Ladygrove Primary School and Nursery

Healthy Eating and Nutrition Policy including EYFS guidance

Written by Kirsty Stewart
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Introduction

At Ladygrove, we promote awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles throughout school. We recognise the valuable role of all staff in modelling good practice and creating an environment that supports positive attitudes to food, physical activity and emotional wellbeing. We also recognise the connection between a healthy, balanced diet and pupils' readiness to learn and achieve. Food provided by the school will meet the applicable School Food Standards, and our EYFS provision will have regard to the statutory framework and current Department for Education nutrition guidance. Children are supported to make informed choices, including eating a varied range of fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and protein foods and drinking water regularly. This policy is inclusive and applies to pupils with medical, allergy, intolerance, cultural, religious and other dietary requirements. We work closely with families, caterers and relevant health professionals so that individual needs are understood and managed safely.

Rationale

Our school is a healthy school. It is important that we consider all elements of our work to ensure that we promote health awareness in all members of the school community. We can provide a valuable role model to pupils and their families about food and healthy eating patterns.
In our school we actively support healthy eating and drinking throughout the school day.

Through effective leadership, the school ethos and the curriculum, all school staff can bring together all elements of the school day to create an environment which supports a healthy lifestyle.

Equal Opportunities

All learners are of equal value.

We ensure that children's religious and medical dietary needs are met. School staff are fully aware of children with medical dietary needs which include allergies.

We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people fairly does not always mean treating everyone in exactly the same way. We make reasonable adjustments and take account of individual medical, disability-related, cultural and religious requirements so that pupils can participate safely and with dignity. Our practice is inclusive, avoids discrimination and is informed by discussion with parents or carers and, where appropriate, relevant health professionals.

Why is a healthy eating policy needed?

A healthy diet is one of the best ways of maintaining young people's health, both now and in the future. Recent research has shown that diets of some young people are not meeting government recommendations for optimum growth and development.

Immediate benefits from healthy eating include:

- Preventing dental decay, obesity and anaemia.

- Improving concentration and behaviour.
- Raising achievement.

Longer term health benefits include:
- Prevention of coronary disease
- Reduced risk of some cancers
- Prevention of osteoporosis (brittle bones)

Aims

1. Encourage children to eat a balanced diet.
2. Reduce children's fat, sugar and salt intake in school.
3. Increase children's levels of hydration.
4. Equip children with the skills, attitudes and knowledge to enable them to make informed choices about food throughout their lives.
5. Increase the number of children having school meals.

Objectives

- To teach information about healthy eating and nutrition through our curriculum.
- To promote fresh fruit/food as part of morning break.
- The School Kitchen will continuously provide healthy eating menus and food choices.
- Healthy Lifestyles are to be promoted daily through positive role models within the school community.
- To promote the importance of drinking water and allow children access to water bottles in the classrooms.
- Any specific medical/cultural requirements concerning food and nutrition are met.

Partnership with parents and carers

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. We will continue to share the importance of a healthy balanced diet with parents and carers through our website and our healthy eating and nutrition policy.

When pupils join our school in Reception, we share our school menu with parents and carers and how it is designed to promote a healthy balanced diet.

Drinks

- Children can bring their own water bottles into their classrooms and are encouraged to drink water whenever they feel thirsty. They are allowed to refill their water bottles when needed.
- At dinner time children will be offered water.

Milk

- Children under the age of five will receive funded milk

Mid-Morning Snack

- EYFS are provided with fruit and crackers
- Key Stage 1 are provided with fruit
- KS2 children may bring their own snack to school providing it is a healthy option; this should be fruit, vegetables, yoghurt cheese or crackers
- Children have access to water and can bring their own water bottles in containing water

Food provision at lunchtime:

School Lunches

- Our school council works with the catering service to ensure that healthy choices are available and that national standards are met.
- Fruit and vegetables are included as part of the meal and salad is available for the children to help themselves to. Where possible, meals have a reduced fat, salt and sugar content.
- Vegetarian, vegan and medical needs will be met in appropriate ways.

School meals are provided by Telford and Wrekin Catering Services. Menus and food provided across the school day are checked against the applicable School Food Standards and allergen requirements. This includes food provided by school for educational visits where the standards apply. Alongside hot meals, the school kitchen may offer a sandwich or wrap option, with fillings and availability communicated to families through current ordering arrangements. Allergen and special dietary information is managed with the caterer, parents or carers and relevant health professionals where appropriate.

Children having a school meal whether it be a hot dinner or a sandwich, have access to a salad bar.

