

Food in School Policy



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| Approved by: | David Jenkins | Date: September 2018 |
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| Last reviewed on: | September 2024 |
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| Next review due by: | September 2025 |
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Rationale:

As part of 'The Rhumsaa Difference', our aim is "to make sure our school is a nurturing, caring environment for everyone and to encourage well-being through healthy minds and bodies". As such, the school is committed to providing an environment that promotes healthy eating and to enabling children to make informed choices about the food they eat.

Bunscoil Rhumsaa is also committed to inclusion and as such this policy reinforces our commitment to recognising the value of the individual and striving to provide equal opportunity for all.

Objectives:

- To improve health and well-being for all
- To ensure the safety of children and adults in school
- To ensure the inclusion of all children
- To set out a coordinated approach to managing food in school
- To give parents information on all aspects of managing food in school
- To communicate part of the schools stated drivers ('Well-Being' from 'The Rhumsaa Difference')
- To help establish effective partnerships between teachers, parents and children to work towards a common goal
- To make provision for staff training as appropriate

Strategies:

Curriculum: Pupils will learn about healthy lifestyles (including healthy eating), nutrition, balanced diets and general health and well-being at various times from Reception to Year Six. Leading by example: The school is committed to promoting healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. School Meals Service provides nutritionally balanced meals daily.

Packed Lunches: Parents are encouraged to provide healthy packed lunches and information and guidance to support this is available from the school (on-site and on-line).

Healthy Snacks: School recognises that snacking can be an important part of the diet of young people and can contribute positively to a balanced diet. Therefore, pupils are allowed to bring to school a snack which they may eat during the morning break. However, the school strongly discourages snacks which are high in fat, salt or sugar, while items such as fizzy drinks (excluding fizzy water), chocolate bars and high-fat crisps are not allowed. The school can provide advice and guidance to parents about appropriate snacks (on-site and online).

Drinks: Water is freely available to pupils throughout the school day from chilled water fountains in each corridor of classrooms. Children may bring their own drink to school if they wish; however, this does not include fizzy drinks (bottles or cans) which are not allowed.

Special Events: Throughout the school year there may be special occasions or events (such as fundraising events or learning opportunities) which include food. In all such cases due consideration must be given to the objectives of this policy. However, in such cases it is

acceptable for there to be 'treats' (eg cakes, sweets etc) provided if provision is made for those with food allergies, intolerance or additional dietary needs eg alternative treats, use of gluten-free ingredients, appropriate preparation, handling and cleaning-up arrangements etc.

Birthdays etc: Although we appreciate the kind intent of parents sending cake or treats to school for their child's birthday or return from a holiday, this is not allowed. The growing number of children with different allergies, intolerances or additional dietary needs means that this measure is needed, as the bringing in of cakes etc is increasingly difficult to manage in school, and therefore presents too high a risk.

Special Dietary Requirements:

Religious and Ethnic Groups: The school will provide food in accordance with pupils' religious beliefs and cultural practices where appropriate.

Vegetarians and Vegan: The School Meals Service provide a vegetarian option every day for those taking School Meals. Where requested, School Meals Service can provide a vegan option.

Food Allergies, Intolerance and Additional Dietary Needs: Individual Care Plans should be provided for children with food allergies, intolerance or additional dietary needs. These should detail symptoms and adverse reactions, actions to be taken in an emergency and emergency contact details. Individual Care Plans should be reviewed with parents regularly.

The dietary needs of individuals will be considered in all activities and appropriate provision made accordingly. This may include provision of alternative options, use of safe ingredients, appropriate storage, appropriate cleaning provision, use of suitable equipment, sharing information with children.

Staff Training Opportunities: Staff will undertake relevant training where available and appropriate to ensure that up-to-date knowledge and practice is applied. The school will also provide staff with guidance and advice from appropriate sources.

Partnership with Parents: Teachers and support staff should liaise with the parents of children in their class who have additional dietary needs if they are planning an activity which may necessitate additional measures being put in place to accommodate those needs.

Raising Awareness: School recognises that there is a growing number of pupils with additional dietary needs. As such, the school is committed to raising awareness of such needs, and the impact, social and medical, that they can have on the individuals concerned. This will be done sensitively and with a firm emphasis on providing facts and information.