



## **Healthy Eating Policy**

### **Introduction**

At Downe House Riyadh we aim to educate our pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to make informed healthy lifestyle choices. To do that effectively, we aim to work in partnership with parents and guardians in securing the very best for every child.

### **Aims**

- To provide pupils with positive healthy eating experiences in order to promote their well being.
- To respect the different dietary, medical, cultural, religious and health needs of all our pupils and provide meals which are adequate in nutrition, quantity, quality, choice and variety.
- To encourage pupils to develop positive attitudes towards food through the curriculum and all the other learning opportunities that are provided in the school.
- To promote an understanding of a balanced diet in which some foods play a greater role than others.
- To develop pupils' understanding of the importance of the social context in which eating takes place.
- To raise awareness with pupils, parents and carers in developing a positive approach to food and nutrition education

### **The Importance of Nutrition for Children**

A nutritionally balanced diet is important in childhood to ensure optimum growth, development and overall functioning at a time of rapid growth. A balanced diet in childhood is not only important in providing the energy and nutrients essential to sustain life it also promotes physical, emotional and cognitive development. Learning and developing positive habits towards healthy eating and physical activity can prevent diseases developing (such as obesity, heart disease and diabetes) and support a lifetime of good health. Meeting nutritional requirements throughout childhood is essential to full intellectual development. Research documents tell us that under-nutrition impacts on children's behaviour, performance and overall quality of development. Children require sufficient energy and essential nutrients each day to concentrate on accomplished learning tasks. Even mild and under nutrition and short-term hunger are barriers to learning.

It is the types and varieties of food eaten at this time that ensure nutrient requirements are met and that the diet is nutritionally balanced. Meals and snacks served should meet children's nutrition needs, provide models of healthy eating patterns, and help children establish good eating patterns at an early age.

A child's diet must include an appropriate intake of foods from the four main food groups:

- Bread, other cereals and potatoes (Carbohydrates)
- Fruit and vegetables (Fibre, vitamins & minerals)
- Milk and dairy foods (Protein & Fats)
- Meat, fish and alternatives (Protein and Fats)

### **Being Healthy – guidelines**

- Eat breakfast every day
- Eat fruit and vegetables daily
- Choose snacks that will provide nutrients to compliment meals
- Avoid snacks and drinks with a high sugar content between meals
- Drink plenty of fluids to avoid becoming dehydrated
- Be physically active every day
- Brush teeth twice a day and visit your dentist regularly

### **Guidelines for a healthy snack (break times)**

#### ***Healthier Break Time Snacks***

- **Chopped up raw vegetables**– e.g. carrots, cucumber or peppers
- **Chopped up fruit/Whole fruit** – e.g. apple, satsuma, strawberries, halved grapes, melon slices
- **Breadsticks and wholemeal crackers**
- **Malt loaf, tea cakes, fruit breads**

Dried fruit is not recommended as a snack between meals as it is high in sugar and can be bad for teeth (but this is ok when eaten as part of a meal).

#### ***Guidelines for a healthy lunch box***

- Based on starchy carbohydrates (bread/potatoes/rice/pasta)
- Include fresh fruit and vegetables/salad
- Include a source of protein such as beans and pulses, eggs, fish, meat, cheese (or dairy alternative)
- Include a side dish such as a low-fat and lower-sugar yoghurt (or dairy alternative), tea cake, fruit bread, plain rice/corn cakes, homemade plain popcorn, sugar-free jelly
- Include a drink such as water, skimmed or semi-skimmed milk, sugar-free or no-added sugar drinks

***We need to work with parents and ask to not send in cake, sweets, chocolate, cereal bars, biscuits, crisps, fizzy drinks for either a mid-morning snack or in lunch boxes. Cold takeaway food is not encouraged. School cannot reheat food sent in from home due to health and safety considerations.***

## **Food provided by the school caterer**

Our meals are prepared by our outsourced catering company who then safely bring the lunches to school.

