ACHIEVING TOGETHER

# FOUR STONES GATEWAY TRUST

## FOOD POLICY

## For Shropshire Schools

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| **DATE POLICY WAS APPROVED** | 09.09.2025 |
| **DATE POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED** | Spring 27 |
| **MEMBER OF STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILTY FOR REVIEW** | Head of Estates |

## Key Definitions

All policies incorporate the following schools or organisations within Four Stones Gateway Trust ('the Trust') that are physically based within Shropshire Local Authority:

- Clee Hill Community Academy
- Cleobury Mortimer Primary School
- Lacon Childe School
- SHaW (Shropshire, Herefordshire, and Wolverhampton) Maths Hub
- Stottesdon CofE Primary School
- Any other schools or organisations that may join the Trust from time to time and not listed above.

The terms Academy, School, Organisation and Trust are considered interchangeable in the context of all Trust policies.

Where appropriate, in this Policy the term:

**"CEO"** includes the Chief Executive Officer

**"CFOO"** includes the Chief Financial Officer

**"Trust Senior Leadership Team"** includes Executive Headteachers, Headteachers, strategic operational leads and Teaching School/SCITT Directors.

**"Headteacher"** includes the appropriate School Headteacher.

**"Trustees or Trust Board"** are appointed Trustees who oversee the business of Four Stones Gateway Trust, agreeing the overarching strategic direction and ensuring robust governance.

**"Local Academy Boards (LAB)"** are appointed Governors at a local level associated with the Trust's Worcestershire Schools. LAB Governors act as advocates for their school's Safeguarding, SEND, Standards and Stakeholder engagement.

**"Local Governing Bodies (LGB)"** are appointed Governors at a local level associated with the Trust's Shropshire Schools. LGB Governors are advocates for their school's Safeguarding, SEND, Standards and Stakeholder engagement.

**"Chair"** responsible for leading the board and ensuring its effectiveness.

**"Stakeholders"** are any individuals or companies who are invested in the welfare and success of the Trust and/or School and its students, including staff members, students, parents, community members, LAB, LGB or Trust members, trade unions, local business leaders etc.

## Introduction

This Policy covers all aspects of food and drink at the Four stones Gateway Trust. The Trust is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes healthy food and eating, enabling students to make informed choices about the food they eat. This will be achieved by the whole Trust approach to food and nutrition documented in this whole Trust Food Policy.

The Policy was formulated through consultation between members of staff, governors, caterers, parents/carers, students including a School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG).

The Policy is communicated to the entire Trust community. It is adhered to by everyone involved with the teaching/serving/cooking of food/drink in Trust during the day and our partners that share our Trust premises.

The nutritional principles of this Policy are based on current evidence-based findings; and the Eatwell Guide is the agreed model for ensuring a healthy balanced diet.
https://www.nhs.uk/Live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide

The Trust will follow the school food standards for food throughout the school day.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools and the Early y ears foundation stage nutrition guidance (2025)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6839b752210698b3364e86fc/Early_years_foundation_stage_nutrition_guidance.pdf

Further information can also be found in the School Food Plan (2014)
www.schoolfoodplan.com

## FOOD POLICY CO-ORDINATOR

This Trust Food Policy and healthy eating strategy is co-ordinated by the Headteacher of Clee Hill Community Academy and the Director of Primary .

## FOOD POLICY AIMS

The main aims of our Trust Food Policy are:

1. To enable students to make healthy food choices through the provision of information and development of appropriate skills and attitudes.

2. To provide healthy food/drink choices throughout the school day and ensure food brought into school is healthy too.

3. To ensure that all aspects of food and drink in schools promote the health and wellbeing of students, staff, and visitors

These aims will be addressed through the following areas:

## CURRICULUM

It is essential that nutrition education is embedded in the curriculum and there is consistency across different subjects- science, technology, PSHE, PE and that it remains consistent with the whole school Food Policy. This includes extra curriculum activities such as cookery and gardening clubs.

This is addressed through:

## TEACHING METHODS/RESOURCES

The Four Stones Gateway Trust aims to:

- integrate food and nutrition as part of the curriculum.
- bring in a practical element around food education, through cooking or gardening.
- provide healthy school food including breakfast, tuck and school lunches following the National School Food Standards Go to http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/actions/school-food-standards/ (opens new window)
- encourage uptake of school lunches
- become a Sugar Smart school
- reinforce our Food Policy throughout the school year.
- ensure that everyone in the school understands their role and has access to resources that help promote healthy eating.
- does not promote unhealthy foods as rewards.

Resources used, and how you ensure consistency and that they are up to date.

