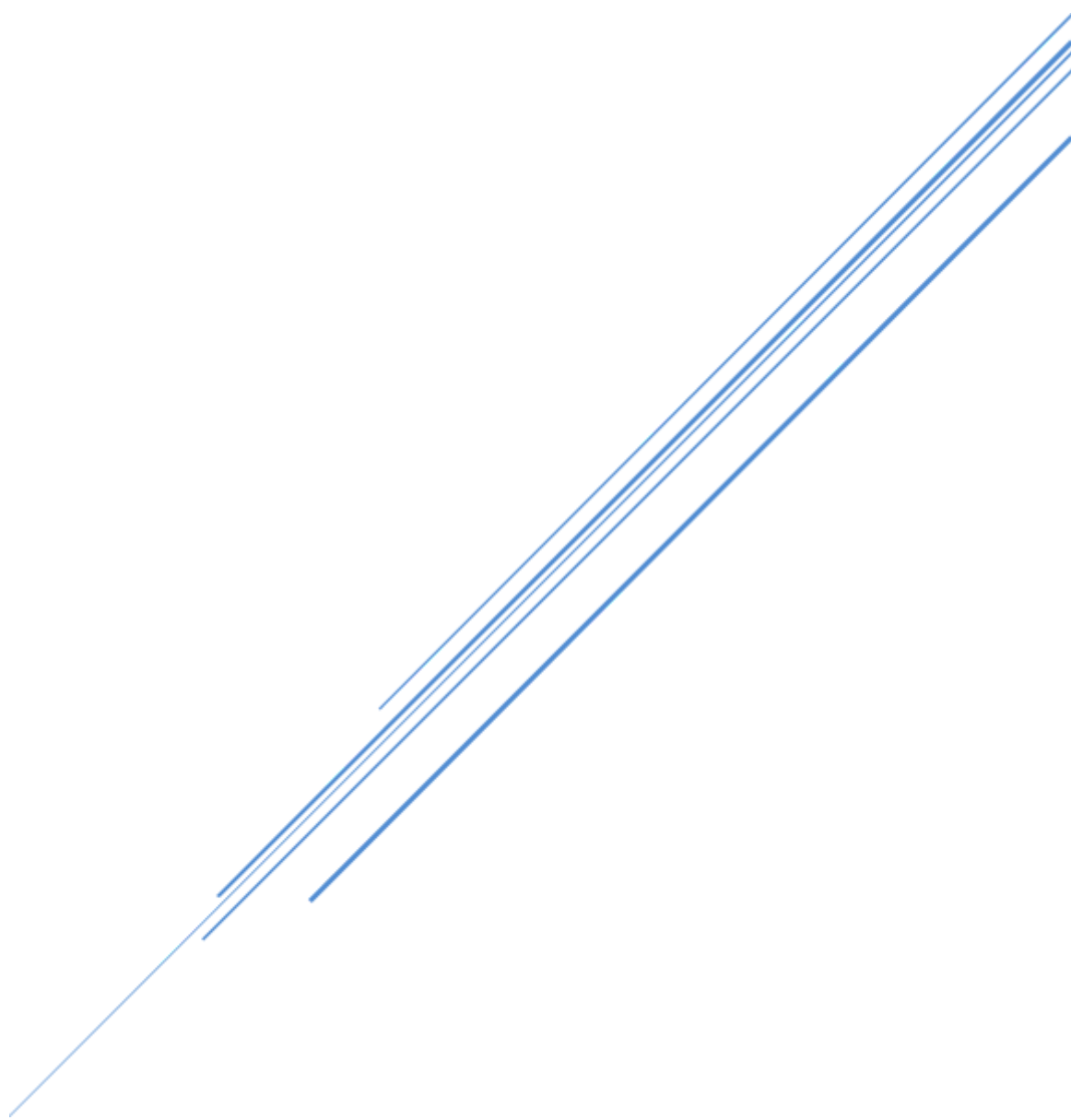


BEAM TRUST FOOD POLICY

Statham Primary School
Ravenbank Primary School
Oughtlington Primary School
Thelwall Infant School



BEAM Trust
October 2026

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Aims and Objectives

This Food Policy outlines the BEAM Trust's commitment to promoting healthy eating habits, ensuring the well-being of our pupils, and providing a positive food environment for all members of our school community.

