



**Comberton
Primary School**

*A caring community
for all to shine*

Comberton Primary School

Whole School Food Policy

Date Policy Last reviewed: September 2026

Signed by: Deena Frost Headteacher

Date: September 2026

Signed by: Sue Wombell Chair of Raising Standards Committee

Date: November 2026

Whole School Food Policy

Legal Guidance:

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014
- Department for Education guidance, 'School Food Standards: A practical guide for schools, their cooks and caterers' (July 2026)
- Government Buying Standards
- The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019
- The Food Safety Act 1990
- The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 (as amended)
- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- The Products Containing Meat etc. (England) Regulations 2014

This policy operates in conjunction with the following non-statutory guidance:

- DfE (2019) 'School food in England'
- The School Food Plan (2014) 'School Food Standards: A practical guide for schools, their cooks and caterers'
- DfE Allergy safety in Schools (2026)

Key Information points:

- Statutory school food standards apply to local authority maintained schools, academies that opened prior to 2010 and academies and free schools in England entering into a funding agreement from June 2014. This includes maintained nurseries and nursery units attached to primary schools, pupil referral units and sixth forms that are part of secondary schools.
- These school food standards are to ensure that food provided to pupils in school is nutritious and of high quality; to promote good nutritional health in all pupils; protect those who are nutritionally vulnerable and to promote good eating behaviour.
- The regulations set out the requirements for school lunches provided to registered pupils, whether on the school premises or not, and to any other person on the school premises.
- The regulations also set out the requirements for food and drink other than lunch provided to pupils on and off school premises up to 6pm, including breakfast club, mid-morning break, and after school club.

- The School Food Plan website draws together best practice and organisations that can support schools and the sector. The authors of the plan have developed a section of the website that brings together examples of what works well from schools, individuals and organisations.
- From September 2014 every child in reception, year 1 and year 2 in state-funded schools is entitled to a free school lunch.
- All food and drink provided during the school day (including breakfast club,, lunch, after-school clubs) will meet the statutory School Food Standards. The school uses the checklist for school food lunches and the checklist for school food other than lunch to ensure menu planning and provision meet frequency and portion requirements (starchy foods, fruit & vegetables, dairy, non-dairy proteins, limits on foods high in fat, sugar and salt, and permitted drinks).

Our Aims

At Comberton Primary School, we recognise the importance of food in our lives. We know that healthy eating is vital for good health and we understand that there is a strong link between a healthy diet and effective learning. We also recognise the importance of food related skills in enriching our social development and in celebrating, nurturing and increasing our appreciation of cultural diversity.

- To maintain or improve the health of the whole school community through education – increasing knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a balanced diet and how to ensure that food is prepared healthily and safely.
- To ensure that children are well nourished at school – with children having access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and water during the school day.
- To increase children's knowledge of where their food comes from, food production, manufacturing, distribution and marketing and how these will impact upon their own lives and the environment.
- To ensure that the food provision in school reflects the ethical and medical needs of the staff and pupils e.g. catering for the needs of religious groups, vegetarians, people with specific food-related allergies.

Role and responsibilities

- School governors are responsible for the provision of school food. A school lunch must be provided for pupils where a meal is requested and either the pupil is eligible for free school lunches, or it would not be unreasonable for lunches to be provided.
- Governing boards are able to decide the form that school lunches take, but must ensure that the lunches and other food and drink provided meets the school food standards.
- Although there is no requirement that lunches must be hot meals, hot lunches should be provided wherever possible to ensure that all pupils are able to eat at least one hot meal every day.
- School governing boards must provide school meals to a pupil free of charge if the pupil and/or a parent meets eligibility criteria set out within the Education Act 1996 and a request is received for free meals to be provided either by the pupil or someone acting on their behalf.
- Drinking water must be provided free of charge at all times on school premises.
- Facilities to eat the food that they bring to school must be provided free of charge for pupils not taking school meals. As a minimum these facilities should include accommodation, furniture and supervision so that pupils can eat food they have brought from home in a safe and social environment.
- Early years - Ensuring that lower-fat milk or lactose-reduced milk is provided at least once a day during school hours.

- The governing body ensures that infant pupils receive free fruit under the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme where eligible, and that lower-fat milk is offered at least once daily to all pupils during school hours. The school proactively identifies and supports families eligible for free school meals and offers assistance with FSM applications. Infant and eligible pupils will receive free milk in line with government schemes.
- The school and caterer will minimise food waste through portion control, pupil choice and food waste monitoring. Procurement will, where reasonably possible, use seasonal, local and sustainably sourced produce and follow the Government Buying Standards for food and catering services.

The governing body will work with the senior leadership team to develop a whole school food policy setting out the school's approach to its provision of food, food education (including practical cooking), and the school's strategy to increase the take-up of school lunches.

The Curriculum

The school will include, as it has in the past and will continue to include, work associated with healthy balanced diets in its curriculum.

In EYFS, KS1 and KS2, there are a number of opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of health, including healthy-eating patterns and practical skills that are needed to understand where food comes from such as shopping, preparing and cooking food.

