

Policy & Procedure

Thornton Primary School



Food Policy 2026-2029

This policy is reviewed every three years and was agreed by the Governing Body of Thornton Primary School in Spring 2026 **and will be reviewed again in Spring 2029**

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors

Date: _____

Non-Statutory Policy

Our aim is to develop confident and enthusiastic learners who are always respectful of each other and the staff. We want them to build a strong appreciation of their own positive attributes as well as those of the other children and, in doing so, to develop a 'can-do' attitude to learning, and the community in which they live, through consistent focus upon:



Excellence
Independence Enthusiasm Equality
Responsibility Empathy
Confidence Perseverance Care
Aspiration
Respect
Pride Tolerance
Teamwork Challenge Integrity
Enjoyment



INTRODUCTION

The school is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes healthy eating and enabling pupils to make informed choices about the food they eat. This will be achieved by the whole school approach to food and nutrition documented in this whole school food policy. This policy covers all aspects of food and drink at school.

The policy was formulated through consultation between members of staff, governors, caterers, parents/carers, children/young people, and our school nurse.

The policy is referred to in the school prospectus/profile and is communicated to the entire school community. It is adhered to by everyone involved with the teaching/serving/cooking of food/drink in school during the day and our partners that share our school premises.

The nutritional principles of this policy are based on current evidence based findings; and the 'eatwell plate' is the agreed model for ensuring a healthy balanced diet.

www.eatwell.gov.uk

Current DFE standards for school food throughout the school day are in place.

FOOD POLICY CO-ORDINATOR

This school food policy and healthy eating strategy is co-ordinated by

Greg Barton-Harvey (healthy schools coordinator) and the member of the Senior Leadership Team that oversees all aspects of food in school is **Sarah Acton (Head teacher)**.

FOOD POLICY AIMS

The main aims of our school food policy are:

1. To enable pupils to make healthy food choices through the provision of information and development of appropriate skills and attitudes (linked to FSA food competencies).
2. To provide healthy food/drink choices throughout the school day and ensure food brought into school is healthy too.
3. To ensure that all aspects of food and drink in school promote the health and well being of pupils, staff and visitors to our school

These aims will be addressed through the following areas:

The Food Curriculum

At Thornton, pupils are taught about the major components of a balanced diet and how ingredients can be combined to prepare healthy meals. They are taught basic cooking techniques and how to cook a variety of healthy, sweet and savoury dishes. Each class incorporates a cooking/ nutrition activity in line with the DT curriculum/other curriculum areas. Links are made with relevant subject areas, in particular Science, Design Technology, PSHE and PE.

To enhance the children's experiences with food, a range of approaches and resources are used. These include:

- Gardening with the Master Gardener. Growing fruit, vegetables and herbs to use in recipes.
- Inviting parents in to share lunch with their children.
- Visiting a local farm
- Inviting local producers in to share their work with us.
- Visiting local producers (eg. Tesco 'Farm to Fork').
- Making food produce to sell at our Summer Fair.
- Participating in Gardening Weeks.
- Providing weekly opportunities to cook through extra-curricular activities

FOOD AND DRINK PROVISION THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL DAY

National Nutritional Standards for School Lunches became compulsory in April 2001. The School Food Standards (November 2025) cover all aspects of school food and form the baseline for all food offered and eaten in school throughout the school day.

Together they apply to all food and drink sold or served in schools up to 6pm: breakfast, lunch and after-school clubs.

(Full details and the documents and guidance along with checklists relating to this are available from the Children's Food Trust www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk and www.schoolfoodplan.com)

BREAKFAST CLUB

Breakfast is an important meal that should provide 25% of a child's energy requirement and contribute significantly to their vitamin and mineral requirements. The school operates a breakfast club that provides a nutritious meal for pupils before the school day and complies with the standards.

The breakfast menu includes: cereal, toast or bread, spreads and jams, fruit, fruit juice and milk.

BREAKTIME SNACKS

The school understands that snacks can be an important part of the diet of young people and can contribute positively towards a balanced diet. The school discourages the consumption of snacks high in fat and sugar at breaktime. Children may choose to bring a healthy snack of fruit/vegetable to eat during morning break. Children in Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 are provided with a free piece of fruit each day. This is funded through The National School Fruit Scheme.

SCHOOL LUNCH

Food prepared by the school catering team meet the School Food Standards for School Lunches .

As a school we encourage pupils to have a school lunch provided by our catering service and free school meals are provided to all those pupils who are entitled to them. Children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One are entitled to a free school meal as part of the government's Universal Infant Free School Meals initiative.

