



Dar Ul Madinah will nurture our learners into model citizens that exemplify the inherent values of Islam, make a positive contribution to the community and are champions of their faith.

Healthy Eating Policy

This policy is in line with the Mission Statement of the School

Document Control

This policy has been approved for operation within Darul Madinah Primary School

Date of last review: August 2026

Date of next review: August 2027

Review period: Annually

Policy Status: Statutory

Owner: Directors

1. Purpose of the Policy

This Healthy Eating Policy sets out Darul Madinah's whole-school approach to promoting children's health, wellbeing, and nutrition from the age of two in Nursery through to ten years old in Year 6. The policy reflects the expectations set out in the **EYFS Statutory Framework (2025)**, the **School Food Standards**, **Public Health England guidance**, and the **Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2025)**, all of which emphasise the importance of healthy eating, safe food practices, and the development of lifelong healthy habits. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our children receive consistent messages, support, and education across the school so that they can make informed choices about food, understand the impact of diet on their bodies, and experience positive eating routines every day.

2. Statutory and Guidance Framework

This policy is grounded in the requirements of the EYFS Framework, which states that early years settings must provide food that is healthy, balanced, and safe, and must promote children's health, hygiene, and independence. The **2025 updates** place a stronger emphasis on children's physical development, oral health, and self-care routines. The **School Food Standards** set out the nutritional expectations for meals and snacks provided in schools and guide us in ensuring that food offered meets the required balance of fruit, vegetables, protein, carbohydrates, and dairy. Public Health England's guidance outlines national recommendations for limiting sugar intake, reducing childhood obesity, and improving children's overall diet. Ofsted's 2025 framework emphasises that healthy eating forms part of a school's wider responsibility to support pupils' personal development, wellbeing, and understanding of how to live healthy lives.

3. Aims of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that every child in the school is supported to develop strong, positive attitudes towards food and nutrition. The policy aims to reduce children's exposure to foods high in sugar, salt, and saturated fats and to promote a culture in which healthy choices are normal daily practice. We aim to ensure that all food provided at school is safe, nutritious, and suitable for the child's age and stage of development, and that children learn how to make healthy choices independently. We also aim to work closely with parents so that home and school practice is consistent, and children receive the same messages in both environments.

4. Key Principles

This policy is based on the principle that children learn through consistency, repetition, and clear modelling from adults. Healthy eating is not simply about providing nutritious food; it is also about teaching children to understand their bodies, recognise hunger and fullness, and develop independence and social confidence during mealtimes. Research consistently shows that children learn most effectively when healthy eating is embedded across the curriculum, reinforced in daily routines, and supported by adults who model healthy behaviours themselves. The 2025 guidance reinforces the expectation that schools must actively create

an environment that promotes healthy decisions, particularly around drinks, snacks, and daily routines.

5. Food and Drink Provided by the School

The school provides water that is freely accessible throughout the day in all classrooms and outdoor areas. Children are encouraged to drink water regularly, as this is linked to concentration, physical health, and oral hygiene. Milk may be provided at designated times. In line with both the EYFS 2025 expectations and oral health guidance, children must not be given juice, squash, flavoured milk, fizzy drinks, or sweetened beverages during the school day.

Snacks provided by the school follow strict healthy eating criteria. Snacks for younger children are soft, easy to chew, and cut safely to reduce choking risks. Snacks may include fruit, vegetables, breadsticks, plain crackers, or low-sugar yoghurt. No sugary snacks such as biscuits, pastries, cakes, chocolate, or sweets are permitted.

Where the school provides meals, they must follow the School Food Standards and include a mixture of fresh vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and dairy. Salt and sugar must be minimised in all meals. Fresh fruit is the preferred option for dessert.

The school maintains a detailed and regularly updated allergy register so that children with allergies or intolerances can be protected. Staff receive training on allergy management and food safety, particularly in EYFS where children may need food cut appropriately or require additional supervision.

6. Food Brought From Home

Parents who send children with packed lunches are expected to follow the school's healthy eating expectations to ensure consistency for all pupils. Lunches should contain a balanced meal such as a sandwich, wrap, rice dish, or pasta dish with a nutritious filling. Healthy options such as fruit, chopped vegetables, yoghurt, cheese, and plain crackers should be included. Water must be provided, as juice and other sweetened drinks are not allowed. Foods such as sweets, chocolate, sugary cakes, pastries, crisps, fast food, fried foods, and processed snacks should not be included. If a child regularly brings an unhealthy lunch, the school will discuss this with the parents sensitively in line with the 2025 guidance on promoting children's health.

7. Mealtime Practice and Routines

Mealtimes are seen as a key part of children's development, not just a time to eat. Staff sit with children and model healthy eating habits, such as trying new foods, using utensils properly, and maintaining good table manners. Children are encouraged to develop independence through pouring their own water, opening food containers, tidying up after themselves, and caring for their environment. Staff supervise all mealtimes to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, particularly in the early years where choking risks are higher.

Hygiene routines are strictly followed. Children must wash their hands before and after meals, and all surfaces are cleaned before food is eaten. Staff comply with food hygiene expectations when handling or preparing food.

8. Teaching Healthy Eating Through the Curriculum

Healthy eating is taught throughout the curriculum from Nursery to Year 6. In EYFS, children learn through stories, discussions, role play, and practical experiences such as cooking and food-tasting activities. These activities help children understand where food comes from, how it nourishes their bodies, and how they can make healthy choices. Sensory experiences help younger children develop confidence in trying new foods.

In Key Stage 1, children begin to learn about food groups, balanced meals, and the difference between healthy and unhealthy foods. They learn that sugar and processed foods can affect their health and teeth, and they continue to make links between healthy eating and oral health.

In Key Stage 2, children develop a deeper understanding of nutrition. They learn about vitamins, minerals, the digestive system, food labels, and how diet affects their concentration, behaviour, and long-term health. They learn how to plan a nutritious meal and how to understand ingredients and nutritional information.

These lessons are linked across different subjects. In Science, children study digestion and nutrition; in PSHE, they explore wellbeing and self-care; in PE, they learn the importance of healthy lifestyles; in English, they write recipes or instructions; in Maths, they measure and weigh ingredients.

9. Oral Health Links

Healthy eating is directly linked to oral health, and this policy supports the school's Oral Health Policy. By limiting sugar and promoting water as the main drink, the school helps reduce the risk of cavities and tooth decay. Children learn how sugary snacks affect their teeth and why brushing twice a day and visiting the dentist are important. Healthy eating routines reinforce these messages daily.

10. Celebrations and Special Occasions

To maintain consistency and avoid confusion for pupils, birthdays and celebrations in school do not involve sugary treats or food-based rewards. Parents are encouraged to send non-food items such as books or stickers instead of cakes or sweets. School events focus on activities and experiences rather than high-sugar foods. This approach aligns with the 2025 guidance on promoting children's health and preventing childhood obesity.

11. Staff Responsibilities and Training

All staff are responsible for modelling healthy practices. Staff must not consume sweetened drinks, energy drinks, or unhealthy foods in front of pupils. Staff receive annual training to refresh their knowledge of nutrition, oral health, and healthy eating expectations. New staff are introduced to the policy as part of their induction.

12. Working With Parents

The school recognises that parents play a crucial role in shaping children's eating habits. The school provides guidance through newsletters, parent workshops, and leaflets about healthy lunches, sugar swaps, and nutritional ideas. Healthy eating expectations are included on the school's application form so that families understand our approach from the beginning. If concerns arise regarding a child's lunch or eating habits, the school communicates sensitively with parents to offer support.

13. Monitoring and Review

Healthy eating practices are monitored daily in EYFS and during lunch times across the school. Curriculum planning is reviewed to ensure healthy eating is taught consistently. The Leadership Team reviews this policy annually or sooner if statutory guidance changes. Any updates will be communicated to all staff and parents.

14. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the Oral Health Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Health & Safety Policy, EYFS Curriculum Policy, and the Behaviour and Personal Development Policies.