The teaching team discusses our school meal menu with children at registration time so children are aware of the food choices and healthy benefits as well looking forward to learning about the meals, especially meals which may be new to children.
Children are consulted about school meals and their opinions taken on board.
Menus are uploaded onto the school website and social networking sites.
A cashless system of payment is used for school meals and seating arrangements that allow children to sit with their friends. There is no separate seating for school meals and packed lunches.
To allow children sufficient time to eat their food the lunchtime is one hour with staggered sittings for each year group on a rota basis. Some children are also able to sit in alternative, supervised areas if they are needing extra pastoral support. This means that the children are more comfortable and their eating environment is quieter.
Clean and palatable drinking water is freely available for all children at lunchtime, in the dining hall.
Please see Appendix 1 for a sample menu.

Packed Lunches

- Our school aims to support parents in making healthy choices when preparing packed lunches.
- Packed lunches should reflect a healthy balanced diet.
- To promote a healthy packed lunches we send out regular information to parents.

- We also encourage children to develop a positive attitude to a healthy packed lunch and promote this during whole school assemblies.

Please see Appendix 2 for a healthy packed lunch guide from the NHS.

Special occasions

Special occasions, such as Christmas, and the end of terms are a time when teachers and pupils like to have a class party or treat. Class parties should reflect our ethos on having a balanced diet so sugary treats and high fat foods will be given in moderation.

To support healthy eating and reduce allergy risk, families are asked not to send cakes, sweets or other food into school for birthdays. If families wish to mark the occasion, suitable non-food alternatives, such as a card, pencil or sticker, may be used in line with school arrangements. Any food used for a school-organised celebration will be planned in moderation and managed in accordance with pupils' allergy, medical, cultural and religious requirements.

Food across the Curriculum

We recognise that food has great potential for cross-curricular work. There are many opportunities to promote healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle in most subjects, and this is considered when planning topics.
Our Jigsaw Scheme for PSHE, Design and technology scheme and Science scheme all support the delivery and promotes the importance of healthy eating throughout the year as part of our curriculum.

Breakfast Club

We have a very successful breakfast club which opens daily from 7:30am until 8:35am. The breakfast club promotes the ethos of healthy eating by encouraging children to have a balanced meal. Breakfast Club serves low sugar/salt/fat cereal, with semi-skimmed milk. Bread is high-fibre, spreads are low fat/low sugar and fruit juices are low-sugar variations. Children are offered fruit to eat at breakfast.

After School Clubs
Children always have access to water during after school clubs. The after school club run by school staff promotes the healthy eating ethos of the school and adheres to the Nutritional Guidelines as set out in the School Food Standards (SFS).

Food Hygiene

- Children should be reminded to wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating.
- Water bottles and lunch boxes should be taken home every day to be washed.
- When handling food in lessons both staff and children should have clean hands, hair tied back and a clean surface to work on.

Safer Eating

Paediatric First Aid
Whilst children are eating there will always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate. Paediatric First Aid training is completed every 3 years. A Training Matrix identifies when this training needs to be updated.

Special Dietary Requirements and Allergy Safety
Before a child is admitted, the school will obtain up-to-date information about allergies, intolerances, coeliac disease, other medical dietary needs, cultural or religious requirements and relevant preferences. Information will be recorded, reviewed regularly and shared on a need-to-know basis with staff and caterers involved in preparing, serving or supervising food. Where required, the school will work with parents or carers and health professionals to put an Individual Healthcare Plan or allergy action plan in place. A responsible member of staff will check that food and supervision arrangements meet each child's documented requirements at every relevant mealtime and snack time.

Allergies
The school will maintain and publish a dedicated allergy safety policy in line with statutory guidance, with a named senior leader responsible for implementation and annual review. All staff will receive appropriate allergy awareness and emergency-response training, including how to recognise and respond to anaphylaxis. Individual Healthcare Plans and allergy action plans will be developed where needed with parents or carers and relevant health professionals, kept up to date and shared with staff who need the information. Serious incidents and near misses will be recorded, reviewed and used to improve practice.

Choking
Food will be risk assessed and prepared in age-appropriate ways to reduce choking risk. This includes removing stones, pips, bones and skins where needed; cutting small round foods lengthways and into quarters; serving sausages in thin strips rather than chunks; serving cheese, bread and firm fruit or vegetables in suitable strips or slices; and not offering whole nuts, whole seeds, popcorn, hard sweets, marshmallows or jelly cubes to children under five. Staff will distinguish between gagging and choking and know how to respond in an emergency. Babies and young children will be seated safely in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair when eating, in a designated eating space, with minimal distractions.
Children will always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff. Staff will sit facing the children when they are eating, so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking, to prevent food sharing and be alerted to an unexpected allergic reaction.

Record Keeping
If a child experiences a choking incident, allergic reaction or relevant near miss, the incident will be recorded and shared promptly with parents or carers. Records will be reviewed to identify themes, trends and required actions. The school will follow its accident, medical and safeguarding procedures and any applicable statutory reporting requirements.

