

# The Weald Federation

Of Five Ashes, Frant, Mark Cross and Mayfield Church of England Primary Schools



**With God's love we grow and learn together**

With God's love we grow and learn together to inspire every child and adult to flourish within our community. Through our Christian ethos, excellent teaching and shared learning, we aim to encourage everyone to discover who they are in relation to God, the world and others. This is in order to prepare for, and positively contribute to, our ever changing and diverse world.

## Food Policy

Led by:	Joanna Challis and Jo Warren (EHTs)
Date implemented:	March 2025
Date for next review:	March 2027
Approved by:	EHTs
ESCC policy / school	ESCC

## Rationale

According to The Department of Health (2020), tackling obesity is one of the greatest long-term health challenges our country faces. Today, around two-thirds (63%) of adults are above a healthy weight. One in three children leave primary school who are already over weight or are living with obesity.

Obesity is associated with reduced life expectancy. It is a risk factor for a range of chronic diseases, including: cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, at least 12 kinds of cancer, liver and respiratory disease. Obesity can also impact on mental health.

It is important that we ensure that health awareness is promoted and understood by all members of the school community. Adults should be role models to pupils with regard to food and healthy eating patterns.

A balanced, healthy, nutritious diet is important for the development of a child's physical growth and health, as well as for their mental health and development. Feeding the body with the required nutrients helps to fuel the mind to be more receptive to learning new skills and contributing to emotional wellbeing.

## Aims & Objectives

- To ensure that all aspects of food and drink in school promote the health and well-being of pupils, staff and visitors to our school
- To adopt a whole school approach to healthy eating
- To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide pupils with healthy and nutritious food that is similar in quality to food served in schools, which is required to meet national standards
- To ensure that we are giving consistent and regular messages about food and health
- To encourage good hygiene when handling food
- To give our pupils the information they need to make healthy choices in life
- To promote health awareness
- To contribute to the healthy physical, mental and emotional development of our pupils

## Settings for Food Policy

- School meals and packed lunches
- Food during snack times
- Water and drinks
- Food in the curriculum
- Breakfast Club

## Snacks

All of our Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children are entitled to a free piece of fruit or vegetables through the Government free fruit and vegetable scheme. KS2 children are also encouraged to bring a piece of fruit or vegetables in to school for their morning break.

## School Lunches and Packed Lunches

The school has a procedure in place to manage food allergies and other special dietary requirements within school.

All our **school meals** are provided by a contracted caterer (Chartwells). All lunches provided by our caterer meet the nutritional standards for school meals. Where possible, this includes the use of fresh fruit and vegetables each day as a choice for the children. Our caterers work very hard to ensure that meal choices are low fat, high fibre and contain high levels of vegetables and fruit. They are made aware of food allergies and

intolerances and provide individual diets as necessary. They are also informed if children are from families with specific dietary preferences eg. vegetarian/vegan or there are dietary considerations linked to their religion.

Children who have a meal through the school's kitchen are offered a hot meal throughout the year. There is a choice of menu every day from which the children can select with their parents before school. Our school lunches are provided by Chartwells, part of Compass Group UK, and meet national standards. For more information, please visit: <https://www.compass-group.co.uk/meet-the-family/education-chartwells/>

We encourage all children to eat school lunches. However, parents of pupils wishing to have packed lunches for a particular reason are expected to provide their children with packed lunches which are in line with the NHS Eat Well guidelines.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/>

#### **A Healthy Packed Lunch Might Include:**

- at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day
- meat, fish, eggs, or a non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus, falafel) every day
- oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks
- a starchy food such as any type of bread (white or wholegrain rolls, pitta bread or wraps), pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or another cereal every day
- a dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day
- a drink of water, fruit juice or smoothie (maximum portion 150 ml), semi-skimmed, 1% fat or skimmed milk, yoghurt or another milk drink

#### **Packed lunches may occasionally include:**

- meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages.
- cakes and biscuits, children are encouraged to eat these as part of a meal
- salty snacks such as crisps - alternatively include seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat.
- confectionery such as chocolate-coated biscuits, cereal bars, processed fruit bars.

#### **Packed lunches should not include:**

- sugary soft drinks, such as fizzy/energy drinks (even if labelled as 'sugar-free', 'no-added sugar' or 'reduced sugar' as these drinks can contribute to tooth decay and provide little nutritional value)
- chocolate bars and sweets

The Federation has adopted a 'Nut Free School Policy'. Items containing nuts are not allowed in school. Although these are healthy, some children are allergic to nuts and they can cause a severe reaction even when in other pupils' packed lunches.

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by teaching staff / midday meal supervisors or pre-identified pupil packed lunch helpers.

If a child regularly brings to school a snack or packed lunch that does not conform to the policy, the school will discuss this with the parent/carer. Where there are serious concerns, this will be recorded in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

#### **Water**

Water is freely available throughout the school day to all members of the school community. Regular water breaks are encouraged by class teachers (more frequently during hot weather).

#### **Food Across the Curriculum**

In EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, there are a number of opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of health, including healthy eating patterns and practical skills that are needed to understand where food comes from such as shopping, preparing and cooking food.

In PE lessons, children are encouraged to drink regularly throughout the sessions in order to keep hydrated. Children are also taught that water regulates body temperature and lubricates joints. It helps transport nutrients to provide energy and keep children healthy.

Science based lessons provide an opportunity to learn about the types of food available, their nutritional composition, digestion and the function of different nutrients in contributing to health and how the body responds to exercise.

Food Technology, as part of Design and Technology lessons, provide the opportunity to learn about where food comes from and apply healthy eating messages through practical work with food. This includes the designing, preparation and cooking of different recipes and dishes. Risk assessments are put in place for individual lessons.

Children will learn about food hygiene in science and food technology lessons.

Personal, Social and Health Education lessons encourage children to take responsibility for their own health and well-being. These sessions cover many topics such as healthy eating and lifestyle choices, eating disorders, people's relationship with food and how this can be linked to negative body image. The underlying theme is keeping our children healthy and preparing them to take responsibility for their own choices.

### **Safer Eating in EYFS Settings**

From September 2025, in line with EYFS safeguarding reforms, we ensure that:

- At least one Paediatric first aid (PFA) trained member of staff is present at all times when Reception children are eating.
- Our schools obtain information about special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances and other health requirements before children start school. This information must be shared with all staff.
- Children are observed closely while sitting to eat. When possible, staff should face the children; this allows for early intervention in the case of choking or allergic reactions. It also allows the staff to watch out for children swapping food.

### **Other Considerations**

It is at the Head of School/Executive Headteacher's discretion whether sweets or chocolate for special occasions, such as birthdays, can be sent in to school for children to take home. These are not to be consumed in school. It is left at the parents' discretion as to whether their child is to consume the item received.

On occasions, the children or PTA may organise a cake sale for charity or to raise funds for the school.

Healthy snacks are preferred when sharing food as a small group eg. SATs week or during nurture groups.

Fasting pupils are supported in accordance with their religious beliefs and schools will work closely with families to ensure that their faith is respected.

Schools may choose to reward healthy lunch/eating choices.

### **Sharing the policy**

The partnership between home and school is critical in shaping how children behave, particularly where health is concerned. Each must reinforce the other.

The school will ensure that all parents/carers are aware of the policy e.g. by sharing information via the school newsletter, website, prospectus, in assemblies etc.

The school will use opportunities such as parents' evenings and healthy living weeks to promote this policy as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating.

The policy will be shared with all school staff, including teaching and catering staff.