



HEARTS ACADEMY TRUST

Food Policy

Adopted by Trustees: September 2021

To be reviewed: September 2024

HEARTS Academy Trust is committed to providing a happy, caring and safe learning environment for all within a values led context, where everyone feels valued and grows in confidence and independence.

We promote **HAPPINESS** through a creative, exciting and practical curriculum, which generates a love of, and interest in, learning and a resilience and hope which supports us through challenging times.

Great value is placed on pupils' self **ESTEEM** which is developed through a positive and motivated attitude to learning, a healthy lifestyle, good social skills, self-discipline and a positive self-image.

We promote the highest standards of **ACHIEVEMENT** in all areas of the curriculum and help all pupils to fulfil their potential regardless of gender, race or ability.

We foster **RESPECT and RESPONSIBILITY** for all by establishing good relations between the school, home and community. Pupils are taught respect for themselves, others and the environment. They are also taught to take full responsibility for their own choices and responsibility for themselves and their community.

We encourage **TRUTH** and honesty in all aspects of school life – relationships, work and the curriculum and learn to trust and accept others' individuality and uniqueness.

We develop **SPIRITUALITY and SERVICE** so that calm, quiet, reflective times which support deep thought are part of school life and beauty is appreciated. We promote a service culture that reflects our duty to support and show compassion to all members of the community and not just ourselves.



Children at the HEART

Introduction

This policy supports our SEMH policy.

At HEARTS, we are committed to ensuring that pupils, staff and the community are knowledgeable about the vital part that food and healthy eating plays in everyone's wellbeing. Teaching our pupils how to make sensible food choices as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle is built into the curriculum and life in school. This policy has been developed by drawing on key government guidance associated with healthy eating and the school day. As well as curriculum leaders' information on what we teach explicitly about food. It also contains information about a range of partners that can support families when access to food and healthy lifestyles is challenging.

We recognise the importance of a healthy diet and the significant connection between a healthy diet and a pupil's ability to learn effectively in school. It is important we consider all elements of our work to ensure that awareness of healthy eating is promoted to all members of the school and wider community. Healthy lifestyles can be promoted through effective leadership, school ethos and a broad and balanced curriculum.

Our school will always support any family in need of access to food to prevent hunger, ensure healthy growth, reduce anxiety and develop positive wellbeing. When parents are struggling to feed their children if we are asked we will always help. You can ask anyone but these staff are experienced and well trained in responding to requests for support:

MHFA champion – Kerry Westbrook

School counsellor - Kerry Westbrook

School pastoral lead – n/a

Head of school – n/a

Head of year/ phase – n/a

Government strategy outlines and expectation of all schools:

To promote a culture of healthy eating the government now expects all schools, in consultation with parents, pupil and staff, to adopt whole school food policies. In particular, schools will be expected to develop healthy packed lunch policies so that those not yet taking up school lunches are also eating more healthily.

School/ HEARTS Aims

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with parents, pupils, staff and governors with the following aims:

- To ensure that all community members are clear about the importance of food in a healthy lifestyle and the impact of hunger on pupils' wellbeing and ability to thrive.;
- To support parents in ensuring the contents of packed lunches reflect the requirements of schools to meet minimum food and nutrition standards for school meals;
- To make a positive contribution to children's health by encouraging healthy eating habits in childhood that can influence health and wellbeing in later life;
- To take a proactive approach to promoting healthy eating;
- To give clear guidance to parents/carers, pupils, governors and staff on providing a healthy packed lunch;
- To equip pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to make informed healthy lifestyle choices based on their nutritional understanding;
- To ensure that all children have a healthy and nutritious midday meal that sustains and prepares them for their afternoon learning;

- To promote the use of food banks, working collaboratively with charities to provide nutritional meals for vulnerable families throughout the year.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's agreed policy review process. In addition, any major legislative or governmental changes regarding school food may lead to this policy being amended.

Sharing the policy

HEARTS will ensure that all parents/carers and staff are aware of the policy by sharing information on school newsletters, websites, prospectus and in assemblies. Schools 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 and the school nurse/HEARTS counsellor.

Break Time

- Fruits or vegetables are provided, in all Key Stage 1 schools as a snack.
- Milk is also provided for pupils under 5 years old. This is free of charge
- In some of our schools children have the opportunity to buy a healthy snack from their classroom each day. Items children can purchase include fresh fruit, popcorn, and yoghurts, as well as water from the water fountain/ cooler.
- Snacks from home can include any of the above.

