



Food Policy

Iver Heath Junior School

Approved by:	Governors	Date: March 2025
Last reviewed on:	March 2025	
Next review due by:	March 2028	

At Iver Heath Junior School, we believe that good food is vital to children's health and academic achievement, and to the broader life of the school. Many studies have shown that hunger affects concentration, and that well-nourished children fare better at school and this principle underlies our School Food Policy.

We also recognise that there are some children, for whom all foods are not necessarily healthy and some who may be nutritionally vulnerable and we aim to protect and support these children. We are therefore a ***Nut-Free School***.

Breakfast Club

Here at Iver Heath Junior School, we offer a breakfast club to all families who may need this kind of support. Breakfast club doors open at 7.45am. A range of breakfast options are available including cereals and toast with a choice of toppings; this is accompanied by fruit juice or water. Breakfast Club can be booked using *School Money*.

Snacks

At Iver Heath Junior School, children are invited to bring a healthy snack, which can be eaten at breaktime at 10.45am. This healthy snack must be some fruit or vegetables or a cereal bar and **MUST NOT** be a packet of crisps, chocolate or a meat snack.

Meal requirements and food standards

The Pantry (the catering company who provide school meals for the children at Iver Heath junior School) plans and cooks meals which comply with the current Nutritional Standards introduced in January 2015.

Hot meals

The legal requirement on schools is to provide a lunchtime meal that meets the School Food Standards. At Iver Heath Junior School, all pupils will routinely be offered a hot meal option. Catering for pupils with special dietary requirements. At Iver Heath Junior School, we currently offer a daily Vegetarian option, and all our food is 'Nut Free' we are also able to offer gluten free meal choices where this is required. Pupils are provided with opportunities to select fresh fruit and vegetables each day. In accordance with the food standards only one dish per week can be fried, and no salt is added to any food provided. Parents should inform the school of any special dietary requirements in order that we can provide a meal which meets their child's needs.

School Meal Menu Options

A menu for the term will be provided in advance and is also available on the school website. There are a variety of food choices each day including a Vegetarian option. There is always fresh water available. Desert options always include a fruit option.

Children who do not eat meals

No child will be forced to eat anything that they don't like although they will be encouraged to try foods which they wouldn't normally eat. We monitor the amount of food which children eat and liaise with parents through the class teacher should there be any concerns over the amount of food being consumed by a child. We actively encourage parents to communicate with us if there are any problems or worries about their child eating lunch. There are always Midday Supervisors on duty in the dinner hall throughout the lunchtime as well as a member of the Senior Leadership Team around the school. They know the children well and are friendly and approachable if the children have any problems.

The Dining Experience

The children having school meals are served at the counter and carry their meals to a table to sit with other children, usually from their year group. Once children have finished their meal, they bring their plate to a disposal area and a Midday Supervisor checks how much they have eaten and encourages children who may need it to consume a little more. At Iver Heath Junior School, we firmly believe that the dining experience is crucial in developing good food habits and also contributes to a successful afternoon in the classroom. We are therefore constantly looking for ways to further improve the dining experience through the school council and feedback from parents and staff. We also work closely with The Pantry to monitor and refine our dining experience.

Packed lunches

Research undertaken by the 'School Food Plan' showed that many parents mistakenly imagine that a packed lunch is the healthiest option. The School Food Plan demonstrates that it is far easier to get the necessary nutrients into a cooked meal. The School Food Plan research also showed that only 1% of packed lunches meet the nutritional standards that currently apply to school food. Parents wishing to supply a packed lunch for their child are encouraged to include healthy choices in the food they provide. Children having a packed lunch will be expected to take any left-over food packaging home with them. This allows parents to monitor how much their child is eating. We do not allow sweets, chocolate bars (although we do allow chocolate covered biscuits) or fizzy drinks. Through both our Science and PSHE curriculums pupils are made aware of the importance of healthy eating in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Again, we respectfully remind you that we are a nut-free school and that we do have pupils in our school who could be adversely affected by the inclusion of nuts in someone else's lunch.

Curriculum

We understand that providing a wholesome lunch for children is only half the battle. We also need to equip children with the skills they need to feed themselves – and, in time, their own children. Therefore, as well as studying food as part of a healthy lifestyle, cooking lessons are a part of our school curriculum. The curriculum emphasises the importance of cooking nutritious, savoury dishes, understanding where food comes from, and taking pleasure in the creative arts of the kitchen.

Water

All pupils of Iver Heath Junior School are encouraged to bring a drink of water to school each day in a suitable container. There are water fountains for children to access throughout playtime. Each classroom tap, supplies drinking water therefore children can freely top up their drinking containers when required.

Juice is not permitted during the school day except as part of a child's packed lunch box.

Nut Allergies

As we have children in school with severe nut allergies, we do not permit nuts as snacks or as part of a packed lunch; this also includes chocolate spread that includes nuts.

As a school we are committed to encouraging every pupil to make the healthiest food choices available both within school and when in the wider community. We regularly collect pupil opinions and use local and national health data to inform our policies and update our provision both in the dining hall and in the wider curriculum.

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