Burleigh Primary School

Food Policy

Written: December 2025

To be reviewed: January 2027

Burleigh Primary School

Policy History

Date	Writer	To be approved by	Modifications/changes
Dec 2025	N Norman	SLT	New policy created
Sept 2026	A McGuire	SLT	Minor amendments recommended by the Nourish Team including the use of the word 'nutritious' instead of 'healthy'.

Policy approved by the SLT: January 2026

Burleigh Primary School

Food Policy

Rationale:

At Burleigh, we believe that good food is essential if children are to learn and grow well. We know that many children in the UK start and finish primary school at an unhealthy weight and that poor diet affects learning and overall health. As a result, we have developed a whole-school approach to food.

Our Approach:

We will offer nourishing food and encourage everyone to try new options together. It is important to be honest about the negative effects that a poor diet can have on health. Whilst exercise is beneficial, it cannot replace the need for good nutrition. We are committed to *working together for the good of the children* in all areas of school life, including this one, enabling everyone to have a 'MAGIC' relationship with food.

Aims:

- Help every child to become a confident, happy eater
- Introduce children to a wide variety of nutritious foods
- Teach how food is grown and prepared
- Encourage children to enjoy food with passion and 'gusto'

Objectives:

- Provide nutritious food throughout the entire school day, ensuring all food meets the mandatory School Food Standards
- Make sure that all school events serve food which meets our nutritious, whole-school approach
- Ensure our food reflects the cultural backgrounds of our pupils
- Accommodate medical food needs of pupils and staff
- Ensure all staff serving food are properly trained in food safety and hygiene
- Offer training and support for the whole school community to confidently promote nutritionally balanced eating
- Support parents in preparing packed lunches that follow the School Food Standards, whilst still being creative and tasty
- Create a welcoming 'food haven' at Burleigh where every food experience supports health and a love of good food

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Food at Burleigh throughout the Day

Breakfast

Our Breakfast Club provides pupils of all ages with a safe and friendly place to start their school day. It is run and managed by a dedicated team of staff, who also work at Burleigh during the rest of the day.

Each morning a varied breakfast is provided. The children sit at tables and are encouraged to sit and talk together, replicating the atmosphere of a family meal. Colouring materials are also provided for children to enjoy a calm start to the school day.

Our daily Magic Menu offer includes:

- A variety of cereals
- Toast with a selection of spreads
- Beans and eggs
- Milk (soya available on request)
- Water

Special diets will be catered for providing the school office is contacted in advance.

There is availability for 48 pupils at our Breakfast Club (8 places for Reception children and 40 places for pupils in Years 1-6), which runs from 7:45am until the start of school. Each session costs £4 (£2.50 for each additional sibling) and all places must be booked in advance, up until 5pm the previous day, via the School Gateway. If you are in receipt of childcare vouchers, you can use these to pay for Breakfast Club. Please contact the school office for more guidance on this.

Breaktime Snack

Throughout EYFS and KS1, all children are offered a piece of free fruit / veg on a daily basis. Additionally, all children throughout the school may bring in a piece of fruit from home.

Milk is available for all children at Burleigh. Parents can order it from Welcome to Dairylink | School Milk | DairyLink UK Ltd It is free for children under 5 and for those pupils on benefit-related free school meals. (Please note that this is different to 'Universal Meals' which are available, free of charge, to all children in EYFS and KS1). Milk currently costs £0.34 per day.

School Dinners

Our school kitchen is run by Herts Catering Limited, has a Five Star hygiene rating with all food cooked on site. The menu complies with the School Food Standards and runs

on a three-week cycle which changes each autumn and spring. Click on the links below for more information:

HCL | School Catering | Mundells, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL7 1FT, UK

Primary Menu Images | HCL

Meals should be booked by parents using the School Grid prior to 8.30am and cost £3.45 per meal. Ordering from home enables parents and children to discuss and decide together what will be eaten. This in turn helps to minimise food wastage.

The daily menu includes:

- Two choices of hot meal (one of which is always suitable for vegetarians) served with vegetables / salad
- Jacket potatoes served with beans or cheese
- Packed lunch: bread roll with various fillings
- A choice of dessert or fruit

Here is a picture of a typical day at the counter:





...and Burleigh's famous chicken pie!



We have two dining rooms - one for EYFS & KS1 and one for KS2. Food is served to EYFS from 11.50am onwards and to KS1 from midday. In KS2, Years 3 & 4 eat from 12.05 and Years 5 & 6 from 12.30pm. Children sit with their class and are encouraged to take their

time and not rush. Typically, children are given a full half hour in which to eat their meal. Midday Supervisory Assistants (MSAs) monitor the quantity of food being eaten by each child. When a pupil is not eating a sufficient amount, the MSA assigned to that class / year group will inform the child's class teacher who will in turn inform their parent at the end of the school day.

We consider lunchtime an opportunity for children to grow and develop their social and communication skills. This is why, in KS2, all lunches begin with one class per week reciting a poem off by heart prior to eating. Things we expect and encourage include:

- Washing hands
- Queuing patiently
- Showing appreciation for the hard work of the kitchen staff
- Eating with 'gusto' and encouraging others to try new things
- Responding calmly to accidental spillages
- Using a quiet voice
- Engaging in polite conversation and interacting respectfully with each other
- Helping to clear away

Universal Meals and Free School Meals

As part of the government's Universal Infant Free School Meals programme, lunches are free for all children in EYFS & KS1. Some children in KS2 are also eligible for a free school meal.

You can check for Free School Meals eligibility via the link below:

https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/at-school/free-school-meals/free-school-meals.aspx

Packed Lunches from Home

We want to ensure that children who are having a packed lunch enjoy a range of tasty and nutritious foods. Research indicates that less than 2% of packed lunches meet the School Food Standards. More information can be found at Kids Food Guarantee Update: Packed Lunches - May 2024 | Food Foundation.

We hope the following information will help to outline the approach we expect families to take when preparing a packed lunch for their child.

Recommended Lunch Items:

Try to include an item from each of the following food groups in your child's packed lunch:

✓ **Fruit and vegetables** (fresh and tinned without added sugar or salt) such as: tomatoes, cucumber, pepper, peas, banana, strawberries, pear

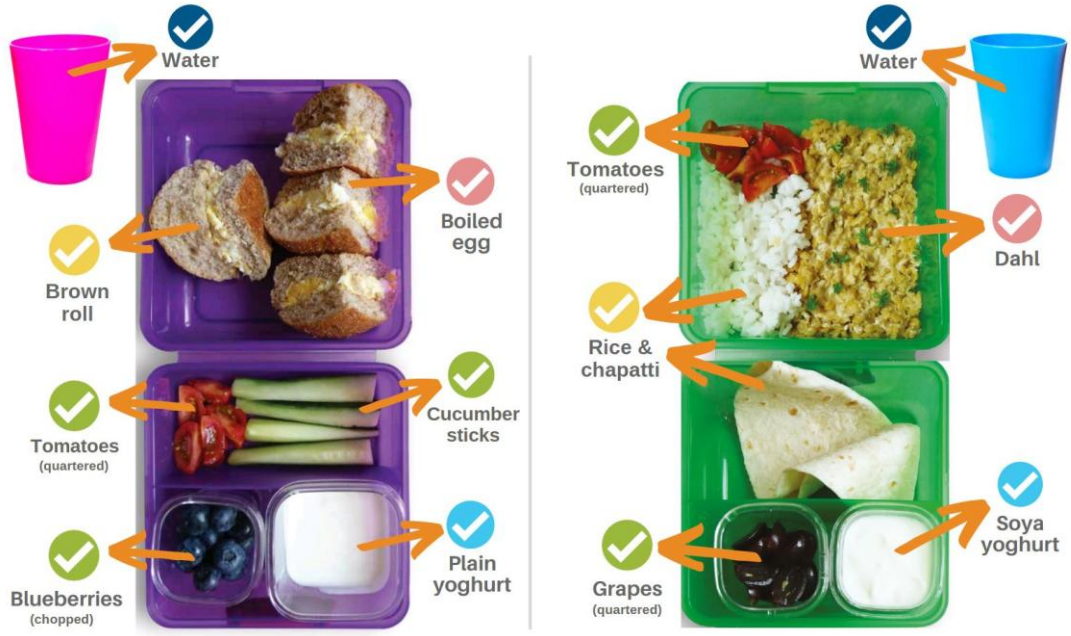
✓ **Starchy carbohydrates** such as: bread, pitta, chapattis, wraps, pasta, rice, couscous

✓ **Proteins** such as: hummus, beans, lentils, eggs, tuna, chicken, beef

✓ **Dairy and plain, fortified plant-based alternatives** eg cheddar cheese, paneer, cream cheese, unsweetened yoghurt

✓ **Drinks** - water

Lunch Box Examples:



Foods to Avoid Putting in Packed Lunches:

Due to their high sugar, salt and/or fat content, we kindly request that the following items are not provided:

⊘ Crisps

⊘ Chocolate, sweets, biscuits, cereal bars,

⊘ Sugary yoghurts

⊘ Highly salted or deep-fried foods, including burgers, chips

⊘ Sugary and/or sweetened drinks, such as fruit juice, smoothies, flavoured water and fruit squash.

⊘ Rice milk

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⊘ Unpasteurised milk, cheese and yoghurt, e.g. raw milk

Useful resources:

- Planning a Nutritious Packed Lunch Tip Sheet
- Eating Well: Packed Lunches for 1 to 5 Year Olds
- NHS Start for Life
- Feeding your Family on a Budget

After School

Our after school club is called 'Brains and Games'. All Burleigh School children are welcome to use the club once the appropriate admission forms are completed. Once the children arrive at the club after the school day finishes (3.15pm), they are given a nutritious and tasty snack which complies with the School Food Standards. Snack time at the club is seen as a group activity with all children participating.

'Water and Milk Only' Policy

Burleigh is a 'water and milk only' school. This means that water, plain semi skimmed or skimmed milk, lactose free or soya milk are the only drinks served across the school day. As a result, children are not drinking sugary drinks which contribute to many preventable health conditions such as obesity, tooth decay and type 2 diabetes.

In our staff rooms, we drink tea and real coffee. Both of these are full of anti-oxidants and help keep our team nutritionally balanced. Warm plain milk and hot chocolate (made with cocoa that contains less than 5% added sugar) are also allowed under this policy.

NB Our 'water and milk only' policy applies across the school day including at our breakfast club, after school club and in all packed lunches.

We promote water consumption by asking all children in KS2 to bring a bottle of water to school. In KS1 and EYFS, water from the tap is used to fill water bottles. We emphasise the importance of staying hydrated in order to be able to concentrate and learn well.

At lunchtime in the Dining Room there are jugs of water on each table.

Very occasionally, for whole school celebration events, exceptions may be made to our 'water and milk only' policy. When this occurs, children may be offered a school food standards compliant alternative of diluted pure fruit juice.

Food on the Curriculum

Cooking and nutrition are compulsory components within the Design & Technology curriculum for all year groups. As children progress through the school, there are

opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of nutritionally balanced eating, food provenance and practical skills such as designing, preparing and cooking predominantly savoury dishes. Our Design and Technology curriculum has been carefully designed by taking the food-related National Curriculum statements and clustering them into units of work for each year group (for further details and progression maps, see the school website).

We have recently started Food Growing at Burleigh School (Appendix 2). The aim of Food Growing is for children to understand where food comes from, how it is looked after and different ways they can enjoy the food that they grow. Food Growing helps to expose children to a variety of fruit and vegetables, with more eagerness to try different fruit and vegetables when they have been part of the growing process. If your child wants to join the Gardening Club, please contact the office.

Leadership and Staff Role Modelling

All staff (including SLT, teachers, teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors, kitchen staff and club leaders) are expected to model curiosity and a positive attitude towards food. This includes speaking about food using neutral, inclusive language and showing a willingness to try new foods. Staff are offered training to support this approach.

Positive Language Around Food

Staff are encouraged to avoid terms such as “good”, “bad”, “junk” or “treats” when discussing food. Instead, we promote a neutral and balanced approach, focusing on how different foods support our health, energy and well-being. Our aim is to move away from diet culture language and instead highlight how food helps us feel and function (e.g., “this gives us energy to run and play”).

Reward Culture

Once a week, teachers select one pupil from their class (who has clearly demonstrated an aspect of ‘MAGIC’) to have ‘Hot Chocolate with the Head’. This is made with milk and cocoa that contains less than 5% sugar (eg ‘Green & Blacks Organic Fair Trade Cocoa’). Children who would prefer an alternative are able to have water or diluted pure fruit juice which is school food standards compliant. We believe that, when celebrating success, gathering together with friends to make, eat or drink something delicious, is a good habit to develop.

Other Occasions Involving Food

Food brought into school for an event during the school day is always monitored carefully. Such events could include:

- Seasonal celebrations such as Christmas parties
- School Discos
- Specific curriculum events e.g. Roman Day
- Charity events

When planning an event, all organisers must submit their proposals in advance.

We want all food to be nutritionally balanced and delicious.

Allergies and Epi-Pens

We recognise that food allergies can be life-threatening for some children and therefore want to create a safe environment for all pupils. Consequently, all classrooms have a red noticeboard which displays key medical information, including the 'Be Allergy Aware' poster.

All Epi-Pens are labelled and kept in the relevant classroom medical boxes. Annual Anaphylaxis and Epi Pen training is given to all staff. In an emergency, anyone can administer an Epi-Pen if the adult/child is unable to do it themselves. The school's emergency EpiPens (located in First Aid rooms) can be used if a child's prescribed EpiPen is not available. This is indicated on the Asthma and EpiPen register. These should only be used on pupils known to be at risk of anaphylaxis, for whom both medical authorisation and written parental consent have been provided (see Individual Healthcare Plans – Appendix 1 page 9 of Burleigh's *First Aid and Medicines Policy*).

NB At lunchtime, younger children with EpiPens should sit at the end of rows to facilitate staff monitoring and pupil safety. Pupils who need specific allergen-free meals are always served first by the catering staff. This system has been chosen over one in which children with allergies have to wear specifically coloured lanyards or other identifying markers.

Governors and School Leaders

Governors and school leaders are committed to driving this policy forwards. We have a food governor and SLT lead, Mr Norman. They are responsible for ensuring that the systems are in place to ensure all food served across the day is school food standards compliant. You can see more about the role of governors on school food here School food: guidance for governors - GOV.UK

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Our senior leadership team (SLT) are committed to learning, working with partners, seeing best practice in action and making food a 'MAGIC' part of Burleigh.

Checklist for headteachers - GOV.UK

Where possible, a School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG) will include our food governor, SLT lead, Food MPeas and kitchen staff. If you or your child has ideas about food and the food environment at Burleigh, please submit an Ideas Form to your Food MPeas or Mr Norman.

Staff and Visitors

All adults, including staff and external visitors, influence pupils' attitudes towards food and drink. Therefore, it is important that they themselves have a positive attitude towards nutritionally balanced eating and are good role models. At every opportunity, they should promote the importance of eating well, to both learn well and be nutritionally balanced, and reflect our philosophy and approach to food and nutrition. We ask staff and visitors to eat only food and drink in line with the principles of this policy.

Children

Burleigh's children play an important role in raising a general and specific awareness around nutritious eating. This is primarily carried out through the School Parliament which meets regularly to consider whole school issues. The Parliament seeks the views of all children on school meals and engages with HCL (our catering company) to make improvements to lunch meals. In 2026 we also established our Food MPeas who serve as school food ambassadors. The Food MPeas are dedicated to being role models at Burleigh School. They take part in projects to reduce food waste, increase hydration and improve fruit and vegetable uptake. Throughout the academic year, the Food MPeas will be involved in numerous projects to promote nutrition and balanced eating. The Food MPeas will meet termly with Mr Norman, kitchen staff and the food governor to review menus and discuss important topics. If you or your child has ideas about food and the food environment, please complete an Ideas Form and submit to either Food MPeas or Mr Norman. New Food Ambassadors are chosen at the start of the Summer term. If you would like to apply to be a food MPea from Summer 2027, please submit a form by the end of Spring term 2027.

Feedback on this Policy

Just as we are keen to get feedback on school lunches, the same forums and channels are open for feeding back on and improving this policy. We look forward to hearing the ideas and suggestions of parents, students and staff as we take this work forwards.

Monitoring and Evaluation

At each annual review, we will identify which areas we need to improve to ensure that we maintain a nutritious approach to food and drink. Updates to School Food Standards are expected from September 2027. At Burleigh, we are committed to ensuring that food and the food environment comply with September 2027 New School Food Standards. You can read more about proposals to new School Food Standards in Appendix 3.

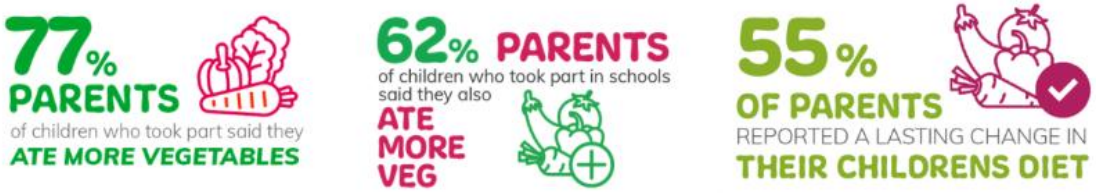
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Appendix 1 – Current Food Initiatives

‘Eat Them to Defeat Them’ (March 2026)

Burleigh will be participating in the ‘Eat Them to Defeat Them’ campaign in 2026:

- ‘Eat Them to Defeat Them’ is an award-winning Veg Power campaign that gets children eating more veg…the fun way! In March 2026, the school will participate in the campaign through working with local partners;
- The website Home - Eat Them To Defeat Them is full of helpful information for all stakeholders. The data on the campaign nationally is impressive.



Veg Power’s ‘Beans’ Project

- This project is similar to ‘Eat Them to Defeat Them’ but is about beans and pulses. Beginning in November 2025, it runs for three years, encouraging children to try, explore and love beans! Repetition is the key to making veg, beans and good food more desirable;
- Veg Power and The Food Foundation have secured a grant from the National Lottery to fully fund this project;
- During November 2025, all children received a wallchart with stickers to motivate them.

‘Attack The Snack’

- Completely free to the school and to parents. Veg Power's 2025 Healthy Snacks Campaign aims to make fruits and vegetables the preferred snack for children in busy families. The campaign launched with a summer social media initiative partnering with NetMums and Veg Power ambassadors to reach millions of parents and carers.
- The programme involves primary and special schools, providing resources and activities to promote healthier snack choices.
- For more information you can visit Attack the Snack - Veg Power

Growing To Love

- We aim to grow our own food from April - July 2026.
- To support our work, we will be engaging with the fantastic free resources of Growing to love… - Veg Power

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Appendix 2 – Food Growing

We are committed to creating permanent food growing spaces at Burleigh. We think this is an important step for the school because:

- Studies have shown that when children are involved in growing fruit and vegetables, it increases their willingness to eat these foods;
- Gardening, including food growing, is a great way to connect with and learn about nature;
- Growing can have a positive impact on our health and wellbeing.

We aim to activate our school planters and other existing small growing spaces around the school. Food growing opportunities have increased as a result of developing the outdoor space for Year 1. This allows the school to build on the children's experiences of seeing where eggs come from via our own chickens in EYFS.

Some vegetables, fruits and flowers which can be expected to grow well at home and school are listed below.

Month	**Vegetables**	**Fruits**	**Flowers**
January	Chillies, microgreens, potatoes (indoors)	Rhubarb (crowns)	Sweet peas, snapdragons (indoors)
February	Aubergines, tomatoes, peppers (indoors)	Apple trees, pear trees (bare root)	Hardy perennials, chrysanthemums
March	Carrots, parsnips, beetroot, broad beans	Strawberries	Dahlias, cosmos, marigolds
April	Peas, carrots, beetroot, lettuce, radishes	Strawberries, melons (under cover)	Sunflowers, nasturtiums, zinnias
May	Sweetcorn, cucumbers, courgettes, pumpkins	Strawberries, outdoor melons	Zinnias, foxgloves, petunias
June	Radishes, lettuce, spring onions, French beans	Strawberries (harvest)	Biennials (foxgloves, wallflowers)
July	Kale, winter cabbage, carrots, spring onions	Strawberries (runners)	Wallflowers, sweet Williams, forget-me-nots
August	Winter salads, spinach, chard, turnips	Strawberries (remove runners)	Hardy annuals for spring
September	Winter salads, spring cabbages, onion sets	Strawberries (new plants)	Cornflowers, poppies, spring bulbs
October	Broad beans, garlic, overwintering peas	Apple trees, pear trees (bare root)	Sweet peas, crepis rubra, spring bulbs
November	Onions, shallots, garlic	Apple trees, pear trees (bare root)	Laurentia, delphinium, hardy annuals

December	Winter salads (indoors), microgreens	Rhubarb (force existing crowns)	Sweet peas, antirrhinums (indoors)

Flowers are included as they play a crucial role in food production by attracting pollinators, which are essential for the development of many fruits and vegetables. They also contribute to a strong ecosystem by supporting beneficial insects and improving soil conditions.

In the medium term we are looking at ways we might increase what we grow and the permanent spaces where food growing is happening at Burleigh.

We would be particularly interested to engage keen growers and gardeners from amongst our parents/carers as part of our work to develop the school's on site growing.

One of the most magical things about gardening is connecting to other gardeners and solving problems together. We will be encouraging pupils and parents/carers to be talking to local growers especially by:

- Visiting local allotments
- Keeping an eye out for local gardens where food is growing

Appendix 3 – Useful Links

School food standards practical guide - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

School-Food-Standards-Guidance-FINAL-V3.pdf (schoolfoodplan.com)

New school Food Standards Proposes: https://consult.education.gov.uk/school-food-policy-team/school-food-standards-updating-the-leg-framework/supporting_documents/school-food-standards-updating-the-legislative-framework-government-consultationpdf

Free school meals: guidance for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

National Curriculum - Design and Technology (Key Stages 1 to 2) (publishing.service.gov.uk)