Policy Name	Food Policy				
Effective Date	March 2021	**Date of last revision**	October 2025	**Version No.**	1
Author	Head of School				

Version History				
Version	**Approved by**	**Revision Date**	**Details of Changes**	**Author**
1.1		**March 2025**	**No changes, reviewed and date of revision noted for March 2027**	**MT**
		October 2025	**Additional changes made to the food groups, to be more specific**	**MT**
		October 2025	**Allergies paragraph expanded to be more detailed**	**MT**

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Head of School every two years, or more frequently if there are changes in policy and procedure. This procedure was last reviewed and agreed by the Head of School in March 2025. It is due for review in March 2027.

Introduction

Policy statement

ICS takes seriously its responsibility to inform students about healthy eating and to help them to make wise choices about what they eat and drink. We ensure that all aspects of food and drink in school promote the health and well-being of students at our school.

Rationale

Our belief is that a balanced, healthy, nutritious diet is important for the development of a child's physical state, as well as for his or her intellectual abilities. Feeding the body with the proper nutrients helps fuel the mind to be more receptive to learning new skills. ICS will be as transparent as possible with families in regard to the types of support needed and the fees associated with this support.

Scope

Applicability

This policy applies to all ICS staff, parents and students.

Statutory guidance

School Food in England DfE
The Requirements for School Food (England) Regulation(2014) The Food Information Regulations 2014 (SI 2014/1855)
School Food Standard Practical Guide

Access

This policy is available on request from the school offices. We also inform parents and guardians about this policy when their children join ICS, through our website. The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our ICS Professional Code of Conduct.

Failure to comply

The health and wellbeing of our staff and students is important to us. Staff

are expected to be familiar with this policy, and failure to abide by it will result in intervention by the Senior Leadership Team.

Food Policy

School lunches

The school provides a simple hot lunch for students each day. The catering staff use fresh ingredients wherever possible. Food is prepared with the health and well-being of students as its prime concern. The school recognises nutritional standards for school meals and non-school meal food provided in school, in line with the Department for Education's School Food Standard. The school through its caterer offers the following food groups as part of the school meal:

A child's healthy, balanced diet should consist of:

- Plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Plenty of unrefined starchy foods
- Some meat, fish, eggs, beans, and other non-dairy sources of protein
- Some milk and dairy foods
- A small amount of food and drink high in fat, sugar, and salt

In line with these principles, the school, through its catering provider, ensures that the following food groups are included as part of the daily lunch offering:

Fruits and vegetables

Fruit and vegetables are vital sources of essential vitamins, minerals, and dietary fibre. They help support healthy growth, strengthen the immune system, and promote good digestion. The school ensures that each student receives not less than two portions per day, including at least one portion of salad or vegetables, and at least one portion of fresh fruit, fruit tinned in juice, or fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice). Additionally, a fruit-based dessert is available every day.

Protein

Protein is an essential part of a balanced diet and is provided daily in school meals. Food from this group is available every day, with the exception of Meat-Free Mondays. Sources of protein include fish (whether fresh, frozen, canned, or dried), eggs, pulses such as lentils and chickpeas, and various types of beans. In Secondary School, meat and/or fish are offered at least twice weekly.

Manufactured/processed products

Where possible, the school provides lunches free from manufactured or processed products. However, manufactured products may be served occasionally as part of school lunches. The school remains committed to ensuring that any processed items included meet nutritional standards and contribute to a balanced diet.

Starchy foods

These include all bread (e.g., chapattis), pasta, noodles, rice, potatoes, and sweet potatoes. Food from this group is available on a daily basis. Fat or oil is not used in the cooking process of starchy foods on more than one day in any week. On every day that fat or oil is used in cooking starchy foods, a starchy food for which fat or oil is not used in the cooking process is also available. In addition, bread is available daily.

Deep Fried Products

Meals will not contain more than two deep fried products in a single week.
This includes products which are deep-fried in the manufacturing process

Food High in Fat Sugar and Salt

The school recognises the importance of limiting foods high in fat, sugar, and salt to promote healthier eating habits among students. Deep-fried products, which often contain higher levels of fat and salt, are therefore limited in school meals. Meals will contain no more than two deep-fried products in a single week, including those that are deep-fried during the manufacturing process.

Milk and dairy foods

includes milk, cheese, and yoghurt. A food from this group is available on a daily basis

Dairy Products

Milk and dairy foods, including milk, cheese, and yoghurt, are an important source of calcium and other essential nutrients for growing children. A food from this group is available on a daily basis as part of the school meal to support healthy development and balanced nutrition

Portion Sizes and Age Appropriateness

Portion sizes are carefully planned and tailored to meet the nutritional needs and appetites of different age groups within the school. This ensures that students receive adequate energy and nutrients appropriate for their stage of growth and development without encouraging overeating.

Sustainability and Food Sourcing

Wherever possible, the school and its catering provider source ingredients locally and sustainably. The school is committed to reducing food waste through careful portioning and by promoting mindful eating with suitable portion sizes.

Drinks

There is always easy access to free, fresh drinking water.

Students have easy access to fresh drinking water throughout the school day to encourage proper hydration and support overall health and well-being.

Water stations are conveniently located to ensure all students can refill their bottles or cups as needed. The school promotes water as the primary drink choice and limits availability of sugary drinks in line with nutritional guidelines.

Confectionery and savoury snacks

Confectionery, chocolate and chocolate-coated products (excluding cocoa powder used in chocolate cakes, or low calorie hot drinking chocolate) are not available throughout the lunch time.

Staff and visitors

Staff and visitors are encouraged to eat at the school, and to model balanced choices for students. Staff receive a free lunch daily. Adults eating at the school are reminded that the food is prepared with the health and well-being of students as its prime concern. The catering staff are under specific instructions to prepare food for the age of children in the school.

Food and the curriculum

The school will include work associated with healthy balanced diets in its Curriculum.

Packed lunches (provided by the school for trips or from home)

The school provides information on healthy foods that should be included in lunch boxes from home and by the school. See Appendix A — Guidelines for Packed Lunches.

Snacks and break-times

Primary

During morning break-time many children like to have a snack. We ask them to bring in a healthy snack, such as a piece of fruit. We encourage children to bring in a reusable water bottle to school daily, which they may refill during the day. Children are not allowed gum, crisps or fizzy drinks during school hours or on school premises.

Secondary

Students may bring their own healthy snack into school for morning break. The catering team also provides fruit and some simple home baking for students to enjoy during morning break. Students are not allowed to bring gum, fizzy drinks or energy drinks to school.

Birthdays

Primary

Many parents and guardians request that children have a small celebration at school, and send in cake/goodie bags. We ask that parents/guardians contact the class teacher at least 1 week in advance to set this up. Celebrations should last around 15 minutes and should not interrupt the class routine. Parents/guardians are welcome to attend. It is most convenient for the teacher if they send in individual cakes e.g. cup-cakes, and find out whether any children in the class have food allergies, so that they can accommodate the whole class. Parents are requested to inform the school in advance and provide ingredient information to ensure the safety of all students.

Secondary

On occasion parents of Secondary students would like their child to celebrate their birthday at school. Parents should inform the form tutor at least one day beforehand and may deliver a cake or similar for sharing with the class at break or lunchtime. It is most convenient for the teacher if they send in individual cakes e.g. cup-cakes, and find out whether any children in the class have food allergies, so that they can accommodate the whole class. Parents are requested to inform the school in advance and provide ingredient information to ensure the safety of all students.

Partnership with stakeholders

Students, parents and staff are encouraged to feedback on school food, and to offer constructive suggestions for menus. The catering manager is available at all times, and Primary parents are welcome to pop in for lunch by appointment. In addition, the catering manager will meet with stakeholders each time the menu is changed, in order to review it.

Allergies

All parents must provide details of any food allergies or intolerances their child has during the admissions process. The school maintains a secure, photographic register of all students with allergies, which is accessible to catering staff, teachers, and other relevant personnel.

The school and catering provider take every precaution to avoid cross-contamination of allergens in food preparation and serving.

All food provided is clearly labelled with allergen information, including the 14 major allergens as required by law. Staff involved in food handling receive training on allergy awareness, including recognising symptoms of allergic reactions and appropriate emergency responses.

Parents are asked to inform the school immediately of any new or changing allergies. For students with severe allergies, individual healthcare plans are developed in collaboration with parents and healthcare professionals. These plans outline symptoms, emergency actions, and medication requirements, and are shared with all relevant staff members.

In the event of an allergic reaction, trained first aid staff are available to provide immediate assistance and administer emergency medication such as adrenaline auto-injectors (EpiPens). All incidents are recorded and reviewed to improve safety measures.

When external food is brought into school, such as for birthday celebrations, parents are requested to inform the school in advance and provide ingredient information to ensure the safety of all students.

Parents of children with allergies may also choose to provide packed lunches, following recommended guidelines for safe food preparation and storage.

Nut Free

In order to safeguard the health and well-being of all students, the school operates a nut-free policy. The presence of nuts and nut-based products is strictly prohibited on school premises, including in packed lunches, snacks, and any food items brought in for celebrations or events. This measure is essential to minimise the risk of allergic reactions among students with nut allergies. We request that all parents, staff, and visitors adhere to this policy by ensuring that any food brought into school does not contain nuts or nut derivatives.

Cultural and Dietary Requirements

The school respects and accommodates the diverse cultural, religious, and dietary needs of students. Menus are planned to include vegetarian, vegan, halal, and other dietary options to ensure inclusivity and meet the needs of all students.

Hygiene

The school will ensure their catering staff are trained, at least, to Basic Food Hygiene Standards.

The school is committed to maintaining high standards of food hygiene and safety to protect the health and well-being of students and staff. The school requires that all catering staff hold, at a minimum, a Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene qualification or equivalent, in line with regulatory standards for food handling and preparation.

The school works closely with the catering provider to ensure that staff receive regular refresher training and that all food preparation areas meet strict hygiene standards. The catering provider maintains records of staff training and hygiene compliance, which are reviewed by the school as part of ongoing quality assurance and health and safety monitoring.

Food Safety and Temperature Control

The catering team strictly follows food safety regulations, including maintaining appropriate temperature controls during food storage, preparation, and serving. This ensures meals are safe to eat and reduces the risk of foodborne illnesses.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school regularly reviews its catering service and menu offerings to ensure continued compliance with the School Food Standards. Feedback from students, parents, staff, and the catering provider is used to inform menu adjustments and improvements.

The dining room environment

The school will provide a safe and healthy eating environment for students, staff and visitors having lunch at the school.

The school will provide a clean, sociable environment, indoors and out, for children to eat their lunch.

In the Primary school, lunchtime supervisors will help any children who have concerns or cause concern during meal time, e.g. children who may have problems eating their lunch, spill or drop their lunch, cannot find a place to sit, do not eat their lunch or skip lunch, etc.

If children are unsure of what the meal, or any meal item, is, they can ask the caterer or supervisory assistant to explain.

The school uses sensitive encouragement to make food enjoyable. We give students information about food, encourage them to try, and allow them to make the final decision about what or how much they will eat. We do not force children to eat, nor reward them for doing so (however, we might reward children for trying new food experiences).

Students leaving the school for lunch

In the Secondary school, with written parental permission, students over 15 years of age may leave the school during lunch time and eat their lunch off site. If students wish to bring externally purchased food back onto school premises to eat, they must not bring fizzy drinks or unhealthy food such as deep fried meals eg burger and fries. They may also not bring in 'orders' for younger students.

Students may not order takeaways to be delivered to the school except with staff permission for a special celebration for example.

Appendix 1:

Guidelines for packed lunches

The school recognises the benefits of a well-balanced hot school meal for children, in the middle of the day, and would recommend to parents that this as the best option. However, some parents decide to send in a packed lunch from home. The school will give the children a school prepared packed lunch no more than once per week.

Please note the following recommended guidelines set out by the British Nutrition Foundation.

A child's lunch should include only the following:

- A portion of starchy food, e.g. wholegrain bap/bread, sesame seed pitta bread, plain crackers, pasta or rice salad
- Fresh fruit and vegetables, e.g. apple/orange/banana, cherry tomatoes. carrots sticks, mini fruit chunks, etc.
- A portion of milk or dairy food, e.g. cheese, plain/fruit yoghurt, etc.
- Small portion of protein, e.g. lean meat, fish or alternative, e.g. two slices of ham, chicken, beef, Quorn, cheese, tuna, egg or hummus, etc
- Water

In addition, the school requests that parents do not include the following items in packed lunches:

- Sweets, chocolate, etc.
- Crisps or any packets of savoury snacks high in salt and fat
- Fizzy drinks/sugary drinks
- Sweet cakes, e.g. sugary cakes, doughnuts, etc.
- Sweet nut bars, etc.
- Foods containing salted nuts, etc.
- Packets of salted nuts

Parents who have difficulty following these guidelines are requested to contact the school.

Parents are advised to include an ice pack. Food products, prepared and stored in ambient temperatures, can after a period of between two to four hours, have increased levels of bacteria in them, which may be harmful to your child. Although the school provides ambient storage facilities, the school cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

References

School Food in England DfE
The Requirements for School Food (England) Regulation

(2014) The Food Information Regulations 2OJ4 (SI 2014/1855)