The policy should be read in conjunction with the Curriculum & School Organisation policy, Schemes of Work and subject mapping for PSHCE, Design Technology and the Supplementary Guidance for Policies (covering Philosophy & Ethos, Audience, Monitoring & Evaluation, Supporting learning beyond the school).

At The Loyne Specialist School we believe that education about health issues is very important for the development of our pupils both now and for the future. We acknowledge the important link between a healthy lifestyle and the ability to learn effectively. We also recognise that the school can play an integral role in supporting families to promote lifelong healthy eating as part of a healthy lifestyle and recognise that a healthy lifestyle will look very different for different students. We also aim to broaden limited diets by introducing a range of tastes, textures and colours.

A child's healthy, balanced diet should consist of (unless on a specialised diet):
1. Plenty of fruit and vegetables
2. Plenty of unrefined starchy foods
3. Some meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein
4. Some milk and dairy foods (and a small amount of food and drink high in fat, sugar and/or salt)

We recognise that it is important for the whole school to use consistent messages around healthy eating. Therefore, our message is:

There is no such thing as bad foods just bad diets. Healthy eating does not mean never having treats but it does mean having them at appropriate times and in moderation.

Aims of policy:

- To ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in school promote the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors to our school.
- To improve the eating habits of pupils and staff through increasing their knowledge and awareness of food issues, including what constitutes a healthy diet and hygienic food preparation.
- To ensure the school curriculum is rich with learning opportunities that encourage and aid students in making sensible choices when selecting food and drink.
- To ensure that pupils are well nourished at school and that every pupil has access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and a safe, easily accessible water supply during the school day.
- To ensure that food provision reflects the ethical and medical requirements of pupils and staff e.g. religious, vegetarian, medical and allergy needs.
- To ensure that food consumed at break and lunch times effectively reinforces the key messages around healthy eating.
- To place students in a range of situations where choices need to be made.
- To encourage students to begin to make better choices in a variety of situations.
- To ensure that there is a graduated approach to snacks and the associated skill development.

Benefits of Healthy Eating

- Helps young people develop, grow and work well in school
- Prevents childhood and adolescent health problems such as obesity, eating disorders, tooth decay and anaemia
- May help prevent health problems later in life, including heart disease, diabetes and cancer
- Establishing healthy eating habits as part of a healthy lifestyle at a young age is critical because changing poor eating patterns in adulthood can be difficult
- Sitting down to a meal with other children is an important part of a child's social education

Objectives

- To ensure that this policy is both accepted and embraced by Governors, School leaders, teachers, support staff, pupils, parents, food providers and the wider school community.
- To integrate these aims into all aspects of school life, in particular:
    - Food provision within school
    - The curriculum
    - Pastoral and social activities

Curriculum links

Healthy eating is taught through a cross curricular approach. Every opportunity is taken to reinforce the messages of healthy eating through the curriculum, therefore ensuring that its coverage is broad and ongoing, not taught simply as a single unit of work.

The main subjects through which healthy eating is taught are science, PSHE, ASDAN, Maths, English and Catering modules. However, we do recognise that other subjects have their contributions to make such as history, geography, religious studies and design technology.

The School Environment

To reinforce the messages that are expressed through the taught curriculum, we recognise the importance of leading by example. We therefore encourage the eating of healthier foods at break times and lunchtime, which are offered to all pupils. Within EYFS and the primary and secondary departments, water, a variety of fruit and other healthy snacks are on offer to pupils during morning break. In order to meet needs fairly and consistently all snacks are provided by the school and it is requested that additional items from home are not sent in. Milk is available to EYFS, primary and secondary pupils.

In the FE and secondary department, a selection of fruit and occasionally toast is available with the choice of tea, coffee, reduced sugar cordial or water.

The school has two water dispensers which are easily accessible for visitors, pupils and staff. Pupils are encouraged to drink throughout the day, with water being promoted as the healthier option.

Progression of Snack-Time Throughout School

In addition to the school curriculum, snack time will be used as a key teaching time with a clear progression throughout the school.

