

## **Lowca Community School Healthy eating Policy**

As a school we know that food is fundamental to the quality of a child's life, not just in providing essential nutrition but in communicating and sharing positive values, attitudes and experiences with each other. We believe that adults (staff, parents and carers) should be good role models and should support the children in understanding how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and general well-being.

We aim to

- improve the health of pupils, staff and the whole school community by helping to influence eating habits through increasing knowledge and awareness of food issues including encouraging pupils to eat a healthy diet. House points and stickers are given for trying new foods. Children also ask staff "Can I have my pudding now?" and staff encourage pupils to try a little more of the healthy foods first- otherwise in our experience children leave the main meal and skip to dessert. No child is ever forced to eat all their lunch and the atmosphere is one of kind encouragement and praise.
- ensure pupils are well nourished at school and that every pupil has access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and a safe, easily available water supply during the school day. We ensure that food provision in the school acknowledges the ethical and medical requirements of staff and pupils e.g. religious, vegetarian, medical and allergenic needs. Children are provided with a bottle of water at the beginning of each half term which they rinse and refill in their classrooms.

### **Breakfast**

Research suggests that having a healthy breakfast can aid your child's concentration and that without it, your child will feel hungry in the school morning sessions. We recognise that parents have an important role to play in ensuring this basic need is met. Please contact our nursery providers- Happy Hours for more details about their breakfast club and wrap around care.

### **Lunches**

Parents can order a school dinner from a balanced 3 weekly menu. It has been designed and analysed by our meal providers (Orion) and complies with the recommended nutritional guidance (Healthy food standards in schools 2006) to ensure healthy calorie intake, and the correct proportions of protein, carbohydrate, vitamins, and fibre. For reception and year 1 and year 2 this is free as part of the government's universal free school meals initiative. It is hoped that once children have this varied diet in their early years they will want to continue with this in the juniors and adult life. Each child has a beaker of water at the dinner table. All pupils also have the opportunity to have a free beaker of milk after midday play time. All children are sent to wash their hands before lunch. Children have supervised play in the yard (or in the classroom if the weather is wet). Packed lunch pupils come in to the hall first. This is to help with seating capacity. On a rota basis the year groups are called into the hall with their year group. Children eat their lunches together, alongside duty teaching staff, at tables in the dining hall. They are allowed to chat and are encouraged to use a knife and fork properly and have nice table manners. Adaptations can be made as part of an agreed "Educational Health Care Plan" for those children with special educational needs or disabilities.

Some parents may wish to make alternative arrangements and provide their child with a packed lunch. In order to comply with our duty to promote healthy eating, fizzy drinks are not allowed in packed lunches at our school because they tend to be high in sugar and additives and this can negatively influence behaviour and energy levels. A piece of fruit must also be included each day. The contents of pupils' lunchboxes will be monitored by the Senior Midday Supervisor and team. The pupils bring all left overs home so that parents can monitor how much their child has eaten. We have no facilities to store packed lunches in fridges and it is the parents' responsibility to use an insulated bag with an ice pack to ensure that packed lunch contents do not pose a food hygiene threat to their child.

### **Snacks**

Reception and class 1 pupils take part in the Fruit and Vegetables scheme and are encouraged to have a piece of fruit at first break each day. Key stage 2 pupils can also bring in a piece of fruit but chocolate, sweets, chewing gum, biscuits, crisps, and cakes are not allowed as everyday snacks in school. Birthdays, and special events such as Christmas parties, Easter egg hunts or spelling tests in class are also times where food contributes to a sense of celebration and sharing. On these occasions foods other than fruit or vegetables may be offered, but the staff will remind the children that this is an "occasional" treat and not "every day food".