The caterer is xxxx Parents book school lunches on a termly basis for the number of days per week they require. Alternatively they can pay a minimum of SAR 500 into a catering account for their child to purchase snacks or grab and go lunches.

Children have the opportunity to try new healthy foods and are encouraged to try these. All of the catering team talk to the children and help them make healthy choices at lunch time. They and the staff on duty use the scientific language of nutrition such as proteins, carbohydrates etc.

Our menus are always on display in the dining hall corridor for the children to read so that they are able to make their own informed choices. Parents may also view these menus. The Catering Manager is also more than happy to meet with parents to discuss any special dietary requests.

Pupils may choose between a hot meal (vegetarian choices are always available) or cold from the salad bar. They are encouraged to ask for a 'small' serving if they are 'unsure' or have 'small appetite' to discourage wastage. In addition a home – made pudding is always available along with fresh fruit, either cut into segments, to encourage the child who wants a small portion, or entire.

All snacks provided at the school are nutritious, avoiding large quantities of sugar, salt, saturated fats, additives, preservatives and colourings.

Menus are planned in advanced and food offered is fresh, wholesome and balanced. We offer a balance and variety of foods to provide a range of cultural and nutritious experiences for the children.

## **Water**

We have fresh drinking water and suitable cups readily available for children and staff at the lunch tables. All children are encouraged to have at least one glass at the table. Water dispensers around the school provide children with ready access to cooled, fresh drinking water.

We support the children in recognising that they need to drink water when they are thirsty, hot or tired, or feeling unwell.

## **Special dietary needs and food allergies**

We are sensitive to the catering needs of children with specific dietary needs, including religious considerations. Parents will be asked about any special dietary requirements their child has before their child starts school. Parents of children who have special diets (for example a gluten-free diet) or who have food intolerances are responsible for providing the school with information about their diet and choices available to the child. We update our records regularly. Menus will be carefully planned and adapted accordingly.

## **Social skills**

Meals can be times of pleasant social sharing. Opportunities for pupils, teachers, tutors and house staff to eat and drink together are provided, for example during lunchtime staff sit at the ends of the tables. This provides an opportunity for students to learn good social skills and behaviour associated with eating and drinking. It also enables staff to monitor healthy eating.

## **Attendance and encouraging healthy eating**

Staff keep a discreet eye on those who appear not to be eating well. Positive encouragement and peer support is used to encourage poor eaters to make healthy choices, for example children may be sent back to the salad bar to collect 'carbohydrate' and the reason for this explained to them, or they may be gently encouraged to eat a little more of their vegetables before leaving the dining room.

## **Education on Healthy eating**

Within the school's timetable healthy eating is further encouraged through work carried out during Science and PSHE lessons.

## **Downe House Riyadh Events**

As part of our fundraising for the school, Downe House Riyadh will organise events that include purchasing food (e.g. cake sales). As a school, we will work with Downe House Riyadh to ensure that there is a balanced offering of food at Downe House Riyadh events to support our healthy eating policy. We will continue to run cake sales and other such initiatives keeping our healthy eating policy in mind. This is an opportunity for the school to educate the pupils around moderation and the idea of "treats" as part of a balanced diet. It is a key part of their education that they learn to regulate their own eating habits and eating choices.

- We ask parents/guardians to ensure that products containing nuts and seeds are not brought into school.
- No fundraisers involving cakes/buns/biscuits will be held in the school without a check being undertaken of the food on offer.
- Caretaking staff should pay particular attention to the cleaning of identified eating areas
- Pupils at risk of anaphylaxis should be encouraged to wash their hands before eating

## **Festivals and celebrations**

At Downe House Riyadh we celebrate different festivals and celebrations. We recognise that festivals can provide a valuable opportunity for children to experience diversity from a wide range of cultures and nationalities and the contribution they make to the variety of foods eaten in Britain today.

