



Healthy Eating Policy

2023-24

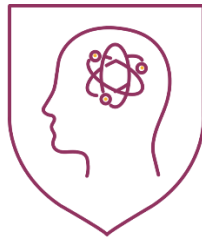
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Lead Reviewer | Primary Vice Principal



“Empowering students to aspire, create and excel in the world that is, so they can help create the world that will be”



The Science of Learning



Social Enterprise



Student Agency and Innovation

GEMS Wellington Academy, Al Khail, is committed to encouraging and developing positive attitudes towards food and a healthy diet. We recognise the importance of offering children the opportunity to make informed choices about what they eat.

Policy Statement:

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. We believe that adults (staff and parents) should be role models and should support the children in understanding how balanced nutrition contributes to a person’s health, happiness and general well-being. As eating represents a social time for children and adults, and helps children to learn about healthy eating, we encourage parents and carers to continue the importance of healthy eating at home as well as in school.

Aims and Objectives:

- To improve the health of students, staff and the wider school community by helping to influence eating habits through increasing knowledge and awareness of food issues, including what constitutes a healthy diet.
- To ensure pupils are well-nourished at school and that every student has access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and easily available water supply during the school day.
- To ensure that parents and carers prepare a healthy snack and lunch for their child/ren.
- To ensure that food provision in the school acknowledges the ethical and medical requirements of staff and pupils e.g., religious, vegetarian, vegan, medical and allergenic needs. (This is in each child’s medical record and the class teacher has a copy to ensure the child’s needs are met). In order to protect children with food allergies and their religious beliefs with regards to eating, we discourage children from sharing or swapping food in school, while recognising that this can be a kind thing to do with family and friends out of school.
- To introduce and promote practices within the school to reinforce these aims and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

Curriculum:



- Opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. This starts with washing hands in the correct way many times throughout the day and doing some exercise each day.
- We regard healthy eating education as a whole-school issue. Healthy eating education forms an important part of our school's curriculum. The importance of balanced nutrition and healthy food choices is explicitly taught through our Science, D.T. and P.H.S.E. curriculum.
- All pupils have the opportunity to learn about safe food preparation and to learn about where food has come from. Pupils learn about the requirements for plant growth, the food chain and the components of a healthy diet through the Science curriculum.
- Children have additional opportunities to learn about healthy eating through assemblies, school initiatives and extra-curricular activities, including cookery and growing food in the school gardens.
- Parents can get involved by having children help with cooking at home a few times a week or preparing snacks and lunches. This will encourage children to try new foods and enjoy the process of preparing healthy food.
- The school will run healthy eating workshops throughout the school year that parents are able to attend with their child.
- Our 'Treat Tuesdays' initiative encourages students to learn about eating treats as part of a healthy, balanced diet.
- Healthy Eating monitors support the promotion of healthy eating.

Management and Expectations around Healthy Eating:

- The school will promote healthy snacks, lunchboxes and food provided by our catering company (Slices).
- Periodically, the school will evaluate parent and child views on the types of foods that are offered via surveys and feedback.
- All children are encouraged to bring in their own pre-filled water bottle so they can have access to water throughout the day. This should be clearly marked with the child's name.
- Pupils' lunchboxes should offer balanced nutrition. Throughout the week, parents are encouraged to offer a variety of healthy foods to ensure a balanced diet, e.g., meat, fish, protein alternatives, dairy, grains, cereals, fruit and vegetables. See Appendix 1 for healthy suggestions.
- Children's food can be stored in their own thermal container or cool box. Staff are not permitted to heat or cool food for individual children. Glass bottles and containers are not allowed in school.
- Foods with high percentages of sugars and fats are discouraged. This includes fast/deep fried food (pizza, fried chicken, burgers, French fries), candy, crisps, chocolate, desserts, cakes and biscuits. Primary children will learn that these foods can be eaten (within reason) as a treat in school on 'Treat Tuesdays', as part of a balanced diet, but should not be consumed daily. Primary students are only permitted to bring, or purchase, one treat on Tuesdays.
- **Energy drinks and fizzy drinks are not permitted in school.**
- **Pork products are not permitted in school.**
- **We have a strict 'no nuts' policy for children and staff. This includes nut-based chocolate spreads such as Nutella.**
- **Lollipops are not permitted in school, as they can present a choking hazard with young children.**
- Energy drinks, fizzy drinks, pork, nuts and lollipops are not permitted on 'Treat Tuesdays'.
- Primary students will be praised daily for their healthy choices at snack and lunchtimes. Each class has a Healthy Lunchbox Monitor (Healthy Eating Detective in Foundation Stage) to encourage healthy eating throughout the year. Regular monitoring in Secondary will award students house



