



## **Red Gates Food Policy**

### **Introduction**

Red Gates School is committed to improving and promoting the health and well being of all pupils, staff and visitors. This can only be achieved through a whole school approach to promoting healthy eating and drinking as identified in the Government White Paper Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier (Nov 2004) and Choosing a Better diet: a food and health action plan (March 2005). Our policy will reflect the 'Every Child Matters' agenda (DfES 2004), promoting healthy living in a safe and secure environment. It will promote the importance of physical activity, directly linked to healthy eating and drinking. This policy will be accessible for staff and parents on the school website.

### **Definition of a Healthy Diet**

With reference to Schools Food Trust Guidance 2006;  
"Children need a healthy, balanced diet, which is rich in fruit, vegetables and bread/other cereals/potatoes, contains moderate amounts of meat (or alternatives) and dairy products, and contains much less fat, sugar, and salt than many children currently eat."

### **Description of School and Dining facilities**

Red Gates is a primary school for children who have severe learning difficulties (SLD) and autism and has classes for children of Reception class age through to Year 6. Approximately 138 children attend the school that live in Croydon or neighbouring boroughs. The wide catchment area means that parental involvement is more difficult than in a mainstream school but we work hard to ensure that parents are as involved as possible through staging school activities at convenient times, hosting parents' support groups and ensuring that parents are represented as Governors.

Red Gates is co-located with Gilbert Scott Primary School. The two schools share the same dining hall and kitchen facilities. Lunch time is regarded as an excellent inclusion opportunity where children from both schools see each other daily. Three Reception classes eat in the classroom and one in the dining room. SaLT and OT will assess eating and drinking skills and devise eating and drinking profiles as required. We seek to ensure the setting and atmosphere in which children dine is relaxed and comfortable so that children can enjoy their meals in a pleasant sociable environment.

A variety of table and chair heights are available to the children. Special utensils, mats and equipment are provided dependent on need and

assessment by an Occupational Therapist. Every class requires two lunchtime support assistants (LTSA) to provide the support required to improve eating, drinking and social skills in line with eating and drinking profiles and IEPs.

### **Vending Machines**

There are no vending machines at the school.

### **Name of member of LMT responsible for School Food**

Dr Viv Hinchcliffe – Headteacher

### **Key- Responsibilities and Multi professional approach**

The Head has key responsibility for monitoring that pupils are provided with healthy nutritional choices of food at snack and lunch times.

The Governor with responsibility for Food is Matt Sowrey Lewin.

The school is part of the South Croydon Schools' Catering Cluster (SCSCC). School meals are provided by a catering company appointed by SCSCC. The catering contract is monitored individually by schools and also through at least termly cluster meetings. The company provides basic utensils but the school provides specialist equipment such as Doidy cups, Manoy plates, plate rings, ergonomically designed utensils.

The school considers lunchtime to be an important learning opportunity and it is treated as part of the children's education. Children eat in their class groups and Teachers, Teaching Assistants (TAs) and LTSAs supervise the children at lunchtime to assist with teaching or assisting them to eat as independently as possible.

The Head meets termly with the area manager from the catering provider and the Headteacher of Gilbert Scott Primary School to discuss new menus and review pupil's preferences and dislikes, taking into consideration the complex needs of Red Gates pupils. School meals to celebrate special events are also organised e.g. Chinese New Year.

The Head is supported by the Healthy Schools Action Group (HSAG) which meets half-termly to review and develop healthy eating at Red Gates. The group is led by the Healthy Schools Co-ordinator and consists of teachers, TAs, LTSAs and the school cook. This provