

WHOLE SCHOOL FOOD POLICY

Date last reviewed	April 2026
Committee Responsible	SBS
Designated member of staff	Sharon Mercer
Date of next review	April 2028

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Grey Court School is committed to giving students consistent messages about all aspects of health and wellbeing, to help them understand the impact of particular behaviours and to encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles and take responsibility for the lifelong choices they make.

Grey Court School seeks to promote health awareness in all members of the school community. The school environment, the behaviour of the staff and students and the messages that the students receive through the formal curriculum all play a crucial role in influencing children and young people's knowledge and understanding of health and nutrition. Through effective leadership, the school ethos and the curriculum, all school staff can bring together all elements in the school to create an environment which supports a healthy lifestyle.

Our Whole School Food Policy covers all aspects of food and drink provision and education, including the formal curriculum, extra-curricular activities, school meals, packed lunches and food provided at the school other than school meals. It also covers welfare issues related to food and involvement of the school in national food-related initiatives and events.

Aims

At Grey Court we work as a whole school community to achieve the following aims regarding food and drink throughout the school day:

- To set out a coordinated approach to food and drink throughout the school day and to ensure that we are giving consistent messages about food and health.
- To communicate our shared vision, ethos and values on all aspects of food and drink in our school.
- To inform part of our school's development plan, providing a strategic vision that everyone understands.

- To improve the health of students and staff by helping to influence their eating habits through increasing their knowledge and awareness of food issues, including what constitutes a healthy and balanced diet, hygienic food preparation and storage methods.
- To ensure students are given the opportunity to learn the skills needed to make healthy, nutritious food.
- To strive to ensure that students are well nourished at school by providing every student with access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and free, clean and palatable drinking water during the school day.
- To ensure that food and drink provision in the school reflects the ethical and medical requirements of staff and students (e.g., religious, medical, vegetarian and allergenic needs)
- To make the provision and consumption of food and drink an enjoyable and safe experience.
- To encourage and teach good manners and courtesy.

Objectives

1. To work to ensure that the following are actively involved in developing, monitoring and amending this policy:
 - Governors
 - School Leadership Team
 - Staff
 - Students
 - Parents/guardians
 - The school's wider community
2. To integrate these aims into all aspects of school life, in particular:
 - Food and drink provision within the school
 - The curriculum
 - Pastoral and social activities
3. To ensure these objectives are effectively put into place, a member of the Senior Leadership team will take responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

FOOD AND DRINK PROVISION WITHIN THE SCHOOL

All food sold during the school day is done so under the direction of our catering manager and is provided by our catering provider, AiP/Sodexo, <https://www.allianceinpartnership.co.uk/secondary-school/>

Students are offered milk, fresh fruit and vegetables each day and are provided with a menu which has regard to nutritional balance and healthy options.

The catering manager ensures that the food on offer conforms to the government's School Food Standards. (The requirements for School Food Regulations 2014). Information about the standards can be found in Appendix 1.

Our caterers meet regularly with a member of the senior leadership team to ensure the healthy food policy is followed, to monitor the quality of food and service provided and to gain feedback from students.

School Catering Service

Grey Court offers a daily breakfast, which is free to all students who are entitled to free school meals, breaktime menu and full lunchtime catering service, which includes a range of hot and cold grab and go items and a full plated main meal. This is available to all students including each student who is entitled to a free school meal, and to all staff. Weekly Menus are communicated on our website, in our weekly newsletter and in the main canteen.

Grey Court offers students the opportunity to purchase healthy cold food options from the Food Cube situated in the playground, for those students who wish to eat and drink outside.

Students in Years 7 to 11 must stay on site during lunchtimes; this encourages them to have access to healthy food. We operate a cashless system so that students do not need to carry cash and we can provide meal reports for individual students to track if they are eating healthily.

