Policy Document	
Subject	**Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy**
Approval Date: October 2026	Review Date: October 2028
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Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy

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Statement of intent
At Ashwell Primary School we will support pupils to eat healthily and keep hydrated while in school. We also aim to teach pupils to make healthy food and drink choices using the curriculum and to reflect these principles in the school's food menu and cooking provisions.

We acknowledge the important connection between a healthy diet and a pupil's ability to learn, concentrate, and achieve high standards in school. We are, therefore, committed to promoting a lasting healthy lifestyle for everyone.

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 food standards and legal obligations. As such, this policy has been implemented to help staff and parents deliver consistent messages to pupils, enabling them to develop a positive and independent approach to a healthy lifestyle.

Please note that this policy is applicable to the school day only. It does not include Premier wraparound care, holiday clubs or PTA events however we do share our ethos with these organisations and work closely alongside them.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to the following legislation:

- Food Safety Act 1990
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014
- Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019 (Natasha's Law)

This policy has regard to the following guidance:

- Department for Education (2026) School Food in England.
- Department for Education (2026) School Food Standards: Practical Guide and Resources for Schools.
- Department for Education (2026) Allergy Safety in Schools.
- Department for Education (2017) Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School.
- Department for Education (2025) Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance (where applicable to Nursery and Reception provision).

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Equality Duty Statement
- Allergy Safe Policy

2. Our aims

The school will adopt the following aims:

- Integrate a whole-school ethos towards healthy eating; therefore, helping both staff and pupils to perform well, concentrate better and improve general wellbeing.
- Ensure all pupils to be well nourished and hydrated, and to ensure they have access to nutritious food and safe drinking water during the school day.
- Encourage pupils to make informed food and drink choices in school and at home, contributing to life-long healthy eating habits.
- Use the curriculum to teach pupils safe, hygienic methods of preparing, handling and storing food, and to inform them about the benefits of choosing healthy options.

- Ensure the school reflects the ethical, medical, and religious dietary requirements of staff and pupils, and that suitable provisions are available.
- Inform staff and parents which provisions are permitted in school and to ensure they can effectively monitor what pupils are eating.

3. Drinks

We teach pupils the importance of drinking plenty of fluids and how hydration helps contribute to effective learning, good health and improved physical performance.

We encourage all children to bring a refillable water with them to school. We also provide safe drinking water throughout the school day, available via drinking fountains around the school, and in cups of water available in the dining room at lunch time. Staff have access to drinking water from a tap in the staff room.

In line with the Nursery Milk Scheme set by the Department of Health and Social Care, one third of a pint of milk will be offered free of charge, once per day, for all pupils in Nursery and Reception.

All other children in the school are offered the option of milk if their parents choose to pay for it. Pupils is receipt of free school meals, will also be offered one third of a pint of milk free of charge, once per day,

Other than in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Headteacher, we do not permit fruit squash or fizzy drinks in bottles or cans at any time. These items will be confiscated by staff and returned to the pupil at the end of the school day.

4. Break time snacks

We encourage pupils to eat a snack at break time. All children in EYFS and Key Stage 1 are offered a free break time snack of fruit or vegetables, in line with the government's 'School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme'. If they prefer, they may bring in their own snack from home. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are welcome to bring their own snack in from home.

As part of our healthy eating ethos, ALL break time snacks must be a piece of fruit or vegetables (fresh/dried) or a healthy, appropriate alternative e.g. cereal bar (not containing chocolate) or bread stick type items.

We do not permit any other snacks to be eaten at break time. If children have snacks that are not in line with our Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy, staff will speak with parents at the end of the school day.

5. Lunch

School Dinners

All our school meals are provided by Herts Catering, who act in accordance with the School Food Standards. A copy of the weekly menu can be found here and is also available via a link on our website: https://menus.hcl.co.uk/

The dining area has a calm and positive atmosphere where children socialise and enjoy the dining experience. Staff monitor food choices and encourage pupils to try new foods, we encourage all parents to take free school meals, where there is an entitlement.

Children are provided with drinking water with their meals.

Themed meals and meals served to celebrate festivals, holidays, or religious observances follow the same standards applied to regular school meals.

Packed Lunches

This policy applies to all packed lunches to be consumed within school or on school trips during school hours.

Parents can choose to provide their child with a packed lunch if they would prefer to not take up the offer a school dinner. They will be expected to provide their child with healthy packed lunches containing recommended food groups.

Packed lunches should not include:

- Too many highly processed items
- Confectionary such as sweets or chocolate bars
- Fizzy or sugary drinks
- Nuts

We would recommend that packed lunches include:

- Water or a small carton of fresh juice
- At least one portion of fruit, vegetable or salad
- Meat, fish or another source of non-dairy protein
- Carbohydrates, such as bread, pasta, rice or potatoes
- Dairy, such as cheese, yoghurt or custard
- A small treat or pudding item such as a cake or biscuit

To allow parents to monitor what has been eaten, pupils will put their litter in their lunchboxes to take home. If staff feel that a pupil is not eating well, we will notify their parents via the class teacher or a message from the office.

Pupils are not permitted to share or swap any food, including that provided from home in a packed lunch or snacks.

6. Treats and prizes

Chocolate, sweets, and other confectionary may be used as treats or rewards in moderation by staff. The school encourages staff to award pupils with alternative treats such as verbal praise, extra break time or stickers.

Pupils are permitted to bring in confectionary items as treats for their classmates – these include birthdays and other special occasions. Please refer to the schools specific parent guidance on managing celebrations.

7. Exemptions

We recognise that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents and carers are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. Please let us know if there are any circumstances we need to be aware of regarding a child's special dietary requirements or preferences.

8. Curriculum

Our Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy is integrated into our curriculum, and in particular in the following subjects:

- PSHE
- PE
- Science
- D&T

Teaching about healthy lifestyles is also a regular feature of our enrichment days and activities.

9. Allergies and dietary requirements

The school ensures the correct food safety measures are in place, in line with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and Health and Safety Policy, to protect pupils with known allergies, intolerances, anaphylaxis, diabetes and other medical conditions associated with diet. Parents provide the school with a written list of any foods their child may have an adverse reaction to, as well as the necessary actions to be taken in the event of an allergic reaction, such as any medication required. This may form an Individual Health Care Plan.

The school's chosen catering service (Herts Catering), is responsible for ensuring that the school's policies are adhered to at all times, including those in relation to the preparation of food, taking into account any allergens.

Learning activities which involve the use of food, such as food technology lessons and enrichment activities, are planned in accordance with pupils' Individual Health Care Plans accounting for any known allergies of the pupils involved.

10. Communication with parents

We will communicate any changes and updates to this policy via letter or features in the newsletter.

We will inform parents if concerns are raised about their child not eating well, or if there are regular snacks or packed lunch items being provided which are not part of our healthy food policy.

Parents will keep the school updated with any changes to their child's dietary requirements, including allergies, and any cultural, religious, or ethical food requirements. Parents will inform the school office or their child's class teacher if they are concerned their child is not eating well during the school day.

11. Monitoring and review

The school will keep developments relating to the forthcoming School Food Standards reforms (expected September 2027, subject to Parliamentary approval) under review and will amend this policy as necessary.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the head teacher and governing body, or in light of any changes to relevant legislation.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is October 2028.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to catering providers, kitchen staff, parents and other stakeholders, where necessary.

References and further reading:

https://hcl.co.uk/
www.nhs.uk/change4life