



*'Spurring each other on with love'*

# School Food Policy

## 2026-2028

POLICY HISTORY (starting with the new cycle started in 2011)

Policy / Version Date	Summary of change	Governor adoption Date	Signed by the Chair	Next Review Date
1	Written by KC using school food plan and model school policies	Summer Term 2014		Summer Tern 2016
2	Reviewed by MH and JDC	9 <sup>th</sup> June 2016		Summer Term 2018
3	Reviewed by JDC	7 June 2018		Summer Term 2020
4	Reviewed by KC changes to eligibility for FSM made	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2020		Summer term 2022
5	Reviewed by THH/HD – no changes made	9 <sup>th</sup> June 2022		Summer Term 2024
6	Reviewed by HD – changes made re serving on china plates and eligibility for FSM	23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2024		Summer Term 2026
7	Reviewed by HD – changes made to FSM eligibility.	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2026		Summer 2026

**At Bickleigh Down Primary 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.**

### **Free School Meals for KS1 Children**

From September 2014, the Children and Families Bill places a legal duty on state-funded schools in England to offer a free school lunch to all pupils in Reception, Year One and Year Two through the introduction of the Government's Universal Infant Free School Meals (UFSM) Policy. The independent School Food Plan, published by the Department for Education in July 2013, recommended this policy, based on the findings of the free school meal pilots held between 2009 and 2011. The pilots showed that universal free school meals can have significant benefits both for individual children and for the broader life of the school. Pupils in the pilot areas were found to eat more healthily and perform better academically. Schools also reported improved behaviour and atmosphere, as a result of all pupils eating together every day.

At Bickleigh Down Primary School we have been working on aspects of the School Food Plan including looking at many of the pilot studies undertaken for more than one academic year as we feel that it is crucial that we get school meals right.

### **Eligibility criteria for other groups**

Existing entitlements to free school meals for disadvantaged pupils in Key stage Two will continue as now, based on the existing free school meals eligibility criteria.

In England, children at key stages 2-4 in state-funded schools are entitled to receive FSM if their parents or carers are in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- with effect from September 2026, all children from households receiving Universal Credit.

## Meal requirements and food standards

### **Food Standards**

The Kitchen Manager at Bickleigh Down CE Primary School plans and cooks meals which comply with the current School Food Standards. In January 2015, a set of simplified standards came into force and we have implemented these. These regulations are intended to ensure that children get the nutrition they need across the whole school day. They govern all food and drink on offer within the school and apply across the school day, including breakfast, mid-morning break, lunchtime and food served after school.

### **Hot meals**

The legal requirement on schools will be to provide a lunchtime meal that meets the School Food Regulations, where they apply. At Bickleigh Down Primary School, all pupils will routinely be offered a hot meal option.

### **Catering for pupils with special dietary requirements**

Bickleigh Down Primary caters for all dietary requirements that we are made aware of. We currently offer a daily vegetarian option, Gluten Free options and all of our food is 'Nut Free'. Parents should inform the school of any special dietary requirements in order that we can provide a meal which meets their child's needs.

### **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.

The Governors of Bickleigh Down Primary School have made the decision that all KS1 children will be provided with a free school meal and there will no longer be a packed lunch option. This decision has been carefully considered and has been made after lengthy consultation with all interested parties. Parents of Key Stage One and Key Stage Two children may also opt to take their child home for the lunchtime period.

Key Stage Two children still have the option of bringing a packed lunch to school.

### **School Meal Menu Options**

A menu will be provided in advance and is also available on the school website. There are three options to choose from each day including a vegetarian option and a jacket potato option. There is always fresh water available. Dessert choices always include a yoghurt and 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 at least three Mealtimes Assistants on duty in the dinner hall throughout the lunchtime as well as a member of the Leadership Team. They know the children well and are friendly and approachable if the children have any problems.

## **Quality**

All our school meals are cooked daily in the school kitchen and are made using fresh, high quality ingredients. Our meat is of good quality and is sourced from a reputable local butcher.

## **The Dining Experience**

All children having a school meal eat from a china plate. The children having school meals are served at the counter and carry their meals to a table to sit with other children from their year group. Once children have finished their meal, they raise their hand and the older children are then allowed to take their empty plate to the clearing area, a member of staff removes the younger children's plates. They are then asked which dessert option they would like, and their choice is then brought to them by a member of staff.

At Bickleigh Down, 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 as a result of feedback from parents and children.

## **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, cooking lessons are a part of our school curriculum. The curriculum emphasises the importance of cooking nutritious, predominantly savoury dishes, understanding where food comes from, and taking pleasure in the creative arts of the kitchen. Science also includes an element of gardening each year in order that children understand where food comes from and how it is grown. We always strive to incorporate the food which children grow into our school menu.

## **Breaktime Snacks**

All Foundation and Key Stage One children are provided with a daily free fruit or vegetable snack.

In Key Stage Two, children are encouraged to bring in a piece of fruit or vegetable to eat at break time. Children may bring dried fruit such as raisins or apricots however any other products which are not purely fruit, such as fruit winders or chocolate covered raisins, are not permitted.

## **Water**

Children are encouraged to bring a drink of water to school each day in a suitable container. There are two water fountains for children to top up their containers. Juice is not permitted during the school day except as part of a Key Stage Two child's packed lunch box.

## **Nut Allergies**

As we have a number of children in school with severe nut allergies, we do not permit nuts as snacks or as part of a packed lunch.

## **Packed Lunches**

Children in Key Stage Two may bring a packed lunch to school which they will eat in the dinner hall. Children having a packed lunch will be expected to take any left-over food and packaging home with them. We do not allow sweets, chocolate bars (although we allow chocolate covered biscuits) or fizzy drinks.