Allerton High

Food and Drink Policy

Reviewed and adopted by the Governing Body
May 2025

Food and Drink Policy

1. Introduction

Allerton High School is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes the health and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors. We have a whole school approach to food and nutrition. Healthy eating and what constitutes a balanced diet are core messages primarily delivered within PSHE, Science and Food technology lessons. All staff promote this and act as role models for our young people. We want to promote healthy eating, and support our students to make informed choices about the food they eat.

This policy has been written with reference to the School Food Standards (*The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2015* and *School Food Standards Practical Guide* last updated 7 February 2023). A range of stakeholders have been consulted including the LCC Health and Wellbeing team, members of staff, Chartwells staff (school Chartwells), governors, parents, carers and our Junior Leadership Team.

This policy and our healthy eating strategy are coordinated by the Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion), Business Manager and Food and Nutrition teacher.

2. Aims and Objectives

The main aims of this policy are:

- To provide a pleasurable eating experience for our staff and students
- To enable students, staff and visitors to make healthy food choices through the provision of information and guidance
- To provide opportunities for our students to develop appropriate skills and attitudes towards food and drink
- To provide healthy food choices throughout the school day, as well as on school trips and visits
- To aid our young people in their physical development; to ensure they have the energy and correct nutrients they need across a whole school day
- To raise awareness of the consequences of a poor diet
- To provide equal access to these benefits for all members of the school community

3. Breakfast and Break time

Breakfast is an important meal that should provide 25% of a child's energy requirement and contribute significantly to their vitamin and mineral requirements.

The school runs a breakfast and books club in the library every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Students read books and have breakfast. Fruit, yogurt and toast/crumpets are offered to students.
The school serves breakfast and snacks at 10:30am to 10.50am or 11am to 11.20am. This provides a nutritious meal or snack for pupils during the busy morning period. The breakfast menu includes white and wholemeal toast, various sandwiches, crumpets, fruit, and yoghurts. The menus satisfy all dietary requirements such as gluten free and low-fat milk. Water and natural drinks are available.

Parents/carers are reminded about these arrangements by periodic email newsletters.

4. Post 16 Cafeteria and Snacking

The school understands that snacks can be an important part of the diet of young people and can contribute positively towards a balanced diet. The school discourages the consumption of snacks high in fat and sugar at break-time. Parents and carers are advised about better snacks in newsletters, on the school website and at information evenings. Students are informed via lessons, displays, Healthy Eating Week and assemblies.
Post 16 students are able to buy hot and cold drinks and snacks from the New Cafeteria when it's not being used at break and lunch. The main purpose for this is to keep sixth form students in school

rather than using local shops. Although carbonated sugar drinks containing additional sugar and confectionary will be available, healthy options will also be on sale. This facility is purely for staff and sixth form students. Students from other year groups will not be able to purchase these items.

5. Drinks and Access to Water

The School Food Standards state that drinking water should be available to all of the school community at all times.

The school agrees with this recommendation and provides a free supply of drinking water via various drinking fountains throughout the school, including the cafeteria. Staff and students are encouraged to bring a bottle of water to school, or to use this to store their water. Students may drink water at all times, in lessons, except during the 30-minute assembly and when near IT equipment. However, they should fill their empty water bottles at break/lunch or before lessons start.

6. School Meals

We aim to meet the School Food Standards across the whole school day: breakfast, mid-morning snacks and lunch. Chartwells continue to adhere to the School Food Standards.

To ensure a balanced diet throughout the week, Chartwells plans a three-weekly menu to provide variety as well as meeting dietary and nutritional needs. Chartwells liaise with the Business Manager and Food and Nutrition teacher with responsibility for school food to ensure we are working towards the School Food Standards.

The menus for lunch are displayed in advance so that students and staff can plan their meals. To minimise queues, we have six service points for lunch, with a variety of dining space options. Students and staff have the option to pre- order packed lunches grab bags for school trips.

Hot meals are available as a two-course meal deal. The meals have a balance of starch, protein and fat. Puddings are only available as part of a two-course meal, and cannot be purchased on their own. Our students who are eligible for Free School Meals are entitled to this meal deal.

Students are only allowed to purchase one brownie, cookie or muffin per day.

Sandwiches are available in wholemeal or white bread.