Lunchtime provision

Promoting a positive lunchtime experience

Dining environments should be a pleasant and social experience. Happy dining environments help to promote a positive lunchtime experience.

Aims:

- To provide a dining environment that is a desirable place to eat;
- To ensure there is enough space to sit and eat a meal feeling refreshed and relaxed ready for learning in the afternoon;
- To teach children, through child role models or adult demonstration:
 - *table manners*
 - *use of cutlery*
 - *awareness of their own choices/ behaviours when sitting in a communal space to eat*
 - *Tidying and cleaning their tables after eating*
 - *Using appropriate noise levels so that dining is calm and comfortable for all present*

School meals

We will provide our pupils with the opportunity to eat a healthy, balanced meal and will ensure a range of meals are available over a week/ term / year. We will ensure the service is consistent with our teaching of healthy eating including the 'at least 5 a day' message and/or the 'Eatwell Plate' and compliant with the School Food Standards. Fresh water will be available during the lunch period.

School meals in HEARTS schools conform to government nutritional guidelines with less sugar, fat and salt and fresher fruit and vegetables.

Eating a healthy nutritionally balanced meal is important because it will help children to:

- Be fit and healthy now and later in life;
- Contribute to pupil's focused learning;
- Support positive mental well-being;
- Reduce anxiety and hunger.

All of our Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils enjoy a school dinner instead of a packed lunch, there is no charge for this. It is not our policy for young children to bring their own meals to school. The school provides for variety in diet including religious and cultural traditions, allergies and pupils who are diabetic. Please provide medical evidence of need and the school will work with you and the school nurse to develop an individual approach to lunch time food preparation.

When children move in to Key Stage 2 (year 3 and above), they will be eligible for free school meals if the parent/carer is in receipt of one of the following:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Children, who receive these benefits instead of through a parent or guardian can also get a free school meal

If parents/carers are not in receipt of any of the above, there will be a small charge for a school dinner. This cost is reviewed annually.

Please note where your income entitlement is impacted by delays to universal credit or any other income inform the school immediately so that they can help in the short term. NO PUPIL NEEDS TO BE HUNGRY IN OUR SCHOOLS.

Menus are posted on our school websites, weekly newsletters and hard copies are available upon request from the school offices.

Packed lunch

Parents/carers of pupils who do not have school meals are expected to provide their children with packed lunches that are consistent with the nutritional standards based on the 'EatWell' plate model (Appendix 1) and the School Food Trust guidelines (link in Appendix 2).

Please visit the following websites for further information and suggestions for packed lunches:

<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes#lunchbox-recipes>

<https://www.nutrition.org.uk/press-office/pressreleases/healthylunchbox.html>

The recommended contents of a healthy lunch box are:

- 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, or custard every day;
- Children can fill their water bottle throughout the day.

Packed Lunches should not include:

- **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' lunches;
- Salty snacks such as crisps - instead include seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat;
- Sweets/confectionery/chewing gum;
- Fizzy or sugary drinks;
- Energy drinks.

Special Diets and allergies

Our schools recognise that some pupils may require special diets that do not follow the National Food Standards exactly. In this case parents/carers are asked to inform the school of this medical need, provide the appropriate

medical evidence and make their child's lunchbox as healthy as possible. For this reason, pupils are not permitted to swap food items.

Provision for Packed Lunches

Our schools will provide dining room facilities where pupils can eat their lunches and ensure that fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.

Packed Lunch Containers

We ask that parents/carers and pupils:

- provide a named packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period.;
- bring packed lunches in reusable plastic containers, rather than disposing of plastic bags and bottles;
- As fridge space is not available in school, pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible. Or adjust contents to ensure that food contained in the lunch box does not go off.

Waste and disposal

The school will, within reason, send any uneaten packed lunch food items back home. The rationale for this is that parents can also monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake with the school.

Monitoring

To promote healthy eating, class teachers, teaching assistants, learning mentors and midday supervisors will oversee the content of packed lunches, whilst undertaking their general duties during lunch time. In order to promote our healthy lunch policy, positive rewards may be allocated. Parents/carers may be contacted if the contents of a packed lunch is a concern.

Food in the Curriculum

Whilst we fully respect individual food choices and understand that there are many different needs and tastes, we want to work with parents to educate children about healthy diet choices so that our children, through understanding a balanced diet, will develop a greater appreciation of a healthy lifestyle. The HEARTS curriculum develops pupils' knowledge of healthy eating predominantly through PSHE, Science and Design Technology lessons.

