

# Healthy Eating Policy

---

*On Track Education Westbury*

<b>Policy Title:</b>	Healthy Eating Policy
<b>School:</b>	On Track Education Westbury
<b>Policy Lead:</b>	Food Lead
<b>School Allergy Leads:</b>	Lesley Coomber & Charlotte Winchester
<b>Approved by:</b>	SLT and Directors
<b>Policy date:</b>	April 2026
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	April 2027
<b>Related Policies:</b>	Supporting Pupils With Medical Conditions Policy   SEND Policy   Behaviour Policy   Safeguarding Policy

## 1. Statement of Intent

At On Track Education Westbury, we believe that food is about so much more than nutrition. Mealtimes and food experiences are opportunities for students to feel safe, cared for, and part of our community. We aim to create a whole-school culture where healthy eating is the norm, supported consistently across all areas of school life, whether students are eating in the common room, classrooms, or outside. By promoting healthy eating together as a staff team, we model positive choices, build trust and resilience, and help our students develop the confidence and good habits they need for success beyond school.

## 2. How This Policy Connects to Our Values

This vision is rooted in everything On Track Education Westbury stands for:

**Trust:** When we model healthy eating and support students consistently, we build trust. Students learn that staff care about their wellbeing and that healthy choices are reliable and normal.

**Resilience:** Learning to try new foods, manage preferences, and make positive choices builds resilience. Food experiences give students daily practice in stepping outside comfort zones in a safe, supportive environment.

**Ambition:** Good nutrition supports concentration, behaviour, and learning, the foundations our students need to achieve their goals and become the best version of themselves.

**Community:** Whether eating together in the common room, in classrooms, or outside, mealtimes are where our community comes together. Supporting each other in making healthy choices strengthens the sense of belonging.

**Kindness:** Supporting each other in making healthy choices, without judgment or pressure, is an act of kindness. It reflects how we care for one another.

### 3. Why This Policy Matters for Our Students

Many of our students arrive at On Track Education Westbury having had difficult experiences around food, mealtimes, or trust in adults. For some, food has been a source of anxiety, shame, or control. For others, mealtimes have been chaotic or unsupported. By creating a warm, secure, and consistent approach to food and eating across all our spaces, we help our students:

- Feel safe and cared for during mealtimes, wherever they are eating
- Build positive associations with healthy eating, step by step
- Experience adults who are consistent, kind, and non-judgmental
- Develop confidence and agency in making choices
- See themselves as capable of building positive habits
- Feel part of a community that values their wellbeing

This is why consistency across all staff is so important. When every adult in school sends the same message - that healthy eating matters and that we support them with kindness, our students can begin to build new, healthier relationships with food.

### 4. Our Commitment

- Create a consistent, supportive whole-school approach to healthy eating
- Ensure all food provided by the school meets the School Food Standards
- Ensure our approach to food provision, practical lessons, and catering fully aligns with our Supporting Pupils With Medical Conditions Policy, supporting the safety and inclusion of every student
- Build students' understanding and confidence in making positive food choices, without shame or pressure
- Weave healthy eating messages across the curriculum, celebrations, and school life in ways that feel safe and achievable
- Create calm, positive spaces for eating, whether in the common room, classrooms, or outside, where every student feels welcomed and supported
- Ensure all staff are champions of healthy eating, with clear guidance, training, and recognition

## 5. Leadership and Governance

We take a whole-school approach to healthy eating, with clear leadership and responsibility at every level.

### Who is responsible?

Our SLT/Food Lead oversees food provision and food education, ensuring alignment with School Food Standards and this vision. Kitchen staff, teaching staff, and support staff all play a role in supporting healthy eating messages.

The school has appointed Designated Allergen Leads who hold responsibility for allergy safety across all food provision and food education. This vision and the school's Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy operate in alignment - allergy management is not separate from our healthy eating culture, it is part of it.

### How do we monitor and evaluate?

- Regular review of menus and food provision against School Food Standards
- Gathering student, staff, and parent feedback through surveys and informal discussion
- Tracking student attitudes to food and mealtimes
- Monitoring staff consistency in supporting healthy eating messages
- Annual review of this vision and progress toward goals
- Participation in schemes such as Food for Life Schools Award to provide external validation

### How do we involve the wider community?

- Parents and carers are informed about our healthy eating approach and encouraged to support it at home
- Students are consulted about food choices and mealtimes
- Staff are supported through training, clear guidance, and recognition of their role

## 6. Food Provision

We provide nutritious, appealing, and well-managed food across the whole school day.

### How do we know our food is tasty and meets the standards?

- All menus and recipes used are planned to meet the School Food Standards
- Kitchen staff prepare food with attention to presentation, flavour, and appeal
- We regularly seek feedback from students about food quality and taste
- Food is monitored for nutritional balance and variety across the week
- We involve students in menu planning and consultation where appropriate

## What do students think about our food?

We actively gather student voice on food provision through informal feedback, surveys, and discussion. Students are involved in decision-making about menus and food choices. We use their feedback to make improvements.

## How do we meet the needs of our school community?

- We provide balanced, nutritious meals that support the health and wellbeing of our students
- All meals, snacks and food used in cooking lessons are provided by the school every day - no student is ever required to bring ingredients, food, or drink from home. Special dietary requirements (allergies, intolerances, cultural preferences) are met with care and without stigma
- Food allergies, intolerances, coeliac disease, skin allergies, and environmental allergies are treated with the same seriousness as all other health and safety requirements
- Every student with a known allergy has an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) and Allergy Action Plan (AAP) in place, which informs all food provision decisions for that student
- Allergen information for all food served on site is clearly displayed in line with the Food Information Regulations 2014, including in the teaching kitchen when school dinners are prepared
- Students with allergies are never excluded from food experiences - adapted recipes, allergen-free alternatives, and safe preparation procedures ensure full inclusion
- Cultural preferences, dietary choices, and religious requirements are respected and met without stigma or making any student feel different
- All students are offered water at lunch and break times, with squash available at lunchtime
- Break-time snacks are healthy options (fruit, yoghurt, crackers, etc.)
- Food is provided in a way that supports our SEMH students, with calm, positive eating spaces across the common room, classrooms, and outdoors
- Staff eat and socialise with students when possible, modelling positive eating behaviours

## The Dining Environment

- Spaces for eating (common room, classrooms, outside) are kept calm, positive, and welcoming
- Staff support students in eating well and manage mealtimes in a way that is supportive and relaxed
- Kitchen and catering staff are engaged, happy, and visible to students

## 7. Food Education

We teach students about healthy eating, nutrition, and practical cooking skills across the curriculum.

### What subjects include food education?

- Cooking lessons and practical food preparation (developing practical skills and confidence)

- BTEC Hospitality (understanding nutrition, food standards, and preparation)
- ASDAN courses (building independence and life skills around food)
- PSHE and wellbeing lessons (nutrition, healthy choices, relationships with food)
- Science (understanding nutrition and health)
- Cross-curricular opportunities (linking food to culture, sustainability, maths, etc.)

### How do we ensure consistent messaging?

- All staff understand and reinforce the same key messages about healthy eating
- Teaching about healthy eating is woven consistently across lessons, not just in cooking
- We approach food education with kindness and without shame or judgment
  - Allergy awareness is embedded across food education - students learn about the 14 notifiable allergens, how to read labels, cross-contamination risks, and how to support peers with allergies
  - Practical cooking lessons include explicit teaching about allergen management, safe ingredient substitution, and the responsibilities of anyone working with food
  - Building students' confidence in asking about ingredients and advocating for their own needs is part of our life skills curriculum, particularly for students working toward independence
- Practical cooking experiences help students develop confidence and positive relationships with food. All ingredients and equipment are provided by the school - no student is disadvantaged by being unable to bring ingredients from home
- We celebrate student achievements in the kitchen and help them see themselves as capable

### How do we measure progress?

- Student knowledge and understanding of nutrition is assessed through lessons and assessments
- Practical cooking skills are assessed as part of BTEC and ASDAN qualifications
- We track changes in student attitudes to food and willingness to try new things
- We observe increased confidence in food choices and reduced anxiety around mealtimes

## 8. Wider Wellbeing and Staff Training

We link healthy eating to students' overall personal development, behaviour, and wellbeing.

