

Queensmill School

Policy guidance on lunchtimes and food

Aims:

We aim to provide a range of healthy food and drink to promote food as the basis of positive social interaction, and to teach children about healthy eating. Whilst many of our children have sensitivities to many foods, we try to encourage them to eat healthily and to taste an increasing number of foods.

Implementation:

1. We work collaboratively with families on eating habits of their children.
2. Staff sit with children at mealtimes, ensuring it is both a pleasant social environment and a good learning environment.
3. We use the National Curriculum and PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) as a framework for teaching children about food and its preparation and other linked issues, and IEPs, PLPs or individual targets for issues particular to that child.
4. We liaise with the PSHCE co-ordinator, school meals service, school nurse and doctor, OT, community dietician and oral hygiene service.
5. Our on-site Speech and Language Therapists are involved in lunchtimes and snack times in order to support staff in helping children to communicate their needs and preferences.
6. Our Occupational Therapists provide training and advice for parents and staff through workshops e.g. 'Understanding of sensory issues and eating for children with ASD'
7. School lunches are cooked from fresh onsite
8. There is a photo board with photographs of those students on special diets
9. Food may be brought in from home for children on special diets, or to supplement a school dinner with favourite foods.
10. We discourage unhealthy food and drinks, although these may be used as a route to motivate a child to eat more healthy foods.
11. Water is on offer throughout the day.
12. Healthy foods are offered at snack times, and staff are aware of those children who must only choose from the snacks provided from home for their special diet.

During lunchtime we teach children to: sit, listen, interact with others, take turns, share, tolerate others, tolerate foods, try different foods, follow instructions, interact with their peers, learn the conventions of eating, lay a table, improve and develop basic maths skills, improve and develop communications skills, improve and develop self-help skills such as clearing away their plates, relax and enjoy the experience of eating with others as much as they can. Playing with food is an important part of a child's development and understanding in relation to food and eating and this is

accepted at Queensmill. We are aware of children's sensory needs throughout the school day, and staff will use sensory strategies to reduce children's anxieties at lunchtimes as much as at any other time in the day. Any interactions with food are carried out in a positive environment and food is not used as a negative consequence; i.e. food will not be denied or forced upon children.

Monitoring

This policy is monitored in the first instance by class teachers, and overall by members of SMT and the PSHCE Subject Leader.

All staff, Autumn 06

To governors for information, Nov 07

Updated May 2014

Policy reviewed – January 2016

Reviewed by*F Adu*.....

Date for next review – January 2017