Our objectives are to:

- Educate pupils about the importance of a balanced diet and make healthy food choices accessible and appealing.
- Contribute to pupils' physical and mental health, concentration, and learning through appropriate nutrition.
- Foster an environment where food is enjoyed, celebrated, and understood as a vital part of a healthy lifestyle.
- Ensure that all pupils, including those with allergies, intolerances, or specific dietary requirements, are safely and appropriately catered for.
- Encourage responsible food consumption and reduce waste where possible.
- Embed learning about food, nutrition, and cooking into the curriculum.
- Consider the environmental impact of our food choices where feasible.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all aspects of food and drink provided, consumed, or celebrated across all schools within the Beam Trust including:

- All food and drink provided by the school (e.g., school lunches, breakfast clubs, and after-school clubs).
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) snack and meal provisions.
- Packed lunches brought from home by pupils.
- Snacks consumed during the school day.
- Food provided for school events, celebrations, and fundraising activities.
- Food used in classroom activities and practical cooking lessons.
- Food provided for staff on school premises.
- Information and menus published publicly via the school website.

Breakfast

Our school promotes the value of breakfast and encourages every pupil to have breakfast at the start of the day to ensure they are alert and ready to learn.

All food and drink served during school breakfast clubs will adhere strictly to the updated national breakfast standards, ensuring a healthy, low-sugar start to the day using permitted base carbohydrates, dairy, and fresh fruit.

Snacks

Morning Snack:

- Key Stage 1 (Years R-2): Pupils will be provided with a free piece of fruit or vegetable daily under the Fruit and Vegetable Scheme (if applicable).
- Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6): Pupils are permitted to bring a healthy snack from home. This must be fruit, vegetables, or plain rice cakes/breadsticks. No crisps, biscuits, or other packaged snacks are allowed.

After-School Clubs: Any snacks provided during after-school clubs will adhere to the principles of healthy eating.

School Meals

Our school uses a collaborative meal-planning system to ensure children enjoy their lunches while minimizing food waste:

- **Menu Variety & Accessibility:** Warrington Catering Team supplies a rotating three-week menu cycle, which is published and made publicly accessible on the school website for parental viewing.
- **Daily Pupil Selection:** To maximize participation and reduce food waste from changes in preference, pupils select their daily meal option upon arrival each morning during registration.
- **Parental Information:** While home-ordering systems have been explored and remain unavailable at present, parents are kept fully informed of daily meal options and rotational menus via the school website.

Nutritional Standards: All school meals strictly adhere to the UK School Food Standards, ensuring:

- A high-quality protein source provided daily.
- A wide variety of vegetables and fruits on offer.
- Foods high in fat, sugar, and salt are strictly limited.
- Fresh drinking water is always accessible.
- Lower-fat cooking methods are used (such as baking and grilling).
- Undesirable ingredients, such as mechanically separated meat, are avoided.

Through close cooperation between home and school, pupil menus are regularly reviewed and updated. Parents are informed if their child consistently refuses certain foods or develops a taste for new ones. This partnership ensures that food waste is kept to an absolute minimum.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Provision For children within the Early Years Foundation Stage, food and drink provision aligns with the statutory EYFS framework and official government early years nutrition guidance.

- **Drink Restrictions:** Milk and fresh drinking water are the only drinks offered to early years children, while sugary drinks, squashes, and fruit juices are avoided to protect oral health. Note: As part of the ongoing commitment to nutritional standards, the school is currently phasing out fruit juice cartons previously offered as snacks.
- **Balanced Food Groups:** Meals and snacks incorporate a variety of options across the core food groups (starchy carbohydrates, fruit and vegetables, proteins, and dairy/alternatives), limiting foods high in saturated fat, salt, and sugar.
- **Safe Preparation & Choking Prevention:** Higher-risk items (such as grapes, cherry tomatoes, and small cylindrical items) are rigorously prepared, sliced, or adapted to eliminate choking hazards, supervised closely by staff holding valid paediatric first aid certificates.
- **Positive Eating Habits:** Mealtimes are treated as social, unhurried learning opportunities. Food is never used as a reward or withheld as a sanction.

Allergies and Dietary Requirements:

Parents and carers must inform the school of any allergies, intolerances, or specific dietary requirements (e.g., vegetarian, vegan, or religious needs) upon enrolment or immediately upon diagnosis.

