



Our visions and values:

Protecting children's right to play learn and have a voice.

Keeping parents involved in children's development

Governors and staff leading the way on quality

Working partnership with health professionals and schools

Being ethical, respectful and tolerant

Food Policy

Status:	n/a
Responsible governors:	Children's Learning and Development Committee
Last review date:	Autumn 2025
Date of next review:	Autumn 2027
The policy is available for staff at:	School offices and shared drive
And for parents/carers at:	School website

Policy audit

Version, revision date, who revised, section revised

V1, 22.6.16: new

V2, 14.10.19: Helen Currie, Lindsay Read: Removal of obsolete Healthy Child Programme and references to crèches; addition of HENRY, detail re provision for vegan children, Barncroft Primary, place in EYFS of food education, storage of packed lunches, teeth brushing guidance and the aim to promote 'meat is a treat'

V3, 29.11.21: Helen Currie: Additional information requested of new starters; clarification of information provided to families on a daily basis and that packed lunches are checked for safety purposes; updating of weekly menu, where we grow food; that handling hot food is by those with Level 2 certification; that Parent Governors review this policy; removal of composting

V4, Autumn 2023: Helen Currie: Addition of NHS advice re fibre for the under 5s. Low Hall lunches now packed lunches.

V5, Autumn 2025: Alison Emmett: New government guidance: Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance May 2025

Introduction

Church Hill Nursery School and Low Hall Nursery School are committed to ensuring that all aspects of food and nutrition in our settings promote the health and well-being of all children and adults. The implementation of this policy is in line with [the Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014 Schedule 5](#), and uses the [Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition and Guidance May 2025](#). We review this compliance when we review this policy.

Our Schools' values and principles

- Children have rights to play, learn, achieve and be heard in our schools.
- Parents/carers have an important role in their children's development and education at home and in school.
- Governors and staff members lead the way on high quality in education and care in our schools.

- Staff members work in partnerships with other professionals to improve children's health, well-being, development and learning.
- Everyone should be treated with respect and tolerance and in turn protect the natural world.

We set out our values and principles in all our policies and in this policy we focus on how our schools aim to support the care and physical development of young children from all our communities by:

- making informed choices about a healthy, balanced diet
- ensuring information relating to food and nutrition is consistent and up-to-date
- developing a healthy lifestyle
- learning about food and nutrition and its relationship to health.

Provision and promotion of food in our schools

Children and parents are encouraged to develop positive attitudes to healthy eating and trying new foods. Healthy foods are promoted in our settings through the food provided, posters, displays, and positive re-enforcement by all staff.

Any activities such as fun days and open days follow the Food Policy guidelines.

Food clubs, cook and eat sessions, and weaning demos are delivered by knowledgeable and experienced staff. Age-appropriate self-feeding is promoted and supported, with the child dictating quantities to prevent overfeeding.

Allergies

Parents whose children attend the Nursery Schools are asked to indicate if their children have any special dietary requirements, special health requirements, preferences, and food allergies. In our Nursery settings we display a list of children with allergies explaining the allergy, the foods which can't be eaten, the symptoms of an allergic reaction, the treatment required and any precautions that need to be taken during activities involving food e.g. craft/messy play. Lunch menus are agreed in advance, the ingredients are cross-checked against the list of allergies that children on roll have and appropriate action is taken to keep them safe.

Parents and carers with concerns about a child's diet or who themselves have anxieties about food may be referred to a local session run by [HENRY](#). On our website we suggest sources of knowledge, ideas and support for building healthy food habits.

At the Nursery Schools

- The differing nutritional needs of each child are considered and planned for.
- Healthy food and drinks are promoted. Fresh drinking water and healthy snacks are available throughout the day for the children to help themselves.
- White bread in small quantities is provided, in line with [NHS recommendations](#) which suggest that for under 5s, having too much fibre, such as from wholegrain carbohydrates, in their diet can fill up their stomachs and take up the space of the nutrients they need. They suggest it's good for children to try different kinds of starchy foods, but not to give only wholegrain or high-fibre foods before your child is 5 years old.

- All of the food offered reflects the religious and cultural needs of the community, for example, all meat is Halal. Dairy products are available for all children. We cater for vegan children, ensuring that non-meat and dairy free products are available. When we have vegan children we only buy dairy-free spread so that snack and lunch options are inclusive. Other products such as vegan cheese and oat milk are bought separately and provided specifically for them at the snack table or with the lunch menu.
- During term time, lunchtime meals are cooked by Walthamstow School for Girls for Church Hill Nursery School, and children from Low Hall Nursery School bring a packed lunch from home.
- The dining area offers a welcoming environment where children can enjoy their lunch and snacks whilst socialising with friends and staff. Children are supervised by Nursery staff including Midday Assistants over the lunchtime period.
- Breakfast and teatime food is prepared by nursery staff on both premises.
- We do not provide individual feedback about what children have eaten at lunch unless the staff at lunch are concerned. In this instance they will speak to the key person who will liaise with the family.

In the nursery schools and external venues

- Healthy drinks and snacks are provided appropriate to the activity (see Appendix 1).
- Healthy eating and options are promoted in cooking activities with parents, carers and children.

Food and drinks brought into the nursery schools

As part of our commitment to health, we encourage parents and carers to provide children with healthy food and drinks when attending our settings (see Appendix 1). During holiday play schemes when children bring in packed lunches, we check these lunchboxes each day to ensure there are no unsafe items, because children may swap their food unknowingly with children who are allergic to it.

Parents and carers who offer to bring food for celebrations or birthdays are asked to bring healthy foods (such as exotic fruits, pakoras etc) that do not contain meat, gelatine or nuts.

Parents and carers visiting our settings whose children might require an additional snack are also asked to bring healthy foods (sweets, crisps, biscuits, and fizzy drinks are discouraged).

Food Education in the EYFS curriculum

We teach children about the importance of healthy eating through practical activities. This includes growing some food organically in the school gardens, cooking in the nursery, and sampling their cooked products with their parents at the end of the nursery sessions, as part of lunch or at tea time. These and other related activities provide learning experiences about different foods and their nutritional value and food production processes that conserve the natural environment.

As part of our snack time curriculum we encourage children to try a variety of healthy foods, serve themselves, share, eat as a social group and begin to distinguish when they are full. We discuss hygiene and the skills that children develop as they feed themselves. A

healthy, balanced snack menu has been devised in conjunction with training from HENRY to ensure that over the week children experience new foods. During snack time we mainly focus on the three Prime Areas of the EYFS curriculum: Personal, social and emotional development (PSED), Physical Development (PD), and Communication and language (CL). We also use the snack area to occasionally teach from the specific areas for instance, writing lists or recipes for Literacy and counting out plates or food, making tally charts, and surveying favourite foods for Mathematics. We teach children about Understanding the World (UW) in particular the natural world by growing some food in our own school gardens.

Food safety and hygiene

We recognise that food safety and hygiene is of paramount importance for the health of the whole community. To ensure that food is stored, prepared, and eaten in a clean and safe environment, the following food safety arrangements are in place:

- All catering staff and staff who handle cooked food will possess a Level 2 food hygiene certificate.
- Staff, children and parents/carers are encouraged to follow appropriate hygiene procedures. In particular, washing their hands properly after using the toilet and before handling food (e.g. at snack breaks and before lunch). Appropriate notices are displayed in the toilet facilities reminding people to wash their hands after using the toilet.
- If children bring lunchboxes, for example for a school trip, they are stored in a safe and hygienic manner away from sources of heat, e.g. pipes, radiators, and direct sunlight and in cool, well-ventilated places. Parents are encouraged to use insulated boxes or icepacks in the children's lunchbox.
- Parents, carers, and young children are encouraged to sit down when they eat or drink.
- Children do not brush their teeth after lunch because eating and drinking foods containing sugar and acids naturally weakens the enamel on your teeth. Brushing straight afterwards can cause tiny particles of enamel to be brushed away. It is best not to brush your teeth until at least one hour after eating.
- We have a Tooth Champion at each nursery school, trained by Henry and Public Health to lead coffee mornings for families about oral hygiene.

Parents'/Carers' Involvement

We actively encourage parents to participate in decision making about healthy eating priorities and to be informed about food within the settings:

- menus are available and are on display for parents and children attending the Nursery Schools
- parents are involved in any development and review of the Food Policy through the involvement of parent governors
- this Food Policy is available to parents/carers on our website
- parents receive information on food issues and healthy eating in a number of different ways

- food provision and healthy eating is discussed at new parent meetings at the nurseries and during various activities run in school.

Food and the Environment

There are many links between food and the environment and our schools are committed to addressing this by:

- reducing the amount of packaging waste from food and drink – including food and drink brought in from home e.g. packed lunches, snacks – and recycling packaging where possible,
- using locally-produced food where possible,
- making available organic and Fairtrade food and drink products,
- sourcing, where possible, high-welfare and sustainably grown and produced food,
- promoting opportunities for children to grow food, e.g. vegetables, herbs,
- Reducing the amount of meat on offer, promoting the idea that 'meat is a treat'.

end

Appendix 1

Healthy foods and snacks

The following items are suggested options for snacks in the nursery schools. All allergens should be displayed:

Snacks

Food types	Examples
Starchy food	<ul style="list-style-type: none">bread, pitta bread, toast, plain rice cakes, crackers, corn cakes, English muffins, crumpets, plain bagels, low salt bread sticks, oat cakes (low sugar; no added salt)
Fruit and vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">seasonal fruit slices: halved grapes, melon, strawberries, pear, banana, appletinned fruit in juice (no added sugar)vegetable sticks - carrots, cucumber, tomatoes, mangetout, peppersavocado
Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none">tofuedamame beans (can be bought frozen)humousrunner beans in the summercubes of full-fat cheese, full fat cream cheese or mozzarella ballsplain yoghurt, or fromage frais (no added sugar)

Ideas

- o dip fruit slices in yoghurt or fromage frais
- o dip vegetable sticks in humous
- o make small sandwiches filled with cheese, tuna etc

Where parents are offered food which children may also eat on special occasions, the following can be added:

- fruit bread, hot cross buns, scotch pancakes, malt bread and scones (plain, cheese or fruit).

Drinks

- water
- half fat (green) Milk
- Oat milk (for specialist diets)
- parents will not be offered hot drinks in groups for health and safety reasons except in specifically-organised Coffee Mornings.

Parents and carers are encouraged to use free-flow feeder cups for all drinks from one year onwards to help protect babies' and young children's teeth from decay.

'Unhealthy' food and drinks

Unhealthy or unsuitable foods are those which are high in fats, added sugar and salt. For example:

- crisps / savoury mixes (e.g. Bombay mix)
- sultanas and other dried fruit (are good to eat as part of a meal but not as a snack due to high sugar content and stickiness)
- chocolate-covered biscuits

- sweetened biscuits / cakes
- sweetened and high fat content bread type foods e.g. brioche rolls, croissants
- processed foods e.g. high in salt biscuits and lunch packs, processed meat products.

Unsuitable drinks for children include:

- squash drinks
- fizzy drinks
- diet drinks with sweeteners
- tea and coffee

NB On special celebratory events adjustments to the Food Policy may be approved by the Senior Leadership Team.