Healthy options are promoted at lunchtime.

PACKED LUNCHES

The school encourages parents and carers to take up the offer of a school dinner. However, if parents choose to provide their child with a packed lunch, we ask that they ensure that it complements the nutritional standards. This is achieved by promoting healthy packed lunch options using the principles of the 'eatwell plate'. This will ensure children having packed lunches have a healthy, balanced meal.

Food safety issues around packed lunches will be conveyed to parents.

Foods and drinks we discourage include:

- Foods with a high fat content eg. chocolate
- Foods with a high sugar content eg. sweets
- Foods with a high salt content
- Drinks containing high levels of sugar

USE OF FOOD AS A REWARD/ SPECIAL OCCASIONS

The school does not encourage the regular eating of sweets or other foods high in sugar or fat, especially as a reward for good behaviour, academic or other achievements. Other methods of positive reinforcement are used in school. However, we do give out birthday sweets brought in by pupils **(nut free)**.

DRINKING WATER

The School Food Standards for Healthy School Lunches recommend that drinking water should be available to all pupils, everyday and free of charge.

The school agrees with this recommendation and provides a free supply of drinking water and will encourage pupils to drink at frequent intervals throughout the day. Water is available free for all pupils at the lunchtime meal service.

Water fountains are located in the cloakrooms. Parents are asked to provide a water bottle containing water or sugar free juice each day. These are stored in the classroom and are made available throughout the day.

SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

SPECIAL DIETS - RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

The school provides food in accordance with pupils' religious beliefs and cultural practices as required.

VEGETARIAN DIETS

School caterers offer a vegetarian option at lunch every day.

SPECIAL DIETS - MEDICAL

We recognise that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for our food policy to be exactly met. In this case parents are asked to make us fully aware of this. Individual care plans need to be created for pupils with special dietary needs/requirements. These should document symptoms and adverse reactions, actions to be taken in an emergency and emergency contact details, along with any particular food requirements e.g. for high-energy diets. School caterers are made aware of any food allergies/food intolerance/medical diets and requests for these diets are submitted according to an agreed process.

NUT-FREE SCHOOL

The school has a nut-free foods policy as we have pupils at the school with a severe nut allergy. Parents are informed of the policy when their child starts school and are discouraged from bringing nuts or food containing nuts into school. Any foods that contain nuts are removed immediately. Nut Free School notices are displayed throughout school.

FOOD SAFETY

Appropriate food safety precautions are taken when food is prepared or stored. These vary depending on the food on offer and include: ensuring that adequate storage and washing facilities are available; that food handlers undergo appropriate food safety and hygiene training; and that suitable equipment and protective clothing are available. Any food safety hazards are identified and controlled. Information is cascaded to everyone who is involved with food related activities in school.

THE FOOD AND EATING ENVIRONMENT

Thornton provides a clean, sociable environment for pupils to eat their lunch. The children eat from plates and bowls as opposed to flight trays to promote a more traditional dining experience.

To make our dining hall a happy, healthy and safe place we enforce the following rules:

- Walk at all times
- Keep our lunch on our plates or in our lunchboxes
- Put rubbish in the bin
- Say please and thank you
- Talk quietly to children only on our table
- Put away our plates and cutlery properly
- Treat all school staff with equal respect

Lunch time supervisors help to ensure a safe, enjoyable experience at lunchtime.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE AND STAFF TRAINING

At Thornton we recognise that teachers, caterers and lunchtime supervisors have a key role in influencing pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes about food, so it is important that they are familiar with healthy eating guidelines.

Staff attend relevant training sessions and feedback accordingly to their colleagues.

CONSULTATION/MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy has been developed through wide consultation with the whole school community. The policy and its impact is reviewed on an ongoing basis.

The policy is communicated to the entire school community and new families/staff to our school are made aware of its importance.

Inclusion

Our school is an inclusive school. We aim to make all pupils feel included in all our activities. We try to make all our teaching fully inclusive. We recognise the entitlement of all pupils to a balanced, creative curriculum. We have systems in place for early identification of barriers to their learning and participation so that they can engage in school activities with all other pupils. We acknowledge the need for high expectations and suitable targets for all children.

Equality Statement

At Thornton Primary School, we actively seek to encourage equity and equality through our teaching. As such, we seek to advance the equality of opportunity between staff or children who share any of the following characteristics:

- gender;
- ethnicity;
- disability;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy or maternity.

The use of stereotypes under any of the above headings will always be challenged.