

Healthy Eating Policy

Greenside School



Greenside School
Learning Achieving Together

Approved by: Headteacher

Date: June 2025

Last reviewed on: N/A

Next review due by: April 2028

Introduction

At Greenside School, we are committed to promoting the health and well-being of all our students. We understand that healthy eating plays a key role in physical development, emotional well-being, and learning. Our Healthy Eating Policy reflects our whole-school approach. It is designed to support our pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), and other complex needs, in making positive food choices, while respecting individual needs and abilities.

Aims

- To encourage a whole-school culture that supports healthy food and drink choices.
- To ensure all pupils, staff, and families understand the importance of balanced nutrition.
- To adapt healthy eating approaches to meet sensory, medical, and dietary needs.
- To involve the whole school community in creating a consistent, supportive food environment.
- To work towards achieving the *Healthy School Award* and continue fostering a culture of health and wellbeing.

Curriculum Integration

Healthy eating is taught across the curriculum, especially through PSHE, science, life skills, and cooking lessons. Lessons include hands-on experiences such as food tasting, cooking, and gardening. Pupils are supported in developing independence with food-related skills (e.g., using cutlery, preparing simple snacks).

School Meals

School lunches are provided by an external company, who meet the Government's School Food Standards and is reviewed regularly to ensure they are nutritious, appealing, and varied. Visual aids and simplified menus are used to support understanding and decision-making. Individual dietary needs are catered for, including allergies, sensory aversions, religious and cultural requirements, and medical diets. Staff provide guidance and encouragement during mealtimes in a calm, social environment.

Packed Lunches

Families are encouraged to send in healthy packed lunches that include:

- A source of protein (e.g., lean meat, egg, beans)
- Wholegrain or starchy food (e.g., bread, rice, pasta)
- Fruit and/or vegetables
- A healthy drink (e.g., water, milk)
 - Sugary drinks, sweets, and crisps are discouraged except for special occasions.
 - Guidance can be shared with families on suitable options.

Snacks and Drinks

Pupils are offered healthy snacks such as fruit, vegetables, popcorn or crackers. Fresh drinking water or squash is available throughout the day. Sugary or fizzy drinks are not permitted during the school day.

Sensory and Medical Considerations

We work closely with parents, nurses, dietitians, and speech and language therapists to support students with restricted diets or oral motor needs. Individual feeding plans are developed where needed, and staff receive relevant training. We promote a non-judgmental and flexible approach to food acceptance and exposure.

Celebrations and Rewards

Birthdays and celebrations may include occasional treats, but the focus is on healthy alternatives and inclusive, non-food-based rewards.

Food-based rewards (e.g., sweets) are avoided in favour of praise, tokens, or sensory activities.

Staff Role Modelling and Training

All staff model healthy eating and positive attitudes toward food. Staff receive training on supporting healthy eating, feeding difficulties, and allergy awareness.

Family Engagement

We are able to provide workshops, newsletters, and resources for families on healthy eating, meal planning, and cooking. We actively involve parents and carers in policy development and review.

Healthy School Award Initiative

The school is working towards achieving the *Healthy School Award* to further promote healthy eating and well-being for all students. As part of this initiative, a list of recommended snacks and foods will be provided for families and students to follow. This list aligns with our commitment to promoting healthier food choices and supporting the overall well-being of our school community.

To support independence, the rules are more flexible for when students are offsite. However, we encourage limiting snacks like chocolate, crisps, and similar items to one per day. This approach helps balance personal choice with maintaining a healthy diet.

Monitoring and Review

The policy is monitored by the Headteacher and reviewed every three years.

Feedback is gathered from staff, families, and pupils to inform updates.