Aims:

- To enable pupils to make healthy and informed choices by increasing knowledge, changing attitudes and enhancing skills;
- To educate pupils to understand the importance of a balanced diet, appropriate portion sizes, where food comes from and the relationship between food, physical activity and health benefits;
- To ensure schemes of work for all key stages will reflect the whole-school approach to healthy eating;
- To ensure opportunities within the whole school curriculum promote and raise awareness of the following topics- healthy weight, breastfeeding, oral health.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the curriculum covers healthy eating and food choices, children have the opportunity to explore foods through cooking lessons, shared snacks and exploration. This includes looking at healthy foods, cooking with these and food tasting linked to the seasons and different festivals. All children cook termly in EYFS and this is part of the HEARTS promise in the early year's settings. As part of the early years PSHE curriculum we focus on developing an understanding of healthy choices including healthy eating, exercise and oral hygiene, the benefits of this and the impact on this on wellbeing."

In key stage 1 the children learn about the idea of a simple food chain and identify and name different sources of food. They can describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene. They observe and describe how seeds and bulbs grow into mature plants.

In Design and Technology children use the basic principles of a healthy and varied diet to prepare dishes and understand where food comes from.

In PSHE sessions the children learn about what constitutes a healthy diet, the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals as well as the characteristics of a poor diet and the risks associated with unhealthy eating. In Lower key stage 2 the children identify that humans need the right types and amount of nutrition, and that they cannot make their own food; they get nutrition from what they eat. They explore the main parts of the body and understand their special functions in relation to digestion. In upper key stage 2 they learn to recognise the impact of diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle on the way their bodies function and how to keep their bodies healthy. In Design and Technology in key stage 2 the children understand and apply the principles of a healthy and varied diet, they prepare and cook a variety of predominantly savoury dishes using a range of cooking techniques. They are taught the principles of seasonality and know where and how a variety of ingredients are grown, reared, caught and processed.

In PSHE in key stage 2 the children begin to develop an awareness of their own dietary needs, learning about the characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating. They know about and understand the function of different food groups needed for a balanced diet.