A robust system is maintained to manage allergies safely, ensuring clear, ongoing communication between kitchen staff, teaching staff, and parents.

Tailored care plans are developed and kept up to date for any pupils with severe allergies.

All kitchen and catering staff receive regular training on allergy awareness, ingredient tracking, and cross-contamination prevention.

The 14 Legally Recognised Food Allergens:

To ensure robust compliance, our catering and first aid teams are trained to manage the 14 major allergens identified by food regulations:

- Cereals containing gluten (wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt, kamut)
- Crustaceans (e.g., prawns, crabs, lobster)
- Eggs
- Fish
- Peanuts
- Soybeans
- Milk
- Nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio nuts, macadamia/Queensland nuts)
- Celery (including celeriac)
- Mustard
- Sesame seeds
- Sulphur dioxide/sulphites (where added at a level above 10mg/kg)
- Lupin (including seeds and flour)
- Molluscs (e.g., clams, mussels, whelks, oysters, squid)

Dining Environment

- The dining hall will be a pleasant and calm environment, promoting social interaction and enjoyment of food.
- Adequate time will be allocated for pupils to eat their lunch.

- Staff will encourage pupils to try new foods and finish their meals.

Free School Meals: The school actively promotes and supports eligible families in applying for Free School Meals to ensure all qualifying children receive their entitled provision.

Food Hygiene & Kitchen Standards: The school kitchen premises are regularly inspected by the Local Authority's Environmental Health Officer and graded according to the national food hygiene rating system. The kitchen where school meals are prepared and cooked is inspected at regular intervals throughout the year to ensure it meets national hygiene, food storage, and preparation standards. Any member of staff working in the kitchen must hold a valid and appropriate food hygiene certificate.

Packed Lunches

Guidance for Parents/Carers: The school encourages parents/carers to provide packed lunches that align with healthy eating principles. Guidance will be regularly provided, suggesting:

- A portion of starchy food (e.g., bread, pasta, rice, potatoes).
- A portion of protein (e.g., meat, fish, eggs, beans, pulses).
- At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetable.
- A dairy item (e.g., cheese, yoghurt) or dairy alternative.
- Water or unsweetened juice as a drink.

Items to limit/avoid: Confectionery (sweets, chocolates), fizzy drinks, high-fat/high-sugar cakes, and biscuits. Crisps should be limited to small packets and not a daily item.

Nut Allergies: Due to severe allergies within the school, the BEAM Trust schools operate as an **Allergy-Aware school**. Parents/carers must ensure packed lunches do not contain nuts or nut products (e.g., peanut butter, Nutella, some cereal bars).

Monitoring: While individual packed lunches will not be policed, staff may gently guide pupils towards healthier choices and parents may be contacted if packed lunches consistently do not meet healthy guidelines or contain prohibited items.

Drinking Water

Fresh, free drinking water will be available to all pupils throughout the school day via water fountains and/or water dispensers.

Pupils are encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle to school daily and can refill it as needed. No sugary or fizzy drinks are permitted in school.

School Trips

Food or drink provided on trips conforms to the latest DCSF/Department of Health/School Food Trust guidance and is consistent with the whole school food policy. Children who normally have a school dinner take a healthy nutritious packed lunch based that has been prepared on the school premises by the cook. Children who normally eat a packed lunch prepared at home bring theirs as normal.

Food education

Food education will be integrated across the curriculum, particularly through Science, PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education), Geography, Design and Technology, and RE. Curriculum delivery will involve practical food experiences delivered by properly trained staff and adequately resourced.

Pupils will learn about:

- The importance of a balanced diet (supported by visual models such as The Eatwell Guide) and healthy lifestyle choices.
- Where food comes from, including farm-to-food production, distribution, and environmental impacts.
- Basic cooking skills, food preparation, and hygienic food handling.
- Sustainable food choices.

The school will explore opportunities for practical cooking activities, school kitchen gardens, and food-related educational visits.

