to bring something in to celebrate birthdays, we would ask that healthy foods such as fruit or non-food items such as stickers, a special book for the class or colouring pencils are considered as alternatives.

Parents can share birthday cakes or sweets outside of school if they choose to.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We fully respect individual parent's food choices for their children and understand that there are many different needs and tastes. However, if breaktime snacks or lunchbox contents regularly fall short of the expectations in this policy we will send a reminder home to parents. We want to work with parents to educate our children about healthy dietary choices so that the children, through the understanding of a balanced diet, will develop a greater appreciation of a healthy lifestyle.

