



Catering Policy

Person responsible: Head teacher
Ratified by the governing body: Spring 2023
Date for review: Spring 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Anne-Marie Renshaw'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail.

Reverend Anne-Marie Renshaw
Chair of Governors

IN-HOUSE CATERING SERVICE - BUSINESS PLAN

Aims and Purpose of Catering Service

To grow and stay healthy, children need to eat a nutritionally well balanced diet. Schools are an influential setting and can contribute significantly to improving the health and well-being of pupils. Good nutrition in childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many children are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables.

The school aims to provide high quality hot meals, using fresh, local produce wherever possible, which will be available to all children and staff in the school.

The school aims to ensure that all meals provided meet the government's School Food Regulations 2014.

The school aims to operate a catering service that is financially viable, taking into account all earmarked funding within its delegated budget, meal income and any other catering-related grants that the school is able to obtain.

The catering service is an integral aspect of the schools aim to promote a healthy lifestyle. Through the dining room experience children learn to appreciate good manners and etiquette.

Ingredients and Suppliers

Local produce and/or suppliers will be used wherever possible.

The quality and price of all ingredients, and the quality of service provided by all suppliers, will be monitored annually. In the event that there are concerns regarding quality, price or service levels, the school will seek alternative suppliers and/or ingredients as appropriate.

The school will aim to spend an average of £1.00 per meal produced on ingredients at all times.

Staffing

The school will employ the appropriate number of staff, under Local Government terms and conditions, in order to meet the aims of the service as set out in this business plan.

The school will undertake regular performance reviews with all catering staff, in accordance with the school's performance management policy.

The Headteacher and Catering Manager/Office Manager will meet on a regular basis to review all matters relating to the operation and development of the catering service.

The school will, by agreement, provide additional hours, support or training in order to meet identified needs or to support development of the catering service.

Consultancy Support

The school will utilise external consultancy support, initially from Essex County Council School Meals Support Service, to support the staff, Headteacher and Governors in meeting the aims of the service as set out in this business plan, and in adhering to all relevant legal requirements, policies and procedures.

The need for, and impact of, such consultancy support will be reviewed by the Governors on an annual basis.

Menus and Menu Cycle

All menus and recipes will be developed on behalf of the school by the Catering Manager/Cook and will be monitored and revised accordingly by Essex County Council School Meals Support Service as part of the consultancy support detailed above.

Essex County Council School Meals Support Service will ensure that all menus and recipes meet the Government's current nutritional standards and that they also meet School Food Regulations 2014 and the updated guidance that follows.

All changes to menus and/or recipes will be agreed in advance by the school with Essex County Council School Meals Support Service, in order to ensure that the current nutritional standards continue to be met.

The service will operate a 3-weekly menu cycle, with new menus introduced from the beginning of each term.

All menus will provide one daily hot meal choice, including a vegetarian option. Depending on the season, there may be either a jacket potato or roll offered as part of the menu choice. Salad, fruit and yoghurt will also be available as extras at all times.

Menus will be sent to all parents at the beginning of each term, and will also be available in the school and on the school website at all times.

Pricing and Charging Policy

Meals will be provided at no charge to any children eligible for free school meals, in accordance with the policies and procedures of Essex County Council. Children in Reception and Key Stage 1 are also eligible for a free school meal.

All other children's meals will be provided at a cost of £2.40.

All adult meals will be provided at a cost of £2.40.

The meal prices detailed above will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Governors and the school as part of the financial monitoring process set out below. Any agreed increase in meal price will take effect from the beginning of the following term, and will be advised to all parents and staff in advance of implementation.

Promotion of Service

The service will be promoted to all parents on a regular basis by way of school newsletters, provision of menus and at parent or new intake events.

The school will also undertake taster sessions, parental visits and theme days in order to promote the service as appropriate.

Snacks, Drinks and Celebrations

A piece of fruit or vegetable is provided every morning for all children in Reception and Key Stage 1 through the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme administered by the Department of Health. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are invited to bring in a snack from home for the morning and this should be a piece of fruit or vegetable, a biscuit or nutritional style bar. Sugary snacks and crisps are discouraged. An additional snack in the afternoon is provided by the school for pupils in Reception.

The school food standards require lower fat milk (or lactose reduced) to be available for drinking at least once throughout the school day and this is offered to children at lunch time, alongside water. Water is available throughout the day for pupils to top up their water bottles when required. Teachers encourage pupils to stay hydrated throughout the school day.

