Villa Real School

together we achieve

Whole School Food and Feeding Policy

Responsibility: Samantha Dawson Date: November 2026

Date to be reviewed: November 2029

INTRODUCTION

To grow and stay healthy, pupils/students need to eat a nutritionally well balanced diet. Schools are an influential setting and can contribute significantly to improving the health and well-being of pupils/students.

Good nutrition in childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many pupils/students are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables.

Villa Real School is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes healthy eating and enables pupils/students to make informed food choices. This will be achieved by the whole school approach to food provision and food education documented in this policy.

AIMS

The main aims of our school food policy are:

1. To provide a range of healthy food choices throughout the School day and in line with the mandatory School Food Standards.
2. To support pupils/students to make healthy food choices and be better prepared to learn and achieve.
3. To ensure a consistent approach to healthy eating across the School community including pupils/students, staff and parents/carers.
4. To ensure consistent practice in eating across the school

IMPLEMENTATION

Food throughout the School Day

1. Breakfast

Breakfast is an important meal that should provide 25% of a pupils'/students' energy requirement and supports pupils/students to be ready to learn at the start of each day. Pupils/students within Villa Real School are offered a range of healthy snack options such as fruit as part of their morning routine.

2. School Lunches

School meals are provided by an outside supplier and served between 12:00pm and 1:00pm in the dining hall or classes. The School meals meet the mandatory requirements of the School Food Standards 2015. Our school caterer also holds an NVQ Level 2 in Professional Cookery. School meals are planned on a 3-week cycle and always contain a meat, fish and vegetarian option. The School meals menu can be found on our school website.

3. Packed Lunches
The School's packed lunch policy is developed using guidance from the Child Food Trust. The guidance aims to support pupils/students to have a balanced lunch and best prepare them for learning in the afternoon.

4. Snacks
Villa Real School understands that healthy snacks can be an important part of the diet of young people. In the Early Years, snacks are provided during the morning and include a range of fruit. Pupils/students are able to bring healthy snacks into school to eat at break-times.

5. Drinks
The School aims to be a water only school where possible, with the exception of the free milk entitlement for all primary and secondary free school meal pupils/students. Water is provided whenever pupils/students require it throughout the School day.

6. School trips
A packed lunch will be provided by the School, for all pupils/students who usually have a school meal. Pupils/students are welcome to bring their own packed lunches on trips, however, these lunches should adhere to the same food and drink guidance described above.

Rewards and Celebrations

Rewards
The School does not allow food to be used as a reward for good behaviour or achievement. Other methods of positive reinforcement are used in school including:

- Use of motivators
- Visual reinforcement
- Positive reinforcement
- Praise

Celebrations
The School recognises the importance of celebrating birthdays and special occasions. For birthday celebrations, all pupils/students will receive recognition in whole school assembly and a small celebration in class with their peers. We make healthy cakes in school to celebrate with pupils/ students. Cakes sent in from home are not permitted.

For celebration events, we welcome a variety of foods, from different cultures, for pupils/ students to try. Class teachers will provide parents/carers with suggestion lists of celebration food to ensure that we have a wide

variety of food choices available. Occasional fund-raising events may include the sale of treat food such as healthy cakes, but the inclusion of other foods will also be encouraged.

Curricular Activity

Food and nutrition is taught at an appropriate level throughout each key stage in Science, PSCHE and Design Technology (cooking and nutrition). The Eatwell model is used throughout the School (see appendix 1) as a model of understanding a balanced diet.

Special Dietary Requirements

The School does everything possible to accommodate pupils'/students specialist dietary requirements including allergies, intolerances, religious or cultural practices.
Individual care plans are created with input from parents and carers which detail any food allergies; these are closely monitored by all relevant staff. Individual care plans are read and understood by all staff as well as being made available for all visitors or other relevant professionals as requested with agreement of parent/carers.

Expectations of Staff and Visitors

The School expects staff to contribute to and support this food policy across the School day. Staff and visitors will be expected to model good practice behaviour around food and drink and in line with the policy, when in the company of pupils/students.

