



# Healthy Eating, Food Allergies & Intolerances Guidance Note | Issue 4

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## 1 Introduction

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Healthy eating, food allergies and food intolerance are difficult areas to manage and of course a main focus for Finton House School and Harrison Catering Services. We want all children to be able to be served with food that is healthy, enjoyable and safe to eat and for them to be able to make an informed choice based on the information given to them.

## 2 Healthy Eating

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A healthy lifestyle together with a balanced diet in childhood helps establish healthy eating habits for life. A healthy diet is one, which allows for a balance of different foods that sustain the wellbeing of the individual. Different lifestyles result in different dietary needs and individuals need to be aware of these and the effects of different foods on their bodies. A healthy, balanced diet may vary between individuals from different cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds.

At Finton House, we promote a positive attitude towards healthy eating through the curriculum areas of PSHEE, Design Technology, Physical Education, Geography and Science. Visitors are invited to assemblies and lessons to support the delivery of the healthy eating message. These lessons help pupils to develop the skills and attitudes that will help them make informed healthy choices both in and out of school. Within school, they are encouraged to make sure they have some carbohydrates, protein and vegetables on their plate each mealtime.

School meals are provided for the children each day and dietary requirements catered for in line with this policy. Food is cooked fresh on site, with frozen foods rarely used. Additions such as salt and sugar are avoided. Fresh meat, fish, fruit and vegetables are delivered daily from reputable suppliers. A variety of main dishes is offered every day, including a vegetarian option and there is a salad bar, which includes items such as cold meats and raw vegetables. There is a choice of desserts and fresh fruit. Children are offered water and encouraged to drink with their meal. The Chef Manager, catering staff and teachers are on hand to assist children with their choices and are vigilant in ensuring every child eats a healthy, balanced meal. If there are any concerns, the class teacher is informed and where necessary, the parents and the rest of the staff briefed.

At morning and afternoon breaks, children can enjoy a choice of fresh fruit or a homemade snack. Snack choices are rotated throughout the week to provide variety. Sandwiches are also provided at break for children having later lunches in Year 4-6. Snacks are also provided before the start of afternoon clubs.

Children are strongly advised to bring in water bottles to keep in the classroom and are allowed to drink from them when necessary. In Reception, there is a water fountain in each classroom. There is access to water fountains in the school playgrounds and at the playing fields for all children.

The Bursar and Chef Manager have regular meetings to discuss menus for the forthcoming weeks and the possible trialling of any new ideas. Menus are displayed on the school board in the downstairs corridor of the 169 building and online via Frog so parents can monitor their child's choices. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Bursar keeps the Chef Manager informed of dietary requirements and recommendations. The diet being provided for the children is monitored and reviewed continuously and all catering staff regularly attend courses on hygiene and healthy eating. Menus are on a three-week cycle and are refreshed each term to balance seasonal ingredients and seasonal eating habits.

## 3 Food Allergies & Intolerances

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When preparing food Harrison Catering Services take all reasonable care and precautions to identify and control the ingredients being used but there can be no absolute guarantee that the food will not contain any allergen. This can occur as a trace from an ingredient, because of the list of ingredients not declaring its presence, due to accidental cross contamination in the kitchen or from something as simple as serving spoons being accidentally used by customers for more than one item on the servery.

Whilst food that is expected to be free of known allergens can be prepared, there is always the risk of cross contamination and mistakes occurring due to the inescapable human fallibility factor. The kitchen is a busy environment, where a large range of different foods are prepared and served using a multiplicity of normal ingredients to which most of the population are not allergic or intolerant. To minimise the risk, school staff, catering staff, parents and children, must share responsibility. The responsibilities of each group are detailed in sections 7, 8 and 9.

We are particularly attentive to nut allergies. We do not use nuts, or nut oils in any catering products in the school. However, we cannot claim to be a 'nut-free' school. Our approach is based on advice from The Anaphylaxis Campaign. In particular, it must be acknowledged that, given current food manufacturing processes, it is impossible to guarantee that all products will be free from possible 'traces of nuts' and other allergens. Additionally, while parents are reminded not to provide items containing nuts we cannot always guarantee that this is complied with.



## **4 Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

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Parents have a responsibility to promote healthy eating at home, which in turn will follow through to a child's approach to health eating at school. Concerning allergies and intolerances, whilst all reasonable precautions will be taken to make sure the food is safe for children to eat; there can be no absolute guarantee that the food will not contain anything to which they are allergic or intolerant. However, parents should be satisfied that:

- The school has been fully informed by them about the foods known to trigger an allergic reaction or intolerance in their child.
- Children can ask for information and advice when necessary about the contents or ingredients of the food from the staff serving the food, or on duty in the dining hall for desserts and soups. If the child cannot do so, then parents should be satisfied that staff are fully aware so can act on the child's behalf.
- Children are aware of what they can and cannot eat concerning food allergies and intolerances.
- Children are aware of special diets that might exist or they might decide to choose such as vegetarianism or veganism and that the school offers this provision should they wish to try it.
- Emergency procedures are understood and are in place should an allergic reaction occur. This includes that:
  - The school has been provided with two auto injector pens (where applicable) that are in date, one kept with the child and one in the school office. Additional medicines may also have been provided such as Piriton. These are also kept in the school office.
  - Appropriate members of school staff are trained and willing to administer the auto injector if necessary (where applicable).

## **5 Children's Responsibilities**

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While the expectations of the child will vary by age, in broad terms children are expected to know that:

- They are expected to try new dishes and expand their food horizons.
- They are expected to eat a balanced, healthy diet, ensuring they always have vegetables and a protein item on their plates.
- The caterer does not label individual items of food as to whether they do or do not contain any known food allergens.
- They can always ask for information and advice when necessary about the contents or ingredients of the food from the Chef Manager or catering staff before being served with food or taking food from a self-service area.
- They must follow the advice given by staff when they are told that a food or dish may not be suitable.

## **6 School Responsibilities**

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The school will ensure that it:

- Keeps an up to date list of all children known to suffer from food related allergies or intolerance,

informs all staff and displays this information in appropriate areas of the school.

- Provides the Caterer with a pictorial register of children who have food allergies.
- Provides a list of students with special diets for other reasons, and those children who are vegetarian or vegan.
- Deploys staff to actively patrol the dining room and ensure that all children eat a balanced and healthy meal.
- Establishes emergency procedures as follows (in line with the First Aid & Medication Policy):
  - Most staff are trained and willing to administer an auto-injector (where applicable) should the need arise.
  - The location of auto-injectors (where applicable) held on site are known to the staff. Usually there is one in the child's classroom and another stored in the school office. The school also keeps spare auto-injectors in the school office.
  - The procedure to contact the emergency services and instruct them of the severity of the situation is known by all.
  - The emergency services will be greeted and taken straight to the casualty.

## **7 Caterer's Responsibilities**

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Harrison's Catering will undertake to ensure that:

- Nuts or nut oils are never used or served at school.
- Ingredient lists and labels are examined on any composite products used as ingredients to establish the declared presence or absence of nuts or other known allergens.
- An up to date ingredient list is maintained in the Food Allergy Folder for all dishes produced in the kitchen to identify if any of the common food allergens are used as an ingredient of the dish.
- A photographic register of children with allergies, intolerances or special diets is displayed in the kitchen area.
- All reasonable care is taken when producing food to avoid cross contamination of ingredients.
- The staff who serve food understand they must refer any question from children or staff about the ingredients of a dish to the Chef Manager so that the Food Allergy Folder can be checked to determine if the dish contains the allergen about which the customer is making the enquiry.
- To serve pupils with high-risk allergies on yellow plates so that all staff, both School and Catering, are aware that extra care must be taken for pupils with yellow plates.
- All reasonable care is taken when serving food to avoid cross contamination between different foods and ensure that serving utensils are only used on one type of food.
- Individual items of food are not labelled as to whether they do or do not contain any known food allergens.
- A warning notice is displayed in the servery area reminding customers about food allergy and intolerance and the need to ask about the ingredients in the food being served before making their choice. If there is any doubt about the ingredients of a particular food, the advice from the Chef Manager or member of staff on duty will be



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that it should not be consumed by a child who suffers from an allergy or intolerance.

- All catering staff are trained regularly on all aspects of food hygiene and safety at work. Following the new allergens legislation in January 2015 all staff were trained in this area and the required notices are now displayed in the school canteen for all children, staff and visitors to see.

ENDS.