Appendix 1: Menu



Appendix 2: Lunchbox guidance from the NHS



Appendix 3: EYFS Nutrition Checklist – May 2025 Guidance

Checklist for children aged 1 to 5 years

This checklist supports review of food and drink provided by the setting. The EYFS nutrition guidance must be taken into account and followed unless there is a good reason not to. The Eatwell Guide applies from age two; portions and food preparation must always be age appropriate.

Fruit and vegetables	✓
Fruit and/or vegetables are included at each main meal provided by the setting and are offered across snacks where appropriate.	
A varied range of fresh, frozen, dried and tinned fruit and vegetables is offered across the week, including different colours and types.	
Tinned fruit is in natural juice rather than syrup; vegetables and pulses are chosen with no added salt or sugar where possible.	
Dried fruit is offered only as part of a meal, not as a between-meal snack, to protect dental health.	
Fruit and vegetables are prepared in an age-appropriate way to reduce choking risk.	

Starchy carbohydrates	✓
A starchy food is included with each main meal provided by the setting.	
A variety of bread, potatoes, rice, pasta, noodles, couscous and cereals is offered across the week.	
Wholegrain or higher-fibre varieties are introduced regularly alongside other age-appropriate starchy foods.	
Breakfast cereals and bread products are chosen with lower sugar and salt content; chocolate-coated and high-sugar cereals are not provided.	
Fried starchy foods and pre-prepared flavoured products are limited, with baked, boiled or steamed options used most often.	

Dairy and suitable alternatives	✓
Milk, yoghurt, cheese or suitable alternatives are included regularly within the food and drink provided by the setting.	
Children under two are offered full-fat dairy foods unless health advice states otherwise; lower-fat options may be introduced from age two where the child is growing well and eating a varied diet.	
Plant-based alternatives are unsweetened, calcium-fortified and appropriate for the individual child; rice drinks are not given to children under five.	
Lower-sugar or plain yoghurts and fromage frais are chosen most often.	

Protein foods	✓
A source of protein is included at each main meal provided by the setting, using varied sources across the week.	
Beans, peas, lentils, eggs, fish, meat and suitable meat alternatives are offered in age-appropriate forms.	

Vegetarian and vegan menus include a varied range of protein and other key nutrients; specialist advice is sought where needed.	
Fish is included where suitable, while bones are carefully removed and current advice on oily fish portions is followed.	
Processed meat, processed fish and highly processed meat alternatives are limited.	

Drinks	✓
Fresh drinking water is freely available and children are encouraged to drink regularly.	
Water and plain milk are the usual drinks provided.	
Whole or semi-skimmed cow's milk is offered according to age and need; skimmed and 1% milk are not used as a main drink for children under five.	
Suitable plant-based drinks are unsweetened and calcium-fortified and are used only after discussion with parents or carers; rice drinks are not provided to children under five.	
Sugary drinks, flavoured milk, squash, fruit juice and smoothies are not routinely provided.	

Menu planning, inclusion and safer eating	✓
Menus are planned over a suitable cycle to provide balance and variety for children attending on different days.	
Portions are appropriate for children aged 1 to 5; children are supported to recognise hunger and fullness and are not pressured to clear their plate.	
Foods high in saturated fat, salt or sugar, including confectionery, cakes, biscuits, pastries and crisps, are not routinely provided; artificial sweeteners are avoided.	
Menus and allergen information are shared with parents or carers, including changes and information needed to balance provision at home.	
Up-to-date information is held for allergies, intolerances, coeliac disease, medical needs, cultural and religious requirements, and suitable alternatives are provided safely.	
Cross-contact risks are assessed and controlled; food labels and ingredients are checked every time, and staff know each child's action plan and emergency arrangements.	
Food is stored, prepared, cooked and served hygienically, with good handwashing and effective cleaning procedures.	
Food is prepared to reduce choking risk; children sit safely and are supervised within sight and hearing by staff who understand choking and emergency first aid.	
Food is not used as a reward or punishment, and non-food ways of celebrating birthdays and special occasions are promoted.	
The food and nutrition policy, menus and practice are reviewed regularly, including feedback from children, families, staff and caterers.	

Useful information

Current national guidance considered

• Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective September 2025.

• Department for Education Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance, May 2025.
• Department for Education School food standards practical guide and school food resources, updated July 2026.
• Department for Education Allergy safety in schools statutory guidance, July 2026.
• Department for Education Help for Early Years Providers resources on nutrition, food safety, choking and allergies.

British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology-BSACI allergy plan: https://www.bsaci.org/resources/allergy-action-plans/
Food allergy: https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/nutrition/food-allergies-and-intolerances
NHS: (www.nhs.uk**)**
Anaphylaxis-NHS: (www.nhs.uk**)**
Weaning-Start for life-NHS: (www.nhs.uk**)**
Food safety-Help for early years providers: GOV.UK

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