



VALENCE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Food and Drink Policy

Date:	January 2026
Date for review:	January 2028



Article 24

Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must work to provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this

Food and Drink Policy

Valence Primary School is committed to giving all pupils consistent messages about all aspects of health to help them understand the impact of eating and drinking behaviours and encourage them to take responsibility for the choices they make. It is important that we consider all elements of our work to ensure that we promote health awareness in all members of the school community and can provide a valuable role model to pupils and their families. Through effective leadership, the school ethos and the curriculum, all school staff can bring together all elements of the school day to create an environment which supports a healthy lifestyle.

At Valence Primary we believe that proper nutrition and fluid intake are essential to all members of the school community if they are to fulfil their potential in life. Proper nutrition is essential for good health and effective teaching and learning. We believe that all messages about food and drink within the school should be consistent.

As a school we want to play our role in establishing and maintaining life-long healthy and environmentally sustainable eating and drinking habits.

Aims and Objectives

- To maintain an ethos within school in which a healthy choice is the easy choice.
- To provide cross-curricular education that enables pupils to think about their food choices and make an informed selection.
- To involve the whole community in developing and maintaining healthy eating and drinking habits.
- To have a pleasant and sociable dining experience which enhances the social development.
- To encourage foods that are rich in vitamins, iron, calcium.
- To encourage a balanced diet.
- To offer milk and water to drink to all pupils free of charge.
- To encourage appropriate fluid intake with an easily accessible water supply throughout the day.
- To consider and accommodate specific diagnosed dietary requirements.
- To ensure high standards of hygiene amongst the children
- To develop healthy eating habits and physical development that will last a lifetime.
- To ensure that the school gives consistent messages about food and health.

As part of the Government initiative our Early Years are provided with free milk and KS1 children receive free fruit/vegetables during the day. KS2 children can bring in fruit as a play time snack. There is also the opportunity for all children to access free milk at lunch time. In addition, fresh drinking water is available throughout the day. Fruit drinks and fruit flavouring in drinks are not permitted.

School lunches and packed lunches

All our school meals are provided by in house catering. We include the use of fresh fruit, salad, and vegetables each day as a choice for the children. We provide a free hot meal for all our FS/KS1 pupils and KS2 pupils can choose a hot meal too. Currently, all pupils can have a free school meal.

We pay regard to nutritional balance and healthy options by following the School Food Standards guide. Some children bring a packed lunch to school. We discourage sweets, crisps and chocolate bars, and do not permit soft or fizzy drinks. We are continuing to work with families and pupils in the promotion of a healthy diet. One area we have been recommended to follow by the Department of Health is the reduction of sugar in children's diets. In the light of this, it is school policy to allow pupils to have only plain water with their packed lunches. We discourage flavoured water, smoothies, yoghurt drinks or squash. This website has really good ideas: Lunchbox Ideas | Recipes | Change4Life (www.nhs.uk). More information can be found on the school website.

Staff are encouraged to sit with children during snack and mealtimes to provide a good role model, encourage good manners and lead conversation.

Breakfast and Extended School Provision

Recognising parental responsibility and school/parent partnership, children are encouraged to have breakfast before leaving home. Our in-house catering provides a range of healthy breakfast options for families using our Breakfast Club provision. In addition, we provide a breakfast where a need is identified e.g., to nourish a hungry child on arrival.

Extended school provision i.e., Breakfast Club and After School Care (GEMS) follow the same rigorous quality control as our main in-house meals – please see link.

[School food standards practical guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Celebrations

Treats are provided by the school for special celebrations such as the Head Teacher's Tea Party or a class party. We do not hand out sweets/chocolates or cake for birthdays although families are permitted to share with friends once children have been dismissed into the playground at home time. For younger children, they will be reminded to seek parental permission before eating.

Food should not be used to reward children.

Drinks

We recognise that low fluid intake can lead to reduced academic performance through poor concentration and lethargy, reduced physical performance and health problems including headaches and urine infections.

Water for all is freely available throughout the school day to all members of the school community.

Water fountains are located at key locations around the school buildings and most classrooms have drinking water on tap. Children may drink their own water throughout the day. Younger and SEND children are also reminded to drink water. Early Years are provided with milk.

Curriculum

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of health, including healthy eating patterns and practical skills that are needed to understand where food comes from such as shopping, preparing, and cooking food.

During cookery sessions children are taught food hygiene, healthy eating, and food preparation techniques. Food and cooking activities aim to widen experience of food. Children are given the opportunity to touch, taste, smell and feel a variety of foods.

Literacy provides children with the opportunity to explore poetry, persuasion, argument, and narrative work using food and food related issues as a stimulus, e.g., writing to a company to persuade them to reduce sugar in drinks etc.

Maths can offer the possibility of understanding nutrition labelling, calculating quantities for recipes, weighing, and measuring ingredients. We also offer a 'Maths Kitchen' to promote the use of mathematical problem solving in food preparation.

Science provides an opportunity to learn about the types of food available, their nutritional composition, digestion, and the function of different nutrients in contributing to health and how the body responds to exercise. Growing food is encouraged in units relating to plants, sustainability, and ecosystems.

RE provides the opportunity to discuss the role of certain foods in the major religions of the world. Children experience different foods associated with religious festivals.

Computing can afford pupils the opportunity to research food issues using the internet and other electronic resources. Pupils design packaging and adverts to promote healthy food choices.

Food Technology as part of DT provides the opportunity to learn about where food comes (school gardening) from and apply healthy eating messages through practical work with food, including preparation and cooking.

PSHE encourages young people to take responsibility for their own health and well-being, teaches them how to develop a healthy lifestyle and addresses issues such as body image. Pupils can discuss issues of interest to young people, e.g., advertising, and sustainable development.

Geography provides a focus on the natural world and changing environment, offering the chance to consider the impact our consumer choices have on people across the world who rely on growing food as their source of income. Our Eco Teams work hard to raise awareness of the need to reduce food waste.

History provides insight into changes in diet and food over time.

Physical Education provides pupils with the opportunity to develop physically and to understand the practical impact of sport, exercise, and other physical activity such as dance and walking.

School visits provide pupils with activities to enhance their knowledge and understanding of food variety e.g., children visit the herb garden at our local museum.

Partnership with parents and carers

The partnership of home and school is critical in shaping how children and young people behave, particularly where health is concerned. Each must reinforce the other. This is not always easy, but our school is well placed to lead by example.

Parents are asked not to send in soft or fizzy drinks and are reminded that only water may be drunk during the school day, except at lunch when children may also have free milk.

An important aspect of our philosophy is a personalised approach to learning. This is for all aspects of a child's development, including eating. Individualised support can be put into place for any child, in consultation with the family.

A copy of the Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy can be found on our website.

Equal Opportunities

The healthy eating and drinking systems and strategies in our school will be accessible to all children and staff regardless of race, gender, and SEND.

Children are taught to respect that choice; method of preparation, and consumption vary across families.

Health and Safety

Food will be stored according to instructions on packaging and common sense. Advice will be sought from the catering staff and Environmental Health if necessary.

Note: Products containing nuts are not permitted as a number of our children have allergies.

Role of the Governors

Governors monitor and check that the school policy is upheld and can also offer guidance where a member of the body has expertise in this area. They are invited to join mealtimes during school visits.

Subject coordinators are responsible for the curriculum development of the Food Policy.

The Headteacher and PSHE coordinator are responsible for supporting colleagues in the delivery of the Food Policy.