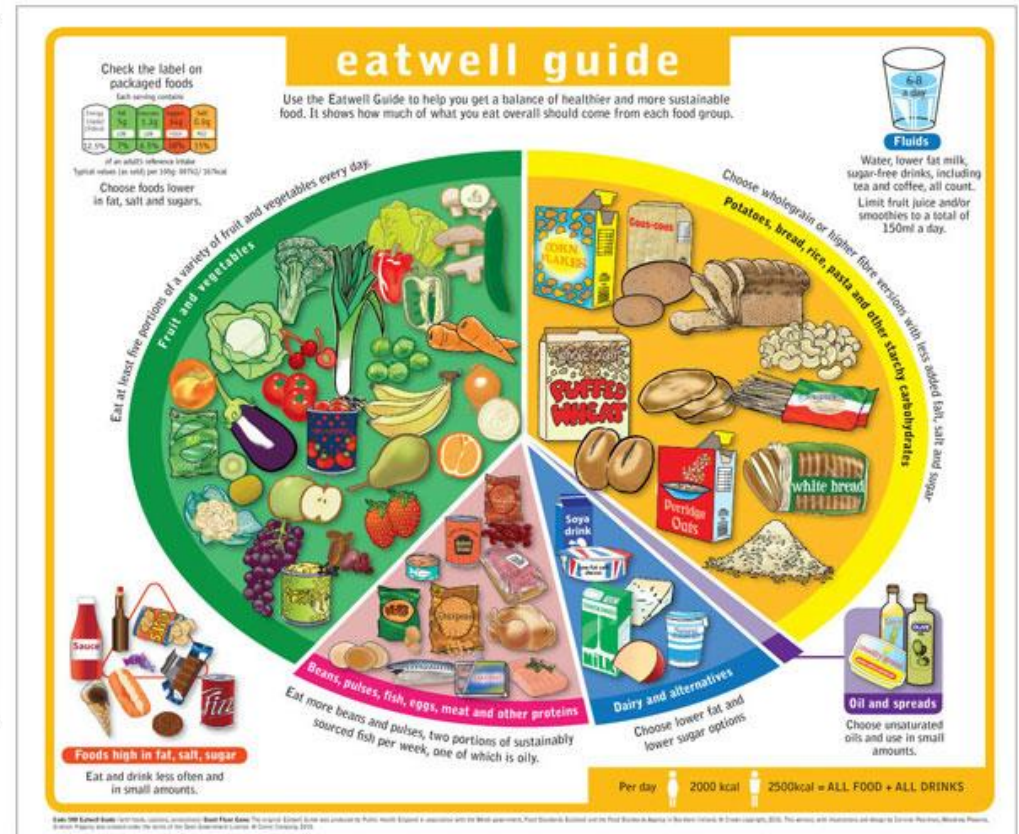
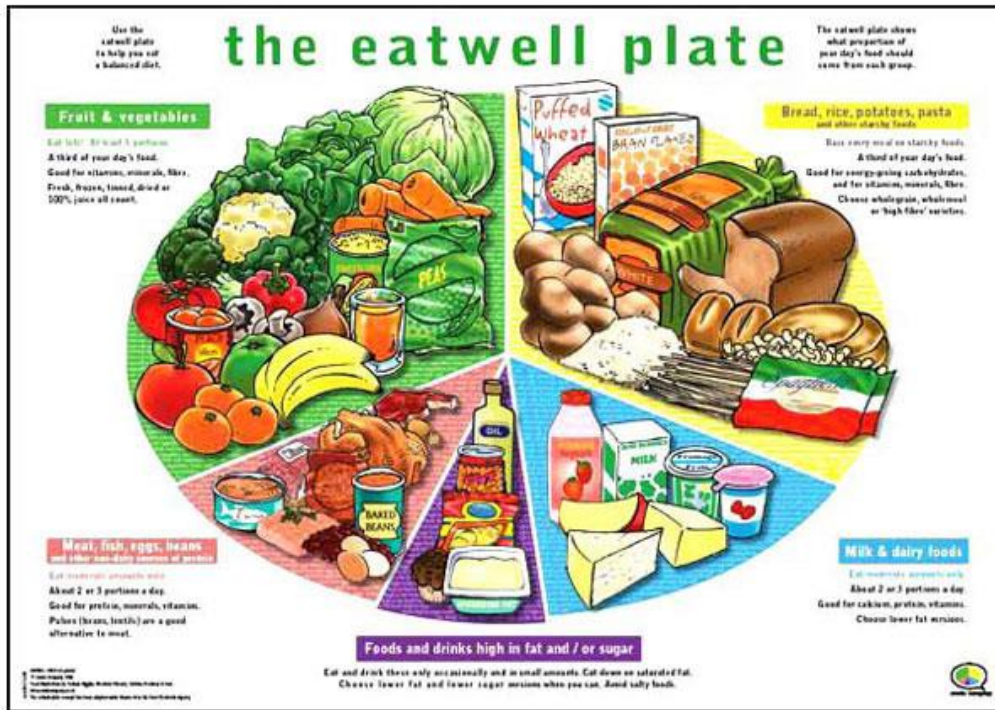
Community links

Our school is a social media advocate for the Trussell trust and we provide food parcels for charities each year at Harvest time.

Food banks

<https://www.trusselltrust.org/> - foodbank in Basildon & Southend: <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/>

Appendix 1



Appendix 2: Key National Documents

The School Food Plan and School Food Standards

<http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/standards/>

School food in England: Departmental advice for governing bodies

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/393122/School_food_in_England_2015.pdf

Information on food allergens www.food.gov.uk/allergy and food allergen poster

<http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/fsa-dfe-eu-fic-schools-posterv2.pdf>

Government Buying Standards for food and catering services

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/food-buying-standards-for-the-public-sectorthe-plan-toolkit>

School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme fact file

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/5ADAY/Documents/SFVS%20Factfile%20for%20Schools.pdf>

Safer Food Better Business Pack

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/sfbb>

Appendix 3: Supporting Information

Change 4 Life School Zone

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools>

Children's Food Trust understand your responsibilities and get expert help. Includes 'Let's Get Cooking', online learning, accreditation programme.

<http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/childrens-food-trust/schools/>

Food Standards Agency

<http://www.food.gov.uk/>

Food - a fact of life (provides a wealth of free resources about healthy eating, cooking, food and farming for children and young people aged 3 to 18 years).

<http://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/>

British seasonal food chart

<http://www.whats-in-season.com/>

School Food Matters Examples of best practice and fun ideas to get children cooking, growing and out onto a farm.

<http://www.schoolfoodmatters.com>

Give Up Loving Pop Campaign to raise awareness of the health harms associated with over consumption of sugary drinks

<http://www.giveuplovingpop.org.uk/>