Chartwells can meet a wide range of dietary needs including gluten free, vegetarian, vegan, low calorie and halal. Students (and their families) should inform the catering staff of any particular need. Medical and dietary requirements should be kept up to date by parent/carers via Operoo. The Admin office can inform Chartwells, on request from parent/carer, to prepare specific meals in advance according to the needs of the child.

Chartwells make every attempt to provide cultural meals to link with key dates in the diary eg. Chinese New Year and Christmas.

Fresh fruit and vegetables are available every day, with a variety of meals containing wholegrain starches, different forms of proteins and dairy. Fried food and those high in sugar or salt are kept to the minimum. Sandwiches and pasta dishes are available daily for lighter lunch options. Chartwells do not sell crisps, chocolate or high sugar fizzy drinks.

7. Free School Meals

Students entitled to free school meals receive £3.25 per day (September 2024) and can use this at break, but this does reduce what they can buy at lunchtime. Students are encouraged to use their allowance at lunch time to purchase a meal deal. 80% of students that are entitled to FSM use this daily. The school website has information about how to apply for FSM and parents/carers are reminded about the support available and the importance of a hot meal for their child.

8. Dining Environment and Procedures

Through the Junior Leadership Team, we consult our students about our dining environment and make improvements in response to student voice wherever we can.

The Cafeterias are bright and attractive, appealing to young people with a café style design. We promote healthy eating through posters and displays on the walls.

Lunchtimes are staggered to ease congestion in the Cafeterias.

9. Packed Lunches and Drinks

Packed lunches provided by Chartwells are in line with the School Food Standards. The school encourages parents and carers to provide children with packed lunches that compliment these standards. Advice and guidance is given via newsletters, the website, in assemblies and at parents' evenings. Periodically we seek parents' and carers' thoughts on packed lunches (i.e. via Parent Forum or Operoo) and work with the Junior Leadership team to develop our guidelines. Students eating packed lunches may eat in all of our dining spaces or outside if they choose.

The lunchtime duty staff lightly monitor packed lunches. We ask parents and carers to provide a balanced lunch and give the following guidelines on contents:

- Starchy foods are a good source of energy, and should make up a third of the lunchbox.
- Wherever posiblle, sandwiches should be made from wholegrain or brown bread or seeded/rye bread, as opposed to white bread.
- A variety of wholegrain starchy foods such as brown rice, pasta or couscous should be used instead of bread every day,
- Fillings for sandwiches or cold salads should be mainly protein based – including meat, fish, eggs, beans, hummus or lentils.
- One dairy item can be included each day; yoghurt or milk but cheese should be limited to twice a week.
- Vegetables or salad and a portion of fruit should be included each day.

We ask parents and carers to provide healthy snacks and drinks such as:

- Fruit, raw vegetables with dips and yogurts
- Water, lower fat milk, fresh fruit or vegetable juice (max 150mls), fruit cordials with no added sugar, rice, soya or oat drinks.

Students in the behaviour area and/or inclusion order a packed lunch which during break time.

We ask parents or carers not to send the following in to school; crisps, confectionary, chocolate, chocolate-coated products, fizzy drinks or energy drinks and nuts. If students are seen with fizzy drinks, energy drinks or family sizes bags of crisps or sweets, these will be confiscated.

12. After-School Clubs and Extra-Curricular Activities

Food is not provided at after school clubs or during extra – curricular activities.

13. Special Occasions, Birthdays and Rewards

The school does not encourage the regular eating of sweets, chewing gum or other foods high in sugar or fat so tries to promote other methods of rewarding students where possible.

- Postcard home from individual staff member
- Bronze/silver/gold reward postcard
- Achievement assembly
- Cinema experience
- Coaching group pizza prize (made in school following healthy food guidance)
- Rewards treat at specific points in the school year only (usually made in school following healthy food guidance and where possible served at lunch/break time along with a main meal).
- Gift voucher
- Newsletter item
- Rewards trip/ Rewards day

14. Healthy Eating and Cooking in the Curriculum

Across the school information is shared with students about the importance of a healthy lifestyle through the Coaching Programme. Activities and assemblies focus on the importance of young people making informed and sensible decisions about their diet and exercise. Healthy eating and drinking form a key part of this work.

