

HEALTHY EATING AND NUTRITION POLICY

Introduction

At Annan all aspects of a child's wellbeing and holistic development are valued. We know that eating well is vital for good health and understand that there is a strong link between a healthy diet and physical, mental and social well being. As a school we know that food is fundamental to the quality of a child's life; not just in providing essential nutrition but in communicating and sharing positive values, attitudes and experiences with each other and in celebrating, nurturing and increasing our appreciation of cultural diversity. We also recognise that 'Being Healthy' is one of the five outcomes of 'Every Child Matters'.

We are committed to giving children consistent messages to help them take responsibility for and understand the impact of choices they make. We believe that adults (staff, parents and carers) should be good role models and should support the children in understanding how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and overall wellbeing.

This policy has been formulated to enable the school to develop and maintain a clear, shared philosophy on all aspects of food and nutrition that benefits the whole school community.

Aims and objectives

- To encourage children to enjoy food and make informed choices
- To promote life-long learning about food and nutrition
- To understand that nutritious food is essential to their ability to learn
- To ensure that we are giving consistent and up to date messages about food and health
- To teach accurate information about food and nutrition as part of the curriculum
- To promote the importance of drinking water and allow children access to water throughout the day
- To promote a healthy balanced snack menu (EYFS), lunch menu (school lunches are provided Monday and Tuesday) and cookery menu
- To encourage packed lunches to be balanced and nutritious
- To ensure that the food provision in school reflects the needs of all children e.g. catering for specific food-related allergies

Cookery and Nutrition in the curriculum

We believe that cookery and nutritional education has great potential for cross-curricular work. There are many opportunities to promote healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle in most curriculum areas which are considered when planning topics.

Children receive multiple opportunities to learn about how to grow their own food and each class has access to outdoor growing beds. We maximise opportunities within the curriculum to discuss and work with food, such as preparing and cooking seasonal soup at Forest School. We aim to increase children's awareness of where their food comes from including elements of food production and manufacturing and how these can impact upon the environment. We aim to make ethical choices such as using free-range eggs and ingredients free from palm oil. Importance is placed on educating children about seasonal and sustainable produce.

We avoid using refined sugar in cookery as far as possible and cooking ingredients are healthy and nutritious.

Cooking activities are used in a variety of ways to widen children's experiences by giving them the opportunity to touch, taste and smell a wide variety of foods from different cultures. Depending on the age of the children we also educate children about how their body uses the food they eat.

Opportunities to support and extend the curriculum will be made through:

- Cooking offered as a Froebelian occupation
- Cookery Club offered as an extra-curricular activity
- Parent workshops when appropriate

Snack time

Children in the Infant House (EYFS and KS1) bring in a piece of fruit or a vegetable each day to share. We prepare and share the snack offerings together, enabling children to choose from a variety of fresh produce each morning.

A starchy snack is also offered for EYFS children, including a rotation of oat cakes, bread and rice cakes. EYFS children are also offered dairy milk and oat milk, alongside water.

Children in Keilhau (KS2) bring in a healthy snack each day, for example a piece of fruit or a vegetable.

Lunch time

Lunch time is a pleasurable, social occasion in which children are encouraged to sit together to enjoy their meal. We provide a calm, ordered environment conducive to positive social interaction. Fresh flowers are placed on each table and a blessing is said together prior to eating.

Kindergarten children eat in the Infant House dining room each day. The rest of the school eat together in the hall. Children have thirty minutes to eat, although this can vary according to children's needs. Both the hall and Infant House dining room are well staffed with teachers and support staff on a rotational basis. Staff monitor the amount children eat and are available to assist with opening containers, to help maintain a clean and tidy environment and to encourage positive interactions over the meal. Children are encouraged to eat savoury items first and to try new items. Staff will provide feedback to parents if children have not eaten as much as usual.