Parents, Carers and Family Members

Our relationships with parents/carers are very important and we aim to support them with information and advice around food, so that they are best prepared to make healthy choices for their families.
Coffee mornings, events and food related workshops are delivered throughout the year for family members to attend.

Feeding

Meeting nutritional needs is essential for life and is a core part of our daily routine and our social culture. As such a pupil's/student's nutrition, needs to be met in all environments and settings that they access throughout the day. Adults working with the pupils/students need to liaise with the pupil's/student's parent's/carers to ensure that information regarding feeding skills, preferences and any associated medical issues are shared. Full feeding and diet plans will be shared from SaLT, Dietitians and Nutritionists. Within a

special school setting a significant number of pupils/students may have difficulties with eating and drinking. These difficulties will be across a range of levels of severity and relate to differing aspects of eating and drinking. These may include:

- Developmental aspects of weaning/feeding
- Individual components required for feeding; suck, bite, chew, swallow
- Positioning
- Possible reflux and aspiration
- Utensils
- Associated reflexes
- Self/independent feeding
- Communication
- Social behaviours

The origins and causes of feeding difficulties may include:

- Developmental delays
- Neurological aspects
- Physical difficulties
- Aspects of behaviour
- Fears, phobias and anxieties
- Specific diagnoses and syndromes

Where a member of staff or parent raises concerns about a pupil / student's ability to feed appropriately, i.e. the need for a specialist / blended diet, they will be referred to SaLT for assessment and formulation of a specific plan. Chartwell's dietician will also be consulted if the pupil or student eats school lunches.

Pupils/students requiring specific school based support, should have feeding plan (appendix 2)

All staff will have annual training in dysphagia, and plans will be available in hard copy in class, on CPOMS, and to the catering supplier. Where any member of staff is concerned about the appropriateness of a prepared meal, they should refrain from giving that meal and seek further advice from a senior member of staff**.**

Pupils/students should eat together within their classes, either in the hall or in class. This includes those that are PEG fed. Pupils/students should be taught correct, polite eating habits and encouraged to feed themselves. No pupil/student should be fed. Hand over hand should be used for those requiring assistance. All pupils/students should have their snacks and lunch at a table. Staff should ensure that pupils/students mouths and hands are clean after eating.

Monitoring and Review

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils/students, parents/carers and governors.
The policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

APPENDIX 1



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh government, Food Standards Scotland and the Foods Standards Agency in Northern Ireland
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APPENDIX 2

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Speech and Language Therapy Department
Eating and Drinking Management Plan

Name: **DOB:**
NHS Number: **Date of Plan: September 2022**

Food

IDDSI level 6 – Soft and bite sized

If unwell i.e. had seizure then requires IDDSI level 5 – minced and moist diet.

Can find mixed textures e.g. solids and liquids difficult.

Drinks

No modifications

History & Risks

Luke has delayed eating and drinking skills and also has limited awareness of safety i.e. will overfill his mouth.

Additionally Luke has epilepsy and if he has a seizure he can have temporary regression with his eating skills and require easier textures.

Positioning




To be seated on an age appropriate sized chair and table.

Equipment required



Drinks from a lidded free flow cup.

How you can help me

- **Provide constant adult supervision whilst eating and drinking**
- **Ensure do not overfill mouth and provide pacing if required.**

Signs of eating, drinking & swallowing difficulty



Distress when eating & drinking
Gagging, coughing and/or choking
Chest infections
Weight loss
Food refusal
Gurgly/wet voice sounds during and/or after eating and/or drinking
Facial colour change
Eye watering
If you observe any of the above or you are concerned, please contact the Speech and Language Therapy Department as soon as possible on 01429 522717

Plan created by
Name:
Designation:
Contact:

This plan will be reviewed on request only. Please contact the Speech & Language Therapy Department on 01429 522717 if [redacted] needs have changed or you are concerned that this plan is no longer appropriate.