Examples of resources:

- Eatwell Guide https://www.nhs.uk/Live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/
- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide
- Trust Food Standards https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/Trust-food-standards-resources-for-Trusts
- Relevant information from School Food Plan (2014) www.Trustfoodplan.com
- Public Health resources from the Trust Zone https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools
- Food Teaching in Primary Schools (2015) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/food-teaching-in-primary-Trusts-knowledge-and-skills-framework
- Consider methods used to link classroom activities and learning about food.
- E.g. Food a Fact of Life free resources for teaching young people aged 3-16 years about where food comes from, cooking and healthy eating www.foodafactoflife.org.uk or a similar programme.

## FOOD AND DRINK PROVISION THROUGHOUT THE DAY

The revised standards for school food came into force on 1 January 2015 and are set out in the requirements for School Food Regulations 2014 along with the Early years foundation stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers (2025)

The government encourages all schools to promote healthy eating and provide healthy, tasty, and nutritious food and drink. Compliance with the requirements for School Food Regulations 2014 is mandatory for all maintained schools including academies and free schools. These school food standards are to ensure that food provided to students in schools is nutritious and of high quality; to promote good nutritional health in all students; protect those who are nutritionally vulnerable and to promote good eating behaviour.

The regulations set out the requirements for school lunches provided to registered students, whether on the school premises or not, and to any other person on the school premises.

The regulations also set out the requirements for food and drink other than lunch, provided to students on and off school premises up to 6pm, including breakfast clubs, tuck shops, mid-morning break, vending and after school clubs.

Full details and guidance are available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-Trust-food-in-england/Trust-food-in-england
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/Trust-food-standards-resources-for-Trusts

## BREAKFAST CLUB

Breakfast is an important meal that should provide 25% of a student's energy requirement and contribute significantly to their vitamin and mineral requirements.
Each primary school operates a breakfast club that provides a nutritious meal for students before the school day and complies with the standards for Trust food other than lunch.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/Trust-food-standards-resources-for-Trusts

The breakfast menu includes:

- a fruit bowl and fruit pots
- a selection of carefully considered cereals (for lower sugar, low salt, and high fibre)
- porridge
- 50/50 bread for toast with different toppings e.g. reduced sugar jam
- low fat yoghurts
- on special occasions, students may be offered a treat e.g. pancakes.
- semi-skimmed milk for drinking or to go with cereal or in smoothies.
- water
- apple and orange juice – Not for Reception or Nursery Students (pg. 16 EYFS NFG)

## VENDING MACHINES

Our Trust does not have vending machines on site, however, the adjoining leisure centre to Lacon Childe School, Teme Leisure, does. The machine is not stocked or managed by the Trust. The vending machine is locked and not able to be used during the school day.

## BREAKTIME SNACKS/TUCK SHOP

The Trust understands that snacks can be an important part of the diet of young people and can contribute positively towards a balanced diet. The Trust discourages the consumption of snacks high in fat and sugar at break-time. In primary schools, we encourage fruit & vegetables for break time snacks as this positively enhances the free fruit in key stage 1.

All primary settings participate in the National Fruit & Vegetable Scheme and **Cool Milk** supplies free and school and Nursery milk to students under 5. Reception and Nursery students will avoid dried fruit.

Any tuck shops should provide a range of snack foods that help to contribute to a balanced healthy diet focused on the Eatwell Guide, using the Trust Food Standards: Checklist for Trust food other than lunch https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/Trust-food-standards-resources-for-Trusts

Fruit snack must be prepared in a way to prevent choking. The Food Standards Agency poster on how to prepare food safely to avoid choking. https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2021/09/Early-Years-Choking-Hazards-Table_FINAL_21-Sept-2021.pdf

## SCHOOL DINNERS

Food prepared by the Trust catering team meets the school Food Standards.

As a Trust we encourage students to have a school lunch provided by our catering service and free school meals are provided to all those students who are entitled to them. *https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/early-years-education-and-learning/free-school-meals/*

Healthy options are promoted at lunchtime. Students are consulted about food choices through school council, pupil questionnaires and surveys and through the SGET SNAG (School Nutrition Action Group)

A portion size for a student age 1 – 5 is generally smaller than an adult portion. There are no official guidelines on exactly how much food students need. Portions should be appropriate for a student's body size and appetite. For toddlers, portion size is usually roughly the size of their clenched fist. About half a piece of fruit (cut appropriately) or a tablespoon of vegetables is a good portion size for a snack. We avoid:

- making students finish everything on their plate or eat more than they want to
- offering rewards to students for finishing everything on their plate (e.g. stickers or dessert).