During times of celebration or for special events, there are occasions when food is shared from home or is outside of the usual standards, for example during charity cake sales and PTFA events. Cakes, sweets, chocolate and sugary drinks are discouraged, however we recognise the importance of educating pupils around balancing these foods with healthy lifestyle choices.

Equipment Maintenance and Purchase

All new equipment will be purchased by following the school's normal purchasing policy and procedures.

The school will put arrangements in place to ensure that all fixed and major equipment is serviced on an annual basis and that any identified faults or repairs are undertaken without delay.

Health and Safety/Food Hygiene

The catering staff will have day to day responsibility for ensuring that the service meets all legal requirements relating to health and safety and food hygiene, and that they comply with all relevant policies and procedures issued by either the school or Essex County Council.

The Headteacher and Governors shall have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the catering service meets all legal requirements relating to health and safety and food hygiene, and that the staff comply with all relevant policies and procedures issued by either the school or Essex County Council.

The school will ensure that all catering staff are provided with relevant training and support to enable them to undertake their responsibilities in respect of health and safety and food hygiene as set out above.

Monitoring and Audit procedures

Regular monitoring will be undertaken by the Headteacher and Governors to ensure that the aims of the service are being achieved, that all legal requirements are being met and that all relevant policies and procedures are being adhered to.

Regular monitoring will also be undertaken by Essex County Council Catering Service who will also undertake, on an annual basis, a full audit of the catering service, to include health and safety and food hygiene procedures. As a result of this audit, a report will be provided to the Headteacher setting out any concerns, training needs or other recommendations.

The outcome of all regular monitoring and/or audit reports will be reported to, and discussed by, the Governors on a regular basis. The Governors will ensure that any actions or training needs identified are implemented without delay.

Financial Management and Monitoring

All income and expenditure relating to the catering service will be recorded through separate, designated cost centres within the school's delegated budget.

An annual catering budget, to include all projected income and expenditure, will be presented to, and approved by, the Governors as part of the school's delegated budget.

Trading accounts will be prepared on a monthly basis and used to monitor actual income and expenditure against the approved budget projections. These accounts will be provided to Governors on at least a termly basis.

Variations against budget will be investigated and reported to the Governors and, where necessary, action will be taken or training provided without delay to address any relevant issues.

It is an aim of the service to operate on a financially viable basis, taking into account all earmarked funding and income received by the school, and a full review of the financial procedures and trading accounts will be undertaken after the end of each financial year.

In the event of a trading deficit, it will be the responsibility of the governors to consider whether it is necessary to implement an increase in meal price, other changes or whether such deficit can be subsidised from the school's overall delegated budget.

In the event of a trading surplus, it will be the responsibility of the Governors to decide whether such surplus will be used for a specific purpose to develop the catering service, set aside as a designated catering contingency to meet future expenditure/deficits, or transferred into the school's overall retained balances.

Packed Lunches

Pupils are able to bring in packed lunches from home and, where possible, the school aims to seat children who have a school dinner alongside those with a packed lunch. In line with research and government initiatives, we aim to support all children in consuming a balanced meal and this

includes for pupils bringing in their own lunch. Guidance can be found through the [British Nutrition Foundation](#) to support the creation of nutritious packed lunches.

Packed lunches should try to include:

- at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day
- meat, fish, eggs, or a non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, houmous, falafel) every day
- oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks
- a starchy food such as any type of bread (white or wholegrain rolls, pitta bread or wraps), pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or another cereal every day
- a dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day
- a drink of water, fruit juice or smoothie (maximum portion 150 mls), semi-skimmed, 1% fat or skimmed milk, yoghurt or another milk drink

Packed lunches can occasionally include:

- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages
- Cakes and biscuits, but encourage your child to eat these as part of a meal

It is the responsibility of the parents / carers to provide an appropriate packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period.

The school will provide storage area / facilities for packed lunch bags, in the most convenient and appropriate place possible. However the school cannot provide cooled storage areas and therefore cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

The school recognises that some pupils may require special diets due to allergies and that these do not follow guidance exactly. In this case, parents are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible.

Before and After School Provision

Breakfast Club starts at 08:00 and a selection of toast and cereal is served to children attending this provision.

Pupils attending after school provision are offered a snack. This is managed by the member of staff responsible and is varied each day.

Curriculum

Healthy and balanced lifestyles are taught through a range of curriculum areas including Science, PE, DT and PSHE. Discussions are also facilitated through assemblies. There are opportunities for all pupils to design, prepare and cook through the DT curriculum.