### How do we connect healthy eating to wellbeing?

- We explicitly teach students that good nutrition supports concentration, behaviour, mood, and learning
- Mealtimes are structured as calm, restorative times that support emotional wellbeing
- We help students understand that making healthy choices is an act of self-care and self-respect
- We create a school culture where healthy eating is celebrated and modelled by all staff
- We recognise that some students may have complex relationships with food, and approach these with compassion and flexibility

### **What training and support do staff receive?**

- All staff receive training on our healthy eating vision and the School Food Standards
- All staff also complete annual allergy awareness and anaphylaxis training, including the National College Allergy and Anaphylaxis course and practical AAI training - this is a requirement of Benedict's Law and sits alongside our healthy eating training as a core part of staff development
- Training includes practical guidance on managing mealtimes in different spaces (common room, classrooms, outside)
- Staff learn about the importance of modelling healthy eating and non-judgmental approaches
- We provide guidance on how to support students with anxieties or difficult relationships with food
- CPD and training are reviewed annually and updated based on staff feedback and emerging needs
- Staff are supported through the cultural shift with clear guidance, regular communication, and recognition of their efforts

### **How do we create a culture of health and wellbeing?**

- Displays and messaging around school celebrate healthy eating and physical wellbeing
- Events, assemblies, and themed days highlight the importance of nutrition and health
- Staff demonstrate positive attitudes to food and exercise
- The whole school works together to promote healthy lifestyle choices
- We draw on expertise from outside agencies (e.g. public health, dietitians) where needed

## **9. Off-Site and Trip Provisions**

When students are on trips or working off-site, we ensure they continue to have access to healthy food choices that align with our School Food Standards and whole-school approach.

For trips and off-site work, we purchase supermarket 'Meal Deals' or similar provisions. These must comply with our healthy eating standards:

- No fizzy drinks, energy drinks, or sports drinks
- Healthy snacks only - no chocolate or crisps
- Options should provide balanced nutrition and support student wellbeing during the day

This consistency ensures that students experience the same healthy eating message whether they are in school or off-site, reinforcing our whole-school approach and helping them build sustainable healthy habits.

Allergy safety is a non-negotiable part of all off-site provision. Before any trip or off-site activity:

- The allergy register is checked for all attending students and all accompanying staff are briefed

- Emergency medication for students with known allergies is confirmed present and signed out on the day
- External catering providers and venue staff are informed of all relevant allergies in advance and asked to confirm how they will cater safely
- Where a venue cannot provide adequate assurance, parents and carers are asked to provide safe food for their child
- An allergy-specific risk assessment is completed for all trips in addition to the standard trip risk assessment

### **Celebrations, Special Events & Cultural Capital**

- Celebrations involving food (Christmas lunch, special occasions) offer healthy, appetising options aligned with School Food Standards
- Staff and students are involved in planning food for celebrations where appropriate
- These occasions celebrate healthy eating as normal and achievable, building positive associations with food
- Special dietary needs are met with care and without making the student feel different or "difficult"
- For all celebrations involving food, the Designated Allergen Lead is informed in advance and allergen information for all items is confirmed before any student is served - this applies to food brought in from outside school as well as food prepared on site

### **Rewards and Incentives**

- Rewards focus primarily on recognition, experiences, and choice
- Where food-based rewards are used, these are healthy options (fresh fruit, smoothies, popcorn without salt/sugar, etc.)
- Staff are supported to move away from using sweets/chocolate as quick rewards, with clear alternatives provided
- This helps students learn that healthy food can be rewarding and enjoyable

### **Fundraising Events**

- Fundraising events (Macmillan coffee mornings, school fete, etc.) offer a range of healthy options alongside any treats
- These are opportunities to promote healthy eating choices and celebrate our whole-school commitment, not undermine it

## **10. Supporting Our Staff**

We recognise that supporting healthy eating consistently requires a shift in culture, and that this is not something staff need to do alone. We're committed to making this easy, clear, and rewarding for all staff:

- Clear, regular reminders and communications keep healthy eating visible and valued

- Staff who model positive attitudes to food and support students in healthy choices are recognised and celebrated
- Questions or uncertainties about food choices are welcomed - ask the food lead rather than guessing
- Practical guidance on how to manage mealtimes and food in different spaces (common room, classrooms, outside)
- The whole team moves together, this is not about individuals being "better" or "worse", but everyone contributing to a warm, supportive culture
- We understand that change takes time, and we support staff through the process with kindness and patience

## 11. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Students become noticeably more confident and positive around food and mealtimes
- Staff consistently support healthy eating messages across the school
- Spaces for eating (common room, classrooms, outside) become visibly calmer and more positive
- Students see healthy eating as something achievable and normal, not a source of anxiety
- Fewer conflicts or anxieties around mealtimes and food choices
- Feedback from students, staff, parents, and carers reflects the growing healthy eating culture

## 12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, with ongoing monitoring and refinement as our healthy eating culture develops. We welcome feedback from students, staff, parents, and carers as we work toward this together. As we learn what works across different spaces and situations, we'll celebrate our progress and adjust our approach to keep supporting every student in our community.