- We ask parents/guardians to ensure that products containing nuts and seeds are not brought into school
- If parents/guardians who wish to supply a 'safe food treat box' for special celebrations, this will be accommodated by the class teacher
- Caretaking staff should pay particular attention to the cleaning of identified eating areas
- Pupils at risk of anaphylaxis should be encouraged to wash their hands before eating

### **Birthday Cakes**

Parents sometimes like to send in birthday cake to their child's class by means of celebration. We request that these are individual cakes to avoid cutting cake in a classroom. We will prefer to send the cake home with each child for the parent to decide if/when it can be eaten. This is due to parental concern over diet, allergies and food colouring.

- We ask parents/guardians to ensure that products containing nuts and seeds are not brought into school
- If parents/guardians who wish to supply a 'safe food treat box' for special celebrations, this will be accommodated by the class teacher
- Birthday cakes/buns/biscuits are allowed in the classroom but under strict guidelines and must be checked by school staff first.
- Caretaking staff should pay particular attention to the cleaning of identified eating areas
- Pupils at risk of anaphylaxis should be encouraged to wash their hands before eating

### **Nut Safe and Allergy Awareness**

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the full Nut Safe and Allergy Awareness Policy.

Downe House Riyadh has a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to keep pupils, staff and members of the wider school community safe at school. Given the growing prevalence of individuals with chronic allergies in our school community, including pupils who have acute allergies to certain foods (in particular nuts) we have adopted this Nut Safe and Allergy Awareness Policy which involves:

- Identifying the risks of anaphylaxis
- Minimising the risk of occurrence through management controls
- Planning for an effective response to emergencies

Teachers must:

- Be aware of allergic triggers that may cause a pupil to experience an anaphylactic reaction and minimise the risk for the pupil by reviewing class activities, supplies and materials to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, they are allergen free.
- Treat the pupil with allergies the same as other pupils.
- Discourage pupils from sharing lunches or trading snacks.

- Reinforce hand washing before eating.
- Discuss activities involving food with parents/guardians before they take place and arrange for the provision by the parents/guardians of alternative options for edible treats on special occasions.
- Discuss activities involving food with parents/guardians before they take place and arrange for the provision by the parents/guardians of alternative options for edible treats on special occasions.
- Ensure the pupil's Anaphylaxis Emergency Kit and a mobile phone is taken on all outings and trips off the school premises.
- Maintain effective communication with parents/guardians, including informing them if their child has become unwell at school.
- Provide a supportive environment for the pupil to manage their allergy effectively and safely at school

As there will be a number of pupils at school who have food allergies, Downe House Riyadh will remind all parents of the danger that even small amounts of an allergen pose to these pupils. Most severe allergic reactions are the result of ingestion but other reactions can be triggered by touching surfaces, such as computer keyboards, books or a piano, if these surfaces have previously been used by someone who has eaten nut products.

Nuts and seeds are part of a healthy diet for those without chronic allergy, but we would appreciate that pupils eat such snacks at home rather than bring them into school. Therefore we would ask all parents not to provide pupils with school snacks which include nuts/sesame seeds or products made from these.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We fully respect individual parent's food choices for their pupils and understand that there are many different needs and tastes. However, if snacks or lunch boxes regularly fall short of the expectations in this policy, we will send a reminder home to parents. We want to work with parents to educate our pupils about healthy dietary choices so that the pupils, through the understanding of a balanced diet, will develop a greater appreciation of a healthy lifestyle.

### **Dissemination of the policy**

The school will use opportunities such as assemblies, new parent meetings and Healthy Lifestyle activities in school to promote this policy as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating.

All school staff, including teaching, pastoral, catering staff will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.

### **Policy History**

Date of adoption of this policy	August 2022
Date of last review of this policy	August 2022
Date for next review of this policy	June 2023
Policy owner (SMT)	Deputy Head (Pastoral) / Head
Policy owner (Chair of the Board)	Board