

EARLY YEARS NUTRITION POLICY 2025/26

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

Castledyke Primary School understands the importance of providing a healthy and balanced diet.

Pupils require the right amount of nutrients and energy they need while they are growing rapidly, this is particularly paramount for those children who are not offered the correct balanced diet at home.

All staff at Castledyke Primary School ensure that they teach children the importance of healthy eating and are providing children with the opportunity for positive eating habits. As stated in the EYFS Nutrition guidance “Children’s early experiences with food can shape future eating habits”.

Castledyke Primary School is committed to providing a nutritious and balanced diet through:

- Having children eating together in the setting to encourage children to try different foods that some children may not be accustomed to at home.
- Members of staff are to watch children eat at all times.
- Ensure allergies are catered for and all staff are aware of these allergies- children will have their own allergy plan in place.
- A healthy and balanced meal will be planned and offered to children at lunch time. Parents will be able to order the meal through ‘Parent Pay’ and therefore, they are aware of the menu that their child will be served.
- Water will be available to children throughout the school day, and semi skimmed milk at snack time.
- All staff working with children when they are eating will be paediatric first aid trained.
- All staff working with children who serve food will have the relevant Food Safety training in place.
- If food is brought in from home (packed lunch)- parents are to be aware that children are to have healthy packed lunch choices – providing healthy, balanced and nutritious food.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to the relevant legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Childcare Act 2006
- Education Act 2002
- Education Act 2011

- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended in 2004)
- Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance 2025
- EYFS Framework 2024

This policy has due regard to the relevant statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance 2025

WHAT IS NUTRITION GUIDANCE? (Please refer to Appendix 1)

The guidance states that: “Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious”.

Nutrition Guidance includes the following:

- Ensure school meals are a balanced diet covering the 4 main food groups
- Ensure packed lunches brought in from home are healthy
- Allergies are catered for and all children have an allergy plan in place
- Food for religious faith and beliefs and special dietary requirements are catered for
- Schools are to only allow children to drink water or semi-skimmed milk-avoid juice or sugary drinks (fresh fruit juice will be offered at lunchtime)
- Children should eat a variety of fruit and vegetables- this will be offered each day at snack time.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The headteacher is responsible for:

- To ensure the school kitchen staff are offering a healthy and balanced menu each week.
- To ensure all staff are aware that healthy packed lunches are to be monitored
- Water is to be offered to all children throughout the day
- To ensure that all staff working with children with food are paediatric first aid trained
- To ensure all staff who are handling food have ‘Food Safety’ training.

All members of staff working with children in EYFS:

- Always ensure food is cut up to a size that is right for the child.
- Ensure parents/ carers are aware of the menu offered to children (through Parent Pay)

- Members of staff have a positive relationship with parents and ensure that information is shared with families regarding a child's food intake.
- Ensuring that the food provided from home aligns with the healthy options offered by our setting.
- Packed lunches are checked to ensure the food is suitable and staff are preventing any choking.
- Packed lunches can be kept at room temperature for 4 hours at a maximum, school cannot take any responsibility for the storage of food as there is no cooling facilities.
- Ensure packed lunches are clearly labelled with the child's name on and detail the contents.
- Any food that has been brought in from home such as; a birthday cake for a celebration, must be checked for any allergens before serving to a child. Parents should then be told that their child has had something additional to their lunch time meal or fruit snack to ensure parents are involved in supporting with healthy eating habits.

Parents are responsible for:

- Liaising with the school to communicate their wishes regarding their child's dietary requirements.
- Providing a healthy and balanced packed lunch and ensuring their child's food is cut up appropriately.
- Ensuring their child has a water bottle each day with water in.

IMPLEMENTATION

Children's packed lunches should include items from the 5 main food groups.

Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta

These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Packed lunches should include 2 or more portions e.g., pasta salad, sandwich.

