JOHN FLETCHER OF MADELEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Healthy Eating Policy

To be reviewed: Spring 2026

John Fletcher of Madeley Primary School

Healthy Eating Policy

Please read this policy in conjunction with the Updated EYFS Policy and Food/Lunchbox Policy 2025

We believe that healthy eating and healthy attitudes to food are vital to the physical and mental wellbeing of both our children and the adults at John Fletcher of Madeley Primary School.

Children will achieve more when their health, well-being and learning needs are met.

We recognise the important part a healthy diet plays for a child's wellbeing and their ability to learn effectively and achieve.

We believe that the school, in partnership with parents and carers, can make a major contribution to improving children and young people's health by increasing their knowledge and understanding of food and helping them to make healthy food choices.

This policy will address;

- Healthy break time snacks
- Healthy lunchboxes
- Healthy drinks

The children were consulted as part of developing this policy. They decided that the main aims for a healthy eating policy were;

- It helps young people develop, grow and do well in school
- It helps to prevent childhood and adolescent health problems such as obesity, eating disorders and tooth decay
- It may help to prevent health problems later in life, such as heart disease and cancer

What do we mean by a healthy diet?

A healthy diet is one which allows for a balance of different foods that sustain the wellbeing of the individual. Different lifestyles result in different dietary needs and individuals need to be aware of these and the effects of different foods on their bodies. A healthy, balanced diet may vary between individuals from different cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds.

Healthy Break Time Snacks

To promote a healthy lifestyle we encourage the children to have a healthy snack at break time each day. A healthy snack will help to keep hunger pangs at bay till lunchtime and aid concentration in class!

What do we mean by a healthy break time snack?

- Any fresh fruit e.g. apple, grapes, strawberries, tomatoes
- Natural dried fruit e.g. raisons, sultanas, bananas
- Any raw or cooked vegetable e.g. celery or carrot
- Plain bread e.g. breadsticks, soda bread, cracker

What does not constitute a healthy snack?

- Flapjacks or granola bars
- Cereal bars
- Fruit covered in chocolate
- Fruit winders
- Tinned fruit
- Yogurts
- Cakes and biscuits
- Crisps
- Croissants

Parents are requested to send in snacks that comply with this healthy eating policy.

All snacks sent in will be kept in the children's bags, lockers or trays and not in their lunchboxes.

All snacks need to able to be consumed as they are sent in and must not require further preparation or storage facilities.

Children are expected to dispose of all wrapping and packaging in the bins provided.

Should a child bring in a snack that does not comply with our healthy eating policy they will be allowed to eat that snack- it will not be taken off them.

However, children will be reminded about the need to bring healthy snacks in the future.

Children who do bring in healthy snacks may receive praise and house points as reward.

Healthy Lunchboxes

Children should have about a third of their daily nutrient requirements at lunchtime. This means that they need food that is going to provide them with enough energy, protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

Lunchboxes provided from home should contain:

- Starchy foods such as bread, rolls, potatoes, rice
- A good source of protein such as meat, fish, eggs
- A good source of calcium such as cheese or yoghurt
- A portion of fruit, salad or vegetable such as tomatoes, pineapple chunks or carrot sticks.

Useful ideas can be found at the Change4life website.

https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes

Healthy drinks

By encouraging children to choose a healthy drink option we aim to;

- help improve the general nutrition of all our children.
- increase the children's awareness of the importance of consuming water.
- encourage children to drink water throughout the day; both in the classroom and at break time.

It is important that children drink enough during the school day to ensure they stay hydrated and don't become tired.

- The key to boosting the capacity to learn is to keep well hydrated throughout the day.
- When we are thirsty mental performance including memory, attention and concentration can decrease by about 10%
- Pupils concentrate better because they are not distracted by the effects of dehydration such as thirst, tiredness and irritability
- Can aid behaviour management by helping to settle pupils in the classroom.

We encourage parents to provide their child with a plastic water bottle from home.

Procedures for water bottles:

- Water bottles will go home with students each night for cleaning.
- Students are to have access to water bottles during class times. (Bottles may be kept on table tops or in an accessible place within the classroom).

- Students are not to drink from other students' bottles under any circumstance.
- Water bottles should be full at the beginning of the day and this amount of water should last them the school day. Children should not be needing to constantly be wanting to re-fill their water bottle.

Children have access to water through taps, which are situated around the school.

Children having a school lunch have access to water on the tables in the dining hall.

Children having a packed lunch from home should have a drink provided as part of their lunch.

We encourage children to bring:

- water (not flavoured or fizzy waters)
- milk

We understand that sometimes children may have:

- fruit juice, squash or smoothies

However, children may not have fizzy drinks.

Although we encourage a balanced healthy approach to our diets we are aware that sometimes we all enjoy treats!

Unhealthy food choices may sometimes be a part of the school day, such as a charity fund raising event, a class reward or a Christmas party. Please note, any birthday treats are discouraged. However, if they are brought in, they will only be given out after school, for parents to make the decision of whether they can have them or not.