## PACKED LUNCHES

The Trust encourages parents/carers to provide students with packed lunches that complement the nutritional standards. This is achieved by promoting healthy balanced packed lunch options using the

principles of the Eatwell Guide and our Packed Lunch Guidelines. This will ensure students having packed lunches have a healthy balanced meal. Packed lunches should include:

- starchy foods – these are bread, rice, potatoes, pasta, and others * EY nutrition guidance states to avoid flavoured dried rice, pasta, and noodle products e.g. packets and pots of instant flavoured noodles, pasta and rice for Reception and Nursery aged students.
- protein foods – including meat, fish, eggs, beans and others.
- a dairy item – this could be cheese or a yoghurt.
- vegetables or salad and a portion of fruit
- a healthy drink such as water, milk or 100% fruit juice (no fizzy drinks) *EY nutrition guidance states to avoid sugary drinks (including fruit juices, squash, and smoothies) for Reception and Nursery aged students.

Packed lunches may include one small chocolate bar and one small snacks or crisps and should not include sweets. * EY nutrition guidance states to avoid foods high in saturated fat, salt, and/or sugars like cakes, sweet and savoury pastries, biscuits, crisps, chocolate, and other confectionary ) for Reception and Nursery aged students.

Food safety issues around packed lunches will be conveyed to parents. Parents may be contacted if packed lunches are not suitable for additional support with providing a nutritious lunch.
Parents may be signposted to websites such as the following:
https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes

EY nutrition guidance states lunch boxes should be clearly labelled with the student's name to avoid cross contamination. (p26)

EY nutrition guidance states all food must be prepared in a way to prevent choking. The Food Standards Agency poster on how to prepare food safely to avoid choking.
https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2021/09/Early-Years-Choking-Hazards-Table_FINAL_21-Sept-2021.pdf
Parents are encouraged to pack an ice pack inside their student's lunchbox.

Following food safety guidance, we will not reheat food brought in from home.

## AFTER TRUST CLUB

The food and drink provision at our after Trust club is in line with the overall whole Trust Food Policy and complies with standards for all Trust food other than lunches.

## USE OF FOOD AS A REWARD/BIRTHDAYS

The Trust does not encourage the regular eating of sweets or other foods high in sugar or fat, especially as a reward for good behaviour or academic or other achievements. Other methods of positive reinforcement are used in schools such as reward certificates, stickers, prizes of books/ stationary etc. Students are discouraged from bringing in sweets/ cakes for their birthday/ seasonal celebrations etc.

## DRINKING WATER

The Trust Food Standards recommend that free, fresh drinking water must be available at all times.

The Trust agrees with this recommendation and provides a free supply of drinking water and will encourage students to drink at frequent intervals throughout the day. Water is freely available for all students at the lunchtime meal service. Students are encouraged to use their own water bottles and these can be refilled throughout the day. Water bottles should be taken home daily to be washed out. In primary settings, milk is available for students at breaktime using the cool milk scheme https://www.coolmilk.com for all students under 5. Please contact your school office for further information.

## 4. SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

## SPECIAL DIETS - RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

The Trust provides food in accordance with students' religious beliefs and cultural practices as required.

## VEGETARIAN DIETS/HALAL MEALS

Trust caterers offer a vegetarian option at lunch every day.

## SPECIAL DIETS - MEDICAL

Under section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014, Trusts have a duty to support students at their Trust with medical conditions. We recognise that some students may require special diets that do not allow for our Food Policy to be exactly met. In this case parents are asked to make us fully aware of this through our admissions process. Individual care plans need to be created for students with special dietary needs/requirements. These should document symptoms and adverse reactions, actions to be taken in an emergency, emergency contact details, along with any particular food requirements e.g. for high-energy diets. The Trust and Trust caterers are made aware of any food allergies/food intolerance/medical diets and requests for these diets are submitted according to an agreed process. Food allergies are common and, on average, most classes in the UK will have one or two students with a food allergy. Menus are available on Arbor (MIS) and parents are responsible for booking lunches for their child, considering the ingredients. Parents/ carers are encouraged to communicate their child's allergies with the catering staff to ensure that they fully understand the ingredients in school lunches.

### Food allergies in school

Food allergy is common – on average, most school classes in the UK will have one or two students with food allergy. Schools need to consider how to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction, in line with the statutory guidance Supporting students at school with medical conditions. Parents need to work with the school in trying to reduce the potential risks:

- bottles, other drinks, and lunch boxes should be clearly labelled with the name of the student for whom they are intended.
- if food is purchased from the school canteen, parents should check the ingredients of foods by speaking directly to the catering manager.
- many students at primary school age are able to check with staff and read ingredients labels and one way to help your child learn is to take them shopping with you, and ask them to read ingredients labels to spot the foods they are allergic too.
- food should not be given to food-allergic students in primary schools without parental engagement and permission (e.g. birthday parties, food treats)
- when planning out-of-school activities such as sporting events, excursions (e.g. restaurants and food processing plants), school outings or camps, think early about the catering requirements for food-allergic students, and emergency planning (including access to emergency medication and medical care)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/Trust-food-standards-resources-for-Trusts

Allergy UK https://www.allergyuk.org/living-with-an-allergy/at-Trust/

Parents are given a Medical Diet Trust Meal Request Form if they have a child who follows a special diet and requires a Trust meal, available from the relevant Trust food supplier.

Food Intolerance
Food intolerance is different to food allergy and usually occurs when the body has difficulty digesting certain foods or ingredients in food. Intolerances do not involve the immune system and are not life threatening. Food intolerances cause unpleasant symptoms such as abdominal pain or discomfort, diarrhoea, bloating, constipation, red rash, itching or eczema flares.

Students with additional support needs and other special diets

Some students may have specific dietary needs because of physical or developmental issues, which may affect their ability to eat independently, for example difficulty with swallowing. These students may need to have their food prepared in a particular way to make it easier to eat. Parents will provide the setting with support and from health professionals may need to be requested.

It is also important to consider students who may experience sensory needs in relation to foods, for example, sensitivity to textures, tastes, or smells, which can lead to limited preferences or aversions towards specific foods. As well as modifying the foods offered, some adaptations to the eating environment could also be made, wherever possible, as a way to support the student at mealtimes, e.g. limiting noise and other distractions, having a cloth to wipe hands if required and not pressuring the student to eat.

If a student requires a special diet for a medical reason not discussed above, it is important to have written confirmation from their qualified health professional about the nature of their specific needs so that their nutritional requirements can be achieved. This information should be recorded, updated regularly, and communicated to all staff involved in the preparing and handling of food.

## 5. FOOD SAFETY

Appropriate food safety precautions are taken when food is prepared or stored. These vary depending on the food on offer and include: ensuring that adequate storage and washing facilities are available; that food handlers undergo appropriate food safety and hygiene training; and that suitable equipment and protective clothing are available. Any food safety hazards are identified and controlled. Information is cascaded to everyone who is involved with food related activities in Trust. We have food safety information displayed in the appropriate areas.

EY nutrition guidance states all food must be prepared in a way to prevent choking. The Food Standards Agency poster on how to prepare food safely to avoid choking.
https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2021/09/Early-Years-Choking-Hazards-Table_FINAL_21-Sept-2021.pdf

# Early years food choking hazards

Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

Below is a table of advice on key foods for care givers who are involved with preparing and serving food for babies and young children (under 5 years old)

| Vegetable and fruits | Advice |
|---|---|
| Pips or stones in fruit | Always check beforehand and remove hard pips or stones from fruit. |
| Small fruits | Cut small round fruits like grapes, cherries, berries, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, into small pieces: cut lengthways and then again cut them in halves (quarters). |
| Large fruits and firm fruits | Cut large fruits like melon and firm fruits like apple into slices instead of small chunks. For very young children, consider grating or mashing firm fruits, or softening them up by steaming or simmering. |
| Vegetables | Cut vegetables like carrots, cucumber and celery into narrow batons. For very young children consider grating or mashing firm vegetables and legumes like butter beans, chickpeas and tofu, or softening them up by steaming or simmering. |
| Skin on fruit and vegetables | Consider removing the skin from fruit and vegetables, especially for very young children. Peeled fruit and vegetables can be swallowed more easily. |
| Cooking fruit and vegetables | Consider softening firm fruit and vegetables (such as carrots, broccoli, yam and apples) by steaming or simmering until soft. Serve cut into slices or narrow batons. |
| **Meat and fish** | **Advice** |
| Sausages and hot dogs | Cut sausages and hot dogs into short strips. Cut them in half and then lengthways or as thinly as possible. Peeling the skin off the sausages helps them to be swallowed more easily. |
| Meat or fish | Remove bones from meat or fish. Cut meat into strips as thinly as possible. Remove skin and fat from meat and fish, it will help the food pass smoothly down the throat. |
| **Cheese** | **Advice** |
| Grate or cut cheese | Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible. |
| **Nuts and seeds** | **Advice** |
| Chop or flake whole nuts | Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old. |
| **Bread** | **Advice** |
| White bread and other breads | White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips. |
| **Snacks and other foods** | **Advice** |
| Popcorn | Do not give babies and young children popcorn. |
| Chewing gum and marshmallows | Do not give babies and young children chewing gum or marshmallows. |
| Peanut butter | Do not give babies and young children peanut butter on its own, only use as a spread. |
| Jelly cubes | Do not give babies and young children raw jelly cubes. |
| Boiled sweets and ice cubes | Do not give babies and young children boiled, hard, gooey, sticky or cough sweets, or ice cubes. |
| Raisins and other dried fruits | Do not give babies under the age of 1 whole raisins or dried fruits. Cut them into small pieces. |

Make sure food is prepared appropriately for children under 5 years old, see: https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/

It is also advisable that care givers are familiar with how to respond to a choking incident, see: How to stop a child from choking: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/ and How to resuscitate a child: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/

All staff preparing and handling food for students in Reception and Nursery should have a clear understanding of what food is safe for students to consume which foods pose a risk for choking as well as understanding how to age-appropriately prepare food.

# Food Safety Advice 0–5 Years

The EYFS framework requires providers to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well – you must be confident that those responsible for preparing and handling food in your setting are competent to do so. By ensuring procedures and safe practices are established, children can thrive in a healthy, safe and nurturing environment.

## Remember...

- All staff should have a clear understanding of what food is safe for children to consume (depending on age and stage), which foods pose a risk for choking as well as understanding how to age-appropriately prepare food.
- Before a child is admitted to the setting, settings must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the child has and any special health requirements.
- Children should be seated safely in a highchair or an appropriately-sized low chair while eating.
- Never leave children alone while they are eating.
- Children must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating. Where possible, adults should sit facing children whilst they eat so they can make sure children are eating in a way to prevent choking and so they can prevent food sharing and be aware of any unexpected allergic reactions.

- While children are eating, there should always be a member of staff in the room with a valid paediatric first aid certificate.

## How to Reduce the Risk of Choking – Food Preparation

- Remove any stones and pips from fruit before serving.
- Cut small round foods, like grapes, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, lengthways and into quarters.
- Cut large fruits like melon and hard fruit or vegetables, like raw apple and carrot, into slices instead of small chunks.
- Do not offer raisins as a snack to children under 12 months – although these can be chopped up as part of a meal.
- Soften hard fruit and vegetables (such as carrot and apple) and remove the skins when first given to babies from around 6 months.
- Sausages should be avoided due to their high salt content, but if offered to children, these should be cut into thin strips rather than chunks and remove the skins.
- Remove bones from meat or fish.
- Do not give whole nuts to children under 5 years old.
- Do not give whole seeds to children under 5 years old.
- Cut cheese into strips rather than chunks.
- Do not give popcorn as a snack.
- Do not give children marshmallows or jelly cubes from a packet either to eat or as part of messy play activities as they can get stuck in the throat.
- Do not give children hard sweets.

Updated April 2025

**Disclaimer:** This resource is provided for informational and educational purposes only and sources information on recommendations and requirements from the Department for Education. Twinkl is not responsible for the health and safety of your group or environment. Please be aware that learners should be supervised at all times, particularly young or vulnerable learners. You must ensure that an adequate risk assessment is carried out and it is your responsibility to ensure that the information this resource contains is safe and appropriate to use in your situation.

CPD | Early Years

Before a student enrols, settings must obtain information about any special dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and intolerances that the student has and any special health requirements.

Reception and Nursery students should be seated safely while eating. (including snack times) Reception and Nursery students must always be within sight and hearing of a member of staff whilst eating to ensure the students are eating in a way to prevent choking and food sharing.

Whilst Reception and Nursery students are eating there should always be an adult present with paediatric first aid certificate.

## 6. THE FOOD AND EATING ENVIRONMENT

The Trust will provide a clean, sociable environment for students to eat their lunch and has developed the healthy/welcoming aspects of the dining room environment. Lunch time supervisors will help to ensure a safe, enjoyable experience at lunchtime and will be able to encourage healthy eating.

## 7. LEADING BY EXAMPLE AND STAFF TRAINING

Teachers, caterers, and lunchtime supervisors have a key role in influencing students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes about food, so it is important that they are familiar with healthy eating guidelines. It is essential that staff are committed to setting an example with food.

## 8. FOOD RELATED ACTION PLANS

As a Trust we are aware that we need to ensure healthy and nutritious food is available across the Trust. The food agenda is part of criteria to be assessed for the voluntary Healthy Schools rating scheme which has been designed to recognise and encourage schools' contributions to students' health and wellbeing as part of the commitment from the government's Childhood Obesity Plan.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthy-schools-rating-scheme