	Early Years Foundation Stage
Rationale	Developing skills in order to sit at a table alongside others, await turns and waiting to leave the table, drinking from cups/beakers & glasses, making requests using pupil's individual communication system. Extended taste experiences, diet, opportunities to explore different flavours, textures etc. and oral-motor skills.
What will be offered – food	Fruit & Veg (different textures & consistencies including cooked, raw, pureed) Rice Cakes (not chocolate covered)
What will be offered – drinks	Milk, Water
Exceptions	For pupils/students with additional dietary needs – allergies, feeding & swallowing difficulties a healthy alternative will be offered (and one of the following dairy alternatives; soya, oat, coconut or almond) – these foods are not to be shared with others. Where there are specific dietary requirements those needs must be met in the first instance. Advice from Healthcare professionals to be followed. **No food to be sent in from home (unless agreed due to specific dietary requirements or allergies).**

	Primary
Rationale	Developing skills in order to sit at a table alongside others, await turns and waiting to leave the table, drinking from cups/beakers & glasses, making requests using pupil's individual communication system. Extended taste experiences, diet, opportunities to explore different flavours, textures etc. and oral-motor skills.
What will be offered – food	Fruit & Veg (different textures & consistencies including cooked, raw, pureed) Rice Cakes (not chocolate covered), Crackers & Breadsticks
What will be offered – drinks	Milk, Water
Exceptions	For pupils/students with additional dietary needs – allergies, feeding & swallowing difficulties a healthy alternative will be offered (and one of the following dairy alternatives; soya, oat, coconut or almond) – these foods are not to be shared with others. Where there are specific dietary requirements those needs must be met in the first instance. Advice from Healthcare professionals to be

	followed. **No food to be sent in from home. (unless agreed due to specific dietary requirements or allergies).**
	Secondary
Rationale	Understanding food preparation, continuing to extend taste experiences.
What will be offered – food	Fruit & Veg (different textures & consistencies including cooked, raw, pureed) Rice Cakes (not chocolate covered), Crackers & Breadsticks, Cheese, Yoghurt (various flavours, textures, fruit, natural & greek yoghurt) Nuts*
What will be offered – drinks	Milk, Water, Tea, Coffee, Herb & Fruit teas
Exceptions	For pupils/students with additional dietary needs – allergies, feeding & swallowing difficulties a healthy alternative will be offered (and one of the following dairy alternatives; soya, oat, coconut or almond) – these foods are not to be shared with others. Where there are specific dietary requirements those needs must be met in the first instance. Advice from Healthcare professionals to be followed. **No food to be sent in from home. (unless agreed due to specific dietary requirements or allergies).**

	FE
Rationale	Food safety, Hospitality Skills – understanding likes and dislikes of others and catering for these e.g. learning about alternatives for specific diets.
What will be offered – food	Fruit & Veg (different textures & consistencies including cooked, raw, pureed) Rice Cakes (not chocolate covered), Crackers & Breadsticks, Cheese, Yoghurt (various flavours, textures, fruit, natural & greek yoghurt) Nuts*, Healthy dips, selection of breads (consider baking own bread)
What will be offered – drinks	Tea, Coffee, Reduced calorie cordial, Milk, Water,
Exceptions	For pupils/students with additional dietary needs – allergies, feeding & swallowing difficulties a healthy alternative will be offered (and one of the following dairy alternatives; soya, oat, coconut or almond) – these foods are not to be shared with others. Where there are specific dietary requirements those needs must be met in the first instance. Advice from Healthcare professionals to be followed. **No food to be sent in from home. (unless agreed due to specific dietary requirements or allergies).**

*Taking into account any allergies

Nothing in these Guidelines applies to food provided:-

(a) at parties or celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions;

(b) at fund-raising events;

(c) as rewards for achievement, good behaviour or effort;

(d) for use in teaching food preparation and cookery skills

These will be offered in moderation and with a healthy option as a choice.

Any foods sent into school for celebrations and events listed above a-d must be in the packaging they were purchased in or have a full list of ingredients demarking allergy information if applicable.

Students on a specialised diet

Some students attending the school have dysphagia and other issues with eating and drinking. It is essential that advice provided by the NHS speech and language therapy service and other health care professionals regarding dysphagia and feeding needs is followed. Please see the school Children with Eating & Drinking Difficulties Policy. If a heathy option of an appropriate texture is not available then staff may be required to offer less healthy options to the student.
When a student has specific dietary requirements e.g. low/high calorie, food allergies, ketogenic diet etc. These needs must be prioritised over healthy eating options but staff will explore all possible options to ensure a balanced diet is met. Advice from dieticians and other health care professionals must be followed.

Communication

Within the school students use Alternative Augmentative Communication Systems (AAC) such as communication boards and Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS). See the schools Speech, Language and Communication Policy. In the early stages of introducing these systems motivating items and activities are required to encourage the student to initiate a communication exchange. As a student becomes more competent in their communication the exchanges become less effortful and therefore the item or activity required can be less motivating and the student will expand their requests. For some students the only motivators identified from assessment are food items such as crisps or chocolate. It is necessary to offer very small amounts of these items to introduce these communication systems and facilitate a spontaneous exchange. It would be anticipated that these unhealthy food options would be phased out appropriately as described above. Staff will take all possible steps to notify alternative motivators to unhealthy food options liaising with home and other professionals as required. Where these food options are essential staff will only offer the minimal amount required, for example a quarter of a chocolate button or only half a crisp.

Food Hygiene

Children are always reminded about the importance of hand washing before eating or handling food. Whenever children work with food in the kitchen they are helped to follow basic hygiene routines including; wearing a food preparation apron, using clean equipment, always washing hands before and after working with the food. Students are encouraged to observe how to store food hygienically and prepare food in a safe

manner. They are taught basic systems to avoid cross contamination of foods. In FE identified students will complete a level 1 basic food hygiene qualification.

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. This is not always easy but The Loyne Specialist School is well placed to lead by example.

Parents and carers are regularly updated on healthy eating issues through the school newsletter. We ask parents not to send in fizzy drinks, juice or break time snacks unless by prior agreement. We remind them that water and milk are actively encouraged during the school day. Information on healthy options for packed lunches, as well as school policy of snacks is also made available for parents and careers where appropriate.

Any specific, medical or religious dietary needs will be discussed with parents as a part of the Annual Review Process, and staff will record this information on the student's personalised learning plan and feeding guidelines.

Students in the Secondary and FE departments regularly prepare food in school. The focus is on preparing our students to be able to shop, cook and eat dishes made with fresh ingredients which are easy to make, cost effective and full of nutritional value.

Monitoring of students' health

Whenever a pupil shows a significant change in health, weight or mobility, the student in question, in consultation with their family and appropriate health professionals, will be offered support with healthy lifestyle advice including targeted interventions e.g. access to extra, high calorie snacks or drinks throughout the day or support to track and monitor with the use of a food diary.

Monitoring and Assessing the Policy

The school healthy eating policy is to be monitored by the PSHE Coordinator and the Healthy School Task Group. It will be reviewed on a planned two-yearly cycle with views of the whole school community taken into consideration, including those of pupils.

Policy Reviewed: February 2024
Review Date: February 2026
Policy Reviewed by: Emma Flynn (PSHE coordinator)

Policy Reviewed: February 2026
Review Date: February 2028
Policy Reviewed by: Helen Gaddas (PSHE coordinator)

Bibliography

The Independent School food plan http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/actions/school-food-standards/
School meals - healthy eating standards https://www.gov.uk/school-meals-healthy-eating-standards

Government packed lunch advice http://www.healthylunch.org.uk/government/
NHS eat well https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/

Further Reading

Gut: The Inside Story of Our Body's Most Underrated Organ https://g.co/kgs/wx9xzR
The Clever Guts Diet https://g.co/kgs/STrhbw
In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto https://g.co/kgs/rLNu6f