- English provides children with the opportunity to explore persuasion, argument and narrative work using food and food-related issues as a stimulus, e.g. writing to a company to persuade them to use non-GM foods in children's food and drink etc.
- Maths can offer the possibility of understanding nutrition labelling, calculating quantities for recipes, weighing and measuring ingredients, and understanding fractions in context.
- Science provides an opportunity to learn about the types of food available, their nutritional composition, digestion and the function of different nutrients in contributing to health, and how the body responds to exercise.
- RE provides the opportunity to discuss the role of certain foods in the major religions of the world.
- Food technology as part of DT provides the opportunity to learn about where food comes from and apply healthy-eating messages through practical work with food, including preparation and cooking.
- PSHRE encourages young people to take responsibility for their own health and well-being, teaches them how to develop a healthy lifestyle and addresses issues such as body image. Pupils are able to discuss issues of interest to young people, e.g. advertising and sustainable development.
- Geography provides a focus on the natural world and changing environment, offering the chance to consider the impact our consumer choices have on people across the world that rely on growing food as their source of income.
- History provides insight into changes in diet and food over time.
- Physical Education provides pupils with the opportunity to develop physically and to understand the practical impact of sport, exercise and other physical activity such as dance and walking.

Any practical cookery lessons will be risk assessed and follow food hygiene procedures. Pupils with allergies will have alternative activities where appropriate. The school will maintain records of food education activities and evaluate their impact on pupils' knowledge and behaviour (e.g., increased fruit/veg consumption).

Lunchtime

A contracted caterer, Innovate, provides our hot school meals. They have confirmed they meet and constantly review their menu against the school food standards.

Their menu includes three hot main meal choices including a vegetarian option and a sandwich option. Children can also help themselves to the rainbow salad bar.

They only source from farmers, wholesalers and catering butchers that are audited to UKAS accredited standards and meet the highest possible assurance levels.

They cater for allergies in consultation with parents.

Many children bring packed lunches to school and the school will provide guidance on healthy foods that should be included in lunchboxes from home.

We actively encourage a healthy lunchbox. Packed lunches should meet the same nutritional principles as school meals. We recommend including a starchy food, a portion of fruit and/or vegetables, a dairy source and a protein source, and water or lower-fat milk. We can also offer support for families who need help and guidance with providing healthy lunches.

In addition, the school encourages a healthy diet and asks parents to consider the quantity and frequency of the following items in pupils' lunchboxes:

- Sweets (including Winders), chocolate bars, etc.
- Crisps or any packeted savoury snacks high in salt and fat
- Sweet cakes, e.g. cakes, doughnuts, etc.

For the health and safety of children with nut allergies, we recommend that the following are not included in pupils' lunchboxes:

- Nut bars
- Foods containing nuts
- Packets of nuts

The Food Environment

The School will provide a safe and healthy eating environment for pupils, staff and visitors having lunch in the school.

- All children are required to sit at a table in order to eat their lunch unless a picnic style lunch is taking place due to the weather.
- Children are required to eat all or at least try to eat most of the food provided, either by the school or in their lunch box.
- Lunchtime supervisors will help any children who have concerns or cause concern during meal time, e.g. children who may have problems eating their lunch, spill or drop their lunch, cannot find a place to sit, do not eat their lunch or skip lunch, etc.
- Children are expected to behave whilst eating their lunches, be polite and helpful.
- If children are unsure of what the meal, or any meal item, is, they can ask the caterer or supervisory assistant to explain.
- Children leave the area where they have eaten their lunch in a reasonable clean and tidy condition.

Break Time Snacks

All our under-5s are entitled to free milk and all EYFS and KS1 classes include a morning break time snack of fruit – any spare is offered to our Key Stage two pupils. KS2 children are encouraged to bring either fruit or vegetables or other healthy items such as a low fat yoghurt or cereal bar which they eat at playtime.

Healthy Drinks/Water

Free, fresh drinking water is available at all times and children are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school to keep in the classroom. The school encourages drinks in line with the School Food Standards: plain water; lower-fat milk; juices (max 150ml); enriched plant milks; plain fermented milk drinks; and permitted combinations (max 330ml).

The school will avoid offering drinks with added sugars, flavourings or preservatives.

Extended School Provision –

Breakfast and After School Clubs operate on a daily basis, before and after school. The food offered is healthy and is consistent with a healthy diet and follows the guidelines set out by The Food Standard Agency.

Exemptions to the school food regulations

The School Food Regulations do not apply to food provided:

- at parties or celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions
- at fund-raising events
- as rewards for achievement, good behaviour or effort
- for use in teaching food preparation and cookery skills, including where the food prepared is served to pupils as part of a school lunch
- on an occasional basis by parents or pupils

Partnership

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 our school is well placed to lead by example. We recognise the need to work closely with parents and the wider community. We will endeavour to keep parents informed of what we are teaching the children and why, as well as keeping them up to date with national and local health information and initiatives, working closely with the school nurse and other members of the health profession.

Health and Safety

It is part of our normal school procedure that the children will be reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating, either with soap and water or hand sanitizer. Food will be stored in appropriate places and parents will be reminded that the packed lunches have to be stored in the classroom/cloakrooms and be encouraged to use insulated packed lunch boxes.

EYFS, care club staff and lunchtime supervisors hold the relevant food hygiene certification and all staff and parents involved in preparation of food will be aware of food safety and hygiene issues and behave accordingly. As a staff we will be aware of the apparently growing tendency for eating disorders in younger children and ensure that we know how to recognise and respond appropriately should the need arise.

Allergies and Medical Needs

The school follows the DfE Allergy Safety in Schools. Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) will be completed for pupils with medically diagnosed food allergies or intolerances, in consultation with parents, the school nurse and relevant medical professionals. All staff and catering staff will receive annual briefings on allergies and specific training where required. Emergency procedures and use of auto-injectors (e.g., epi-pens) will be included in IHPs.

Monitoring and review

The Headteacher and PSHRE subject leader are responsible for supporting colleagues in the delivery of the food policy. Governors monitor and check that the school policy is upheld and can also offer guidance where a member of the body has particular expertise in this area. This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly cycle. The date for review is September 2029.