points for making healthy food choices. Student leaders across the school will collectively support the healthy eating initiative.

- The contents of children's lunchboxes, including portion sizes, will be monitored by the class teacher. Any concerns will initially be shared with parents. Continued concerns will be escalated to the Head of Year, and, where necessary, the school nurse and Phase Leader. Where needed, a meeting will be held with the parents to ensure that lunchboxes are healthy and meet school policy.
- Parents will be reminded to cut foods appropriately (e.g. grapes, cherries, large blueberries) so that these are not a choking hazard.
- Those students who purchase a school lunch will be supported with their healthy decisions. Slices will only offer some 'treat' foods on Tuesdays for Primary students, in addition to healthy options. Choices will be monitored and any concerns communicated to parents, i.e., ensuring each child is getting a balanced diet.
- Pupils are not permitted to share or swap packed lunches for health and safety reasons.
- Special events such as National Day, International day and The Bake Sale are times where 'treat food' may contribute to a sense of celebration, cultural awareness or charity.

Birthday Celebrations:

At The Academy, we are happy to acknowledge students' birthdays by singing 'Happy Birthday' at the end of the school day. The sharing of cake or gifts will not be permitted unless items are individually wrapped and taken home in bags to be eaten – these must not contain nuts or pork products.

Food Allergies:

- The school nurse regularly updates the food allergy register. This is shared with teachers following updates, informing teachers of any changes. All teachers have access to this register via the Shared Drive. Parents are to update the clinic of any changes in children's medical and dietary needs. Parents are asked about medical and allergy needs as part of the enrolment process via signed student information forms.
- Children must never be given foods that contain ingredients that they are allergic to. Teachers must be especially vigilant during special school events such as National Day, International Day, The Bake Sale, birthdays etc.
- Teachers must be aware of the emergency procedures in place for children with food allergies.

Slices

School meals are externally sourced via Slices who cater for the school canteen and parent café. They must provide healthy food as per the contract with the school. This is monitored by the Manager of Services and Operations at Head Office and is reported to the MSO of the school.

Parents may choose to purchase food via their child's Slices account or by providing them with a healthy packed lunch.



Appendix 1

Healthy Food Suggestions	Foods Considered as 'Treats'
Wraps Sandwiches Bread Pasta Rice Cous cous Quinoa Lentils Chickpeas Potatoes Granola Protein (chicken, lamb, tofu etc.) Cereal Salad Fruit Vegetables Olives Plain popcorn Crackers Cheese Yoghurt Eggs Plain milk Fruit juice with no added sugar	Biscuits Cookies Doughnuts Cakes Muffins Croissants Pizza Chicken nuggets Fries Crisps / chips Chocolate Sweets / candy Sweet or salted popcorn Flavoured milk (e.g. chocolate, strawberry etc.) Fruit juice with added sugar
	Foods which are NOT PERMITTED in school Pork Nuts Nut based chocolate spreads such as <u>Nutella</u> Fizzy drinks such Coca Cola Energy drinks Lollipops and hard-boiled sweets/candy (which could present a choking hazard)