Packed Lunches

Students are permitted to bring a packed lunch and students doing so are permitted to eat their lunch in the same areas as those purchasing food from the cafeteria. The Government's food-based standards for school lunches do not apply to food and drink that has been brought in from outside school, however Grey Court endeavours to ensure packed lunches follow the same standards as school meals. School guidance on packed lunches can be found in Appendix 2 and is also on our website. Further advice on healthy packed lunches can be found on the following website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>

Staff on duty at lunchtime routinely monitor packed lunches to ensure they follow school guidance. The following actions are also taken to encourage students and parents/ guardians to pack healthy and nutritious packed lunches:

- Tutors teach Healthy Eating in PDW
- Content of packed lunch boxes is mentioned in Head Teacher's newsletters to parents
- Year 7 parents are reminded of this in their induction meeting
- Posters encouraging Healthy Eating are displayed in the school
- PDW covers the link between eating well and feeling good. It shows how eating disorders can be linked to emotional problems and debunks dieting myths

Dietary Requirements

The school endeavours to identify the special dietary requirements of our students and staff. In response to these dietary requirements we ensure that food and drink provision throughout the school day reflects these requirements. We welcome the opportunity to work with parents/guardians and students to ensure any special dietary needs are met.

Alternative ingredients are provided for, and students are encouraged to adapt recipes in food and nutrition lessons, according to their special dietary needs and requirements. The school follows a nut-free policy.

We ensure that the canteen has a list of students with food allergies, and the electronic payment system will highlight students with allergies when they pay for purchases. Our caterers also display prominent allergy signs which encourage students to check ingredients and to ask for information if this is needed.

We have a rolling out programme of training staff on administering Epipens and our chef manager has completed a first aid course held at GC.

Staying Hydrated

Water is freely available throughout the school to all members of the community. Students may drink their water at any time, and we encourage them to bring reusable drinking bottles to enable them to refill these at break, lunchtimes and after school, in order to stay hydrated throughout the day.

Food across the Curriculum

Throughout the school there are a number of opportunities for students to develop knowledge and understanding of health, including healthy eating patterns and practical skills that are needed to understand where food comes from such as shopping, preparing and cooking food. Examples of how food and healthy eating can be incorporated into the curriculum are:

- Food and Nutrition provides the opportunity to learn about where food comes from and apply healthy eating messages through practical work with food, including preparation and cooking. Students learn about the impact of food production on the environment and how as designers they are to think about these issues, as well as health and nutrition. Every student is taught Cooking in KS3 on a rotational basis with other technology subjects; in Key Stage 4 the option for students is Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE. This is extensive in the knowledge taught regarding healthy eating and nutrition. The key message is to make life long healthy choices in regard to food and how to be independent when they leave the home environment, with an understanding of food security and sustainable practices within food preparation in industry and how these practices are also applicable in the home.
- Maths offers the possibility of understanding nutrition labelling, calculating quantities for recipes, weighing and measuring ingredients.
- Science provides an opportunity to learn about the types of food available, nutritional composition, digestion and the function of different nutrients in contributing to health and how the body responds to exercise.
- 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.
- Languages provide the opportunity to learn about and try the different foods eaten in different countries around the world.
- Design and Technology affords students the opportunity to research food issues using the internet and other electronic resources. Students design packaging and adverts to promote healthy food choices.
- Physical Education provides students with the opportunity to develop physically and to understand the practical impact of sport, exercise and the importance of a healthy diet to physical fitness, healthy diet and lifestyle form part of the GCSE courses. Every student is given a termly fitness target
- PDW encourages young people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing; it teaches them how to develop a healthy lifestyle and addresses issues such as eating disorders, body image and health and diet.
- Geography provides a focus on the natural world and the importance of a healthy water supply, farming and changing environment, offering the chance to consider the impact our consumer choices have on people across the world who rely on growing food as their source of income
- History provides insight into changes in diet and food over time.
- Extra-curricular clubs and events provide learning opportunities, such as Food Club, Multicultural Day, World Food Day and India Day, which is part of year 7 summer activities week.
- Work related learning provides opportunities to carry out work experience placements in the catering industry, follow college link courses in catering,

- School visits provide students with activities to enhance their physical development and knowledge of food e.g. to activity centres and on trips abroad

Environment

The school provides a clean, sociable environment which is welcoming and promotes social interaction amongst students and encourages good manners at all times. In doing so, the children should adhere to the following rules:

- Students are required to sit at a table in order to eat their lunch.
- Students who have packed lunch or who buy food from the Food Cube are allowed to eat this outside if they wish to.
- Students are required to eat all or at least try to eat most of the food provided, either by the school or in their lunch box
- All litter is put into the appropriate recycling and refuse bins provided
- Staff supervising will help any students who have concerns or cause concern during mealtime, e.g. children who may have problems eating their lunch, spill or drop their lunch, cannot find a place to sit, do not eat their lunch or skip lunch.
- Students are expected to behave whilst eating their lunches and be polite and helpful.
- If students are unsure of what the meal, or any meal item, is, they can ask the caterer or supervisory assistant to explain
- Caterers and supervisory assistants thank students for using the facilities, as students thank them for their help and assistance
- Students must leave the area where they have eaten their lunch in a reasonably clean and tidy condition.

Recycling and Sustainability

- All packaging used by the catering company is recyclable.
- The school provides a recycling point for plastic e.g. bottles, containers etc. The school provides bins for recycling all paper and cardboard. Students also compost waste for our school allotment.
- The school allotment club is run by a member of staff and a team of students who maintain the allotment and grow vegetables. The students use the vegetables for making chutney and the students sell their products at local fairs. This is all part of educating our students about the rewards of growing your own food, sustainability, and enterprise.
- Food waste from lessons is composted and used within the allotment club, whilst any packaging from food lessons is also appropriately recycled using the local authority.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

- The partnership of home and school is critical in shaping how children and young people behave, particularly where health is concerned. Each must reinforce the other. Parents and carers are regularly updated on our water and packed lunch policies through newsletters. We ask parents not to send in fizzy drinks and we remind them that only water may be drunk during the school day.
- During out of school events, the school will encourage parents and carers to consider The School Food Policy in the range of refreshments offered for sale to the children.
- Food and Nutrition news is regularly shared in the e-bulletin to re-emphasise the importance of healthy eating and nutrition both in school and at home.

Role of the Governors

Governors have a statutory duty to ensure that the school complies with the school food standards. Governors monitor and check that the school policy is upheld and can offer guidance, where a member of the body has a particular expertise in this area.

APPENDIX 1

The revised standards for school food came into force on 1 January 2015 and are set out in [Education England: The requirements for School Food Regulations 2014](#)

Department of Education has updated the guidance for schools Nov 2025

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/school-food-standards-practical-guide>

Appendix 2 – School Packed Lunch Guidance

Grey Court School recognises the benefits of a well-balanced hot school meal for children, in the middle of the day, and would recommend to parents that this is the best option. However, should parents decide to send in a packed lunch from home, they should note the following recommended guidelines set out by the British Nutrition Foundation.

A child's lunch should include only the following:

- A portion of starchy food, e.g. wholegrain bap/bread, sesame seed pitta bread, plain crackers, pasta, or rice salad.
- Fresh fruit and vegetables, e.g. apple/orange/banana, cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, mini fruit chunks, etc.
- A portion of milk or dairy food, e.g. cheese, plain/fruit yoghurt, etc.
- A small portion of lean meat, fish or alternative, e.g. two slices of ham, chicken, beef, Quorn, cheese, tuna, egg, or hummus, etc.
- A drink - fruit juice (not fizzy or diluted squash), water (not flavoured), milk (not flavoured).

Parents are advised to include an ice pack. Food products prepared and stored in ambient temperatures, can after a period of between two to four hours, have increased levels of bacteria in them, which may be harmful to your child. The school cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

In addition, the school requests that parents do not include the following items in packed lunches:

- Sweets, chocolate, etc.
- Crisps or any savoury snacks high in salt and fat.
- Fizzy drinks/sugary drinks.
- Sweet cakes, e.g. sugary cakes, doughnuts, etc.
- **Nuts of any kind.**

We also request that students do not share food.

Parents who have difficulty following these guidelines are requested to contact the school.

Here is a link that you may find of use:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/childhealth6-15/Pages/Lighterlunchboxes.as>