School Lunches – Monday and Tuesday (Reception – Year 6)

Our school meal provider is Cashew Catering who prepare vegetarian meals off-site and bring them in ready to eat. They work closely with us to enable children to have input into the menu. The menu is sent home to parents a week in advance. Children are encouraged to try a wide range of foods yet an alternative option is available to ensure children do not go hungry. Parent views have been sought and responded to regarding school lunch menus. Cashew Catering provide balanced and nourishing vegetarian meals that contain at least one item from each of the following food groups:

- Starchy foods such as potatoes, grains, rice and pasta
- Vegetables and fruit (raw or cooked)
- Protein rich foods such as lentils, beans or cheese

Packed Lunches – Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

We aim to support parents in making healthy choices when preparing packed lunches. Packed lunches could ideally include unrefined carbohydrates such as grains, fruits and vegetables, healthy fats such as avocados as well as a source of protein for example a hardboiled egg. Chocolate, sweets, crisps or fizzy drinks are not permitted. For EYFS children any uneaten food is returned in the children's packed lunch boxes so the parents and carers can be aware of what the child has eaten whilst at school. Parents are encouraged to attend talks on what constitutes a healthy lunch box, run by Cashew Catering on behalf of the school.

Drinks

Children are encouraged to bring a named water bottle to school daily. Children are encouraged to drink whenever they feel thirsty. Water bottles should be filled at home each morning and can be refilled at school if needed. Milk and a dairy alternative (oat milk) is provided every morning for EYFS children at snack time. Children in KS1 and KS2 are encouraged to drink water with their snack. Jugs of water are offered at lunch time at each table and all children are encouraged to drink.

Wraparound care

We recognise the importance of eating a balanced breakfast. We offer wholemeal toast (including sourdough), bagels, fresh fruit, honey and low sugar jam, marmite and peanut butter. Children can choose from water, milk, or a milk alternative (oat milk) to drink.

Children staying on for after school club are offered fruit and a starchy snack, such as a rice cake or oat cake.

Special occasions

There are several special occasions and celebratory events over the Annan year, such as the Strawberry Tea. During these events foods can contribute to a sense of celebration and sharing, therefore sweet foods such as cake may be available, in addition to more balanced 'free from' options such as sugar/dairy/wheat free options. We recognise that healthy eating does not mean elimination of certain food groups but can mean enjoying them at certain times in moderation. We educate children about the nutritional value of foods and encourage them to make informed choices.

Birthdays

We ask that children do not bring in cakes or refined foods/sweets for birthdays or special celebrations but do encourage children to bring in healthy alternatives like special fruit or fruit kebabs.

Partnership with parents and carers

The partnership between home and school is important in shaping how children perceive healthy eating and nutrition. We aim to learn from each other, particularly regarding diversity. We welcome parents to send in recipes from home and foods related to family and cultural celebrations.

Parents and carers have attended open meetings about school lunches and have been informed of packed lunch and snack requirements.

Parental views about school meals, packed lunches, nutrition and cookery have been gathered through a questionnaire. We respect the wide ranging parental views on food and nutrition and aim to provide a balanced response.

We ask that parents support our aim to keep refined foods especially sugar to a minimum and to avoid nuts when cooking for special events. Where food may include allergens we ask that they are clearly labelled.

Food hygiene

Several staff members across the school hold a Food Hygiene Level 2 award. All staff contribute towards good practices in relation to food hygiene, as follows:

- Children are reminded to wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating.
- Water bottles and lunch boxes should be taken home everyday to be washed.
- Clean surfaces are used to prepare foods in cookery lesson and for snack.
- Food will be stored in appropriate places. Fridges are available to keep perishable cookery items at the correct temperature.
- Parents are informed that the packed lunches are stored at room temperature and are therefore encouraged to use insulated packed lunch boxes.

Health and safety

- All staff are aware of any current food allergies or intolerances affecting specific children. Staff know where to access epi pens or other medical equipment should the need arise.
- Staff hold current Paediatric First Aid certificates and are trained in how to deal with choking incidents.
- Children are taught not to share packed lunches and parents. Some children are allergic to nuts and a serious reaction, including breathing difficulties could occur if accidentally ingested.
- Staff will be aware of eating disorders that can occur for younger children and ensure that we know how to recognise and respond appropriately should the need arise.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Principals and staff of the school and will be reviewed in line with the school's Policy review cycle.