In KS3 and KS4, there are a number of opportunities for students to develop their knowledge and understanding of health, including healthy eating patterns. Students learn some of the practical skills involved in growing, cultivating, purchasing, preparing and cooking food.

In KS3 science students study the digestive system in Year 7. As part of this work they look at the consequences of imbalances in their diet and use calculations to identify energy requirements needed for a healthy daily diet. In Year 9 students study the effects of high levels of cholesterol and poor diets on long term health and the social impacts of poor diets. They also look at obesity as a risk factor for many diseases such as coronary heart disease and cancer.

In KS4 science students study enzymes and how they are involved in the breakdown of molecules such as starch, protein and lipids in the digestive system. They also study photosynthesis and how agricultural practices maximise the rate of photosynthesis in crops.

In KS5 Science students undertake an in-depth study of carbohydrate, protein and lipid structure and their digestion. They also learn how agriculture interferes with the cycling of nutrients within various ecosystems and how the use of fertilisers leads to eutrophication.

RE provides the opportunity to discuss the role of certain foods in the major religions of the world. Students experience different foods associated with religious festivals. In the Year 7 Celebration of Festivals students have the opportunity to taste food from different cultures and religions. Students find out about halal/ haram food and kosher food.

Food Technology provides the opportunity to learn about where food comes from and gives students the opportunity to apply healthy eating messages through practical work with food, including preparation and cooking for all students in KS3. It is a popular option in KS4.

Year 9 PSE encourages young people to take responsibility for their own health and well-being, teaches them how to develop a healthy lifestyle and addresses issues such as healthy eating and body image. Students are able to discuss issues of healthy eating relevant to young people. The Annual Health Fair promotes an awareness of healthy eating and diets.

Geography provides a focus on the natural world and changing environment, offering the chance to consider the impact our consumer choices have on people across the world that rely on growing food as their source of income. Geography also highlights the importance of reducing our global footprint and moving towards a sustainable future. Students find out about how sourcing local food and the concept of fair-trade play important roles in achieving these goals.

Physical Education provides students with the opportunity to develop physically and to understand the practical impact of sport, exercise and other physical activity such as dance and walking. All students are encouraged to take part in extra-curricular activities. Students following exam courses study the impact of nutrition on sporting performance.

Effective teaching requires students to develop their understanding of healthy eating issues and appropriate skills and attitudes to assist them in making informed decisions. Teaching methods adopted in the classroom offer a rich variety of opportunities for participatory learning and include debating issues, group discussions and role-play.

All staff, including teachers and caterers, have a key role in influencing students' knowledge, skills and attitudes towards food. It is important that they are familiar with healthy eating guidelines. To facilitate this the school provides basic awareness training at staff meetings and training events. The Chartwells catering team will attend continued professional development training as required.

15. Where Food Comes From

The school garden is used to grow vegetables and herbs to teach students how to grow edible plants and inspire them to try this at home. Some of this produce is used in Food Technology lessons.
In KS4 Science, Geography and Food and Nutrition lessons students learn about different methods of farming, where food comes from, sustainability and food miles.

16. Special Dietary Requirements

The school provides food which meets the requirements of our families' religious beliefs and cultural practices. Chartwells offer vegetarian options at breakfast, break and lunch every day. When necessary, the school also provides a vegan option, and all other dietary requirements including gluten and lactose free products.

Chartwells can meet students with individual requirements and their parents or carers. The students' needs and information about allergies and food intolerances are stored in SIMS in case of an emergency. The caterers also have this information in their biometric system.

17. Food and Drink Safety

All foods stuffs and drinks comply with Environmental Health and Food Hygiene Regulations. The PFI Contract Officer monitors this on a termly basis.

Adequate storage and washing facilities are available. All food handlers undergo appropriate Food Hygiene Training and suitable equipment and protective clothing are available. All food safety hazards are identified and controlled.

Periodically students may sell cakes or biscuits as part of fund-raising activities. These are purchased from supermarkets or other accredited food retailers, or made under the supervision of the Food Technology teacher.

18. Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Caterers, the Junior Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team, Governors at the Inclusion Committee and parents/carers comment on this policy when it is reviewed every two years.

Members of the Junior Leadership Team collect feedback from their peers about food on sale in the cafeteria and periodically, feedback is collected on Operoo from staff and parent/carers. Feedback is shared with representatives of Chartwells and the Business Manager on a regular basis.