Fruit and Vegetables

These foods provide vitamins, minerals and fibre. Lunches should include at least 1 portion of fruit and/or 1 portion of vegetables / salad, or more e.g., carrot/cucumber sticks, cherry tomatoes, a piece of fruit (including dried fruit).

Milk and Dairy foods

These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Include 1 portion at lunch e.g., yoghurt, fromage frais, milk or cheese, custard or calcium-enriched plant based dairy alternative.

Meat, Fish, Eggs, Beans

These foods provide protein for growth. Packed lunches should include 1 portion of these foods e.g., boiled egg as filling in sandwich, tuna as a sandwich filling, mixed bean salad, sliced chicken as a sandwich filling, to name but a few.

Please see appendix 1 for a Parent Friendly Food Guide

Please support our school by not including these items in a packed lunch:

Nuts

We are a **Nut Free Environment** therefore we do not allow any products that contain nuts anywhere on our premises and kindly request that parents/guardians/carers refrain from packing nut or nut-based products in their children's lunches. (The school is aware of food allergies and has a procedure in place to manage food allergies and other special dietary requirements and is compliant with Natasha's Law).

Foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar

It is important not to fill up on too many foods that are high in fat and/or sugar at the expense of other more nutritious foods. Limiting high fat and sugar foods will help protect young people from becoming overweight as well as helping prevent tooth decay, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. This is why sweets, chocolate, crisps, cereal bars, fruit bars, toffee/salted popcorn, squash and fizzy drinks are no longer available in schools.

No more than one dessert item per day Cake, biscuit, cereal bar, fruit loaf, bun, ideally fruit based. Please encourage your child to eat these as part of a meal.

BANNED ITEMS

To ensure consistency and to keep packed lunches in line with food standards for school meals, packed lunches should not contain the following:

- Nuts – We are a Nut Free Environment. Although nuts can be healthy, some children are allergic to nuts and they can cause a severe reaction even when in other pupil's lunches.
- Fizzy / sugary drinks in cartons, bottles or cans.
- Chocolate-coated products / sweets / confectionary.
- Sweets.

- Chewing gum.
- Sugared / toffee and salted popcorn.
- Crisps or any packet savoury snacks high in salt and fat.
- Energy drinks
- Caffeine drinks

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher and EYFS Lead, who will make any changes necessary and communicate these to all members of staff.

The next scheduled review date is December 2026

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction program

APPENDIX 1

Eatwell Guide

Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (150g) contains

Energy	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
104kcal 250kcal	3.0g LOW	1.3g LOW	34g HIGH	0.9g MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kcal/ 167kcal

Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars

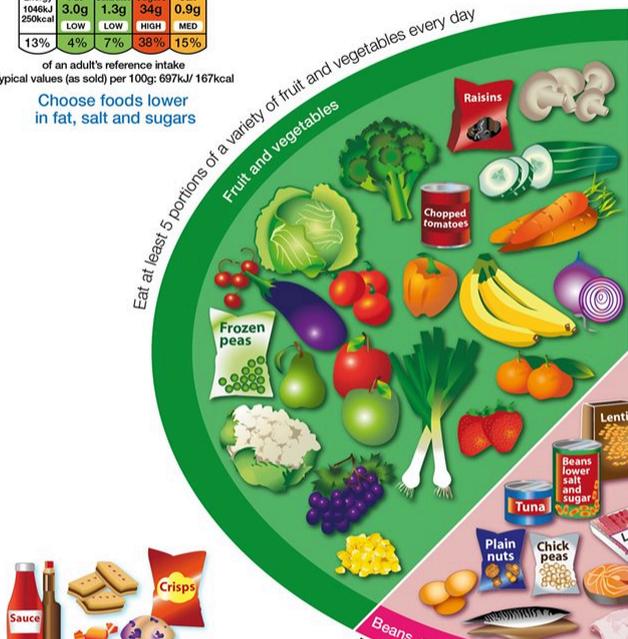
Use the Eatwell Guide to help you get a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.



Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count.

Limit fruit juice and/or smoothies to a total of 150ml a day.

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day



Eat less often and in small amounts



Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with less added fat, salt and sugar



Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

Eat more beans and pulses, 2 portions of sustainably sourced fish per week, one of which is oily. Eat less red and processed meat



Dairy and alternatives

Choose lower fat and lower sugar options



Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts

Per day 2000kcal 2500kcal = ALL FOOD + ALL DRINKS

Healthy packed lunch tips: A simple guide to support families



This guide complies with school food standards and offers tips on how to do a packed lunch on a budget, as well as suggestions on how to make lunches more inspiring.



One portion of whole grains & one source of protein:

- Three bean pasta salad
- Jollof rice
- Rice & peas
- Roast chicken sandwich
- Cheese quesadilla
- Wholemeal pitta and hummus
- Chicken salad
- Vegetable noodles
- Chickpea and potato curry
- Pitta pizzas
- Tuna and pasta salad
- Cheese roll ups
- Soup and crackers
- DIY Tacos
- Black bean burger
- Roast plantain wedges
- Salmon and cream cheese bagel
- Lentil and sweet potato dhal
- Tuna and bean salad
- Ham and cheese sandwich
- Chickpea and vegetable wrap
- Roast vegetable and turkey pasta
- Potato and cauliflower curry
- Cucumber and hummus wraps



At least one portion of vegetable & one portion of fruit:

- Bell pepper
- Carrots
- Celery
- Peas
- Corn
- Broccoli
- Cherry tomatoes
- Kale crisps
- Salad
- Cucumber
- Cauliflower
- Spinach
- Courgette
- Green beans
- Beetroot
- Radish
- Grapes
- Banana
- Orange
- Pineapple
- Cherries
- Mango
- Raspberries
- Strawberries
- Blackberries
- Dried fruit
- Tinned fruit (not in syrup)
- Apple
- Pear
- Papaya
- Apricot
- Melon



One snack:

- Small bag of popcorn
- Small pieces of cheese
- Crackers
- Low fat & sugar yogurts (check the food label is green)
- Malt loaf
- DIY fruit crunch pots
- Brown, plain rice cakes
- Dried fruits (sultanas, raisins)
- Edamame beans



Lunchbox ideas and recipes: www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/



Tips to make a balanced packed lunch:

- Pick a main that includes wholegrain & protein, a selection of fruit & vegetables, one snack and water.
- Ensure fruit and vegetables are always included in a packed lunch.
- Choose wholegrain (bread, pasta, rice) as increased fibre will keep your child fuller for longer.
- Swap out sugary fruit juices, smoothies & fizzy drinks for water, or add fresh fruit to water such as strawberry, oranges or lemons.
- Replace crisps, cheese strings, cookies and sweets with some of the healthier snacks suggested.

Tips to create a healthy packed lunch on a budget:

- Keep different types of wholegrain bread products in the freezer so you have a variety of options that will last longer – bagels, pittas, sliced loaf, wraps.
- Use leftover veg/roast meat from the day before to make cold pasta salads or sandwiches.
- Buy tinned fruit in juice (not syrup) and frozen/tinned vegetables - they are just as nutritious!
- Buy a steel water bottle for your child rather than using disposable plastic water bottles - it's better for the environment and saves money in the long run.



Tips to help your child enjoy packed lunches:

- Involve your child with making their lunch - cutting the fruit/veg or adding salad to their wrap (do it the day before and squeeze some lemon on the fruit to keep it fresh).
- Dipping foods are fun for kids and a happy change from a sandwich every day. Provide a low fat dip such as hummus or tzatziki so they can dunk their carrots or peppers.
- Taste the rainbow - try a variety of different fruits and vegetables for a visually fun packed lunch.
- If you have the time, try cutting fruit and vegetables into shapes.

