



Positive Lunchtime Policy

Last reviewed on:	September 2026
Next review on:	September 2028

Positive Lunchtime Policy

At Grimsdyke we recognise that lunchtime is a key component of the school day. The school aim is that during the designated lunch period pupils will have a safe, happy and healthy break from learning sessions. As a school, we believe that lunchtime provides an opportunity for pupils to learn important life skills and put into practice the caring for all ethos that is central to our school. The experience should be positive and pupils will be supported by a range of school staff including teaching assistants. (UNCRC Article 15 / Article 31).

Aims

- To ensure that all children feel safe and valued.
- To create an enjoyable and calm lunchtime environment.
- To promote the schools SCORE values through the attitudes and behaviours of children and staff
- To ensure that lunchtimes are a constructive time for recreation, exercise and social interaction.
- To ensure that school rules and standards of behaviour apply at lunchtimes to meet the same expectations as during the rest of the school day.
- To promote a healthy lifestyle through good nutrition, exercise and social, emotional and mental health practices

Lunch period organisation

- Lunchtime organisation and supervision is managed by the lead teaching assistants for lower and upper school with the support of the school senior leadership team.
- EYFS have a lunch break from 11.30am to 12.45pm (11.30am to 1pm on Wednesday), Key Stage One have a lunch break from 12.00pm to 1.00pm and Key Stage Two have a lunch break from 12.30pm to 1.30pm.
- A series of rotas are created, circulated and implemented. All lunchtime staff must adhere to these to ensure that children are safe and supervised in all areas (Studio, packed lunches/classrooms, playground/field, Hall, Library etc) throughout the designated lunch period. Staff wishing to organise events which may require changes to these rotas, e.g. trips, sports clubs etc., should notify the lead teaching assistants in advance.
- Information about food allergies and medical advice relating to food and eating are displayed in the studio and relevant classrooms.
- Information about vulnerable students is shared regularly with support staff at meetings to ensure they are aware of students who may need specialist support during lunchtimes.
- A full list of students (including photos) with allergies that may require the administration of an auto-injector/Epi-pen is displayed in the medical room and available to relevant staff.

Studio organisation:

- The Studio is used for serving hot school lunches.
- The Studio is set up ready for lunch by 11.30am.
- Hot school meals are served from 11.30am to 1.30pm approximately.

- Starting with Reception at 11.30am, all year groups have an allocated time in the canteen on a rota basis.
- Children are supervised in the canteen by year group teaching assistants.
- Children are encouraged to eat a healthy and balanced meal of protein, vegetables, salad and dessert. (UNCRC Article 24)
- Children will only leave the dining hall when they have finished their lunches and permission has been given by a member of staff.
- Children are encouraged to eat their lunch, but they will not be forced. If a child does not eat their lunch, parents will be notified.
- Children are supported to eat and interact appropriately in the Studio by the teaching assistants on duty. Positive behaviour is encouraged and praised. Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with at the time, in line with the school behaviour policy and reported to the relevant class teacher.
- The Studio is out of use during the period it is being set up (from approximately 11am), in use for lunch and whilst it is being cleaned after the lunch session (until approximately 2pm.)

Packed lunch organisation

- Children are encouraged to bring a packed lunch which will form part of a balanced diet and support the habit of eating healthily. (UNCRC Article 24)
- The school policy on healthy packed lunches is outlined in detail in Appendix 1.
- Packed lunches are eaten in classrooms or shared teaching spaces in school.
- Appropriate cleaning materials are provided in classrooms to ensure that packed lunches are eaten in an environment that is hygienic and staff should follow the health and safety policy as well as ensure any specific relevant risk assessments e.g. for infection control/Covid.
- Children are supervised in the classrooms by year group teaching assistants.
- Supervising staff will monitor student safety for example in relation to allergies, choke risk; student welfare for example in relation to type and amounts of food eaten and student interactions.
- Children will only leave the classroom when they have finished their lunches and permission has been given by a member of staff.
- During the summer months' children will be allowed to eat their packed lunches outside in picnic style. This is at the discretion of the lead teaching assistants in consultation with the Head Teacher.

Playground / Field Lunchtime Periods

- Those children not indoors eating lunch will play on the infant/junior playgrounds or the field or take part in organised activities such as gymnastics, dance club etc. (UNCRC Article 23/28)
- Staff will be on duty supervising in playgrounds / field and some members of lunchtime staff will organise the outdoor play equipment. Equipment and staff supported activities will be introduced as appropriate depending on the weather etc.

- Staff on duty in the playgrounds will wear high visibility jackets to help students identify where the nearest assistance is should they need it and carry a first stop first aid bag.
- The adventure playground and table tennis tables will be used and supervised on a rota basis.
- Our pupils are given a range of responsibilities over the lunchtime period including:
 - House Captains from year 6 organise equipment and activities on the playground/field for the junior school. (UNCRC Article 31)
 - Play leaders from Year 5 organise equipment and activities on the playground/field for the Infant school.
- There is a Playground Charter on display in each playground area that should be used to remind and reinforce expectations with students as appropriate.
- Teaching assistants will reward positive lunchtime behaviour using the school merit system, awarding merits for good learning, team work or citizenship as appropriate. Stickers may also be used to reward and encourage students to engage in positive and healthy lunchtimes.
- Inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with according to the school behaviour policy.
- Any child who is hurt will be assessed and treated by a member of staff with a first stop first aid bag. If appropriate they will be sent to the Medical Room. The welfare assistant will investigate further and complete all the relevant documents.
- At the end of playtime, a bell will be rung; the children will stand still until directed to line up.

Wet Lunchtime Periods

During wet lunch periods, there will be an adjusted staffing rota managed by the lead teaching assistants for lower and upper school that will ensure that children are supervised safely at all times. The children will engage in suitable activities supervised by the year group teaching assistants. House Captains, Prefects and Play leaders will support year groups as required or nominated by the Deputy Head (Teaching and Learning) as part of their rota.

The Role of the Class teacher:

With the exception of the Head Teacher and Deputy Head (or Senior Leaders covering for them) teachers are not required to perform lunchtime supervision duty. This does not however, absolve teachers in law from attending to a situation involving a pupil, if the matter is brought to their attention. At all times, whilst on the premises, the welfare and safety of pupils is paramount.

Teachers can help improve lunchtime behaviour;

- Creating a class culture and charter that fosters a positive and supportive peer culture within the class that extends beyond learning to social and play contexts.
- By helping children learn to play in more imaginative and constructive ways by teaching playground games/songs and using playground equipment during PE lessons.
- By supporting staff supervising lunchtimes and treating them respectfully, thus raising their status and authority in the eyes of children.
- Keeping lunchtime staff informed of any children with problems or who are experiencing particular difficulties.

- Keeping lead teaching assistants informed of any activities which will have an impact on the lunchtime organisation and staffing.
- Having an awareness of rotas and staff covering the lunch period as advised by the lead teaching assistants.
- Checking Arbor for behaviour incidents regularly and following up entries with the children concerned.
- Ensuring the menu for each day is discussed to encourage children to eat a healthy, balanced diet.
- Ensuring that lunchtime rewards are used consistently and appropriately.
- Using circle-time, drama and PSHE to explore themes such as bullying, self-esteem, manners, school rules and resisting peer pressure.
- Having the classroom charter on display for reference in wet lunchtimes and displaying those items/ activities that are not permitted so that it is clear for all students and staff.
- Providing activities, games, setting up street dance videos or a DVD during wet lunchtimes.
- Running clubs during the lunchtimes.
- Being on time at the start and end of the lunch session to ensure the smooth running of lunchtime and continuity of supervision.

Appendix One:

Healthy Packed Lunch Policy.

Introduction

At Grimsdyke, we are committed to teaching your child about how to make sensible food choices as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The policy has been developed by drawing on key Government guidance associated with healthy eating and is supported by what is taught in our curriculum where healthy eating is discussed and promoted in a number of subjects. We believe that a nutritious packed lunch contributes to the health and well-being of children.

Aims

- To improve the nutritional quality of packed lunches and other foods taken into school.
- To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the child with healthy food that is similar in nutritional value to food served in school.
- To give clear guidance to parents/carers, pupils, governors and staff on providing a healthier packed lunch.

Food to be contained in a packed lunch or sent from home for consumption in school:

Packed lunches should aim to include all of the following every day:

- Fruit and vegetables – at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad.
- A non- dairy source of protein – meat, fish, egg, beans or pulses such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus or falafel.
- A starchy food like bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles or potatoes.
- Dairy foods such as milk, cheese, yoghurt or fromage frais.
- Drinks – the school provides water to refill the children's own water bottles (which should only contain water) and that are available for students to have a drink throughout the school day; healthy drinks such as water, fruit juice, milk, healthy yoghurt drinks or smoothies maybe included in your child's packed lunch but these will only be consumed with their lunch.

To keep packed lunches in line with food-based standards for school meals, packed lunches should not include:

- Pure chocolate bars
- Other confectionery such as sweets
- Fizzy or sugary drinks
- Fast foods such as hamburgers

Students at Key Stage One are provided with a morning snack of fruit or vegetables and/or a drink of milk if they wish. Where students at Key Stage Two bring their own snack for mid-morning, it should be fruit or vegetables and the above guidance applies. Parents may purchase a milk drink for their child to have at snack time in Key Stage Two.

The school will provide storage areas/ 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. Parents/carers are advised that insulated bags, possibly with a small freezer block are a good option for packed lunches

All school staff including teaching and catering staff will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation. Where staff have a welfare concern regarding a student's packed lunch, whether relating to the nutritional content or the amount the child is managing to eat, this will be followed up with the parents in the first instance and with senior staff as required.