Staff Training and Competency

To ensure the highest standards of food safety, hygiene, and nutrition are maintained across the school, the following training provisions are in place:

- All staff involved in the preparation, cooking, and handling of food must hold a valid, nationally recognized Level 2 (or higher) Food Hygiene Certificate. Catering staff also receive regular, up-to-date training regarding allergen awareness, cross-contamination prevention, and compliance with the School Food Standards.
- Supervisory staff supervising lunchtimes receive guidance on encouraging healthy eating habits, supporting positive dining environments, monitoring packed lunches gently, and identifying children who may be struggling with their food intake.
- Staff delivering food education through the curriculum (such as in Science, PSHE, or Design and Technology) or supervising cooking activities are appropriately briefed on food hygiene and safety practices.
- Staff receive specific training on managing medical dietary requirements, food allergies, and emergency response protocols in alignment with the school's separate Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy.
- The school maintains a central record of all staff training certificates and schedules regular refresher training to ensure compliance standards are continually met.

Staff Responsibilities

- All staff will act as positive role models for healthy eating.
- Staff will supervise mealtimes and encourage good eating habits.
- Teaching staff will incorporate food education into their lessons where appropriate.
- Staff will be vigilant regarding allergies and ensure all protocols are followed.
- The school will provide clear guidelines and training to all staff involved in food provision and supervision.

Governance and Transparency

Trust and School Governance

- The Beam Trust Board holds ultimate accountability for ensuring national food standards, health policies, and statutory compliance are met consistently across all trust academies.
- Each school's Local Governing Body (LGB) will appoint a designated Lead Governor for School Food to oversee local compliance, review provision, and support the school's healthy eating strategy.
- Individual Headteachers and local leadership teams are responsible for day-to-day implementation, managing local kitchen operations, parent communications, and meal preference systems.

- In line with national expectations, this Beam Trust Whole School Food Policy and our current school menus will be published openly on each individual school's website to maintain transparency with parents and the wider community.

Parental Engagement

- **Communication:** The school regularly communicates its Food Policy and healthy eating messages to parents and carers through newsletters, the school website, and parent workshops.
- **Support at Home:** Parents and carers are encouraged to support the school's healthy eating initiatives at home.
- **Feedback:** The school welcomes feedback and suggestions from parents and carers regarding food provision.

Complaints Procedure

Our school welcomes the views of the whole school community and we will deal with complaints quickly and efficiently by following our complaint procedure. Copies are available from school. We will comply with the mandatory food standards and refer any complainants to the Secretary of State for direction, should we not be able to resolve a complaint about them.

Policy Development and Review

This policy document was produced in consultation with the entire school community, including pupils, parents, school staff including the catering staff and Governors.

This document is freely available to the entire school community. It has also been made available in the school newsletter, web-site and prospectus.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Related Policies

- Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- PSHE Policy

Review date.....

Signed.....Head Teacher

Date.....

Appendix A: Example of Packed Lunch Guidance for Parents/Carers

To support our whole-school health approach and ensure children have the energy they need for learning, we ask that home-packed lunches follow these guidelines:

1. What to Include (The Balanced Lunchbox)

- **Starchy Food:** Sandwich, roll, pitta bread, wrap, pasta, rice, or crackers (try wholemeal or wholegrain options where possible).
- **Protein:** Lean meat, fish, eggs, pulses (e.g., chickpeas, lentils), hummus, or cheese.
- **Fruit:** A portion of fresh fruit (e.g., apple, banana, grapes, berries — *please ensure grapes and cherry tomatoes are halved lengthwise for younger children*).
- **Vegetables:** A portion of vegetables (e.g., carrot sticks, cucumber, cherry tomatoes, pepper strips).
- **Dairy:** A pot of plain or low-sugar yoghurt, or a piece of cheese.
- **Drink:** Water or unsweetened fruit juice (diluted with water is best).

2. What to Limit

- **Crisps:** Small, individual bags (no more than twice a week).
- **Sweet Biscuits or Cakes:** Small portions (no more than twice a week).

3. What NOT to Include (Nut-Free School Policy)

Due to severe allergies within the school community, please do not include:

- **Nuts or Nut Products:** Peanut butter, Nutella, or cereal bars containing nuts.
- **Chocolate Bars:** Chocolate confectionery or chocolate-coated items.
- **Sweets and Confectionery:** Lollies, gummies, chewy sweets, or high-sugar snacks.
- **Fizzy or Energy Drinks:** Colas, lemonades, high-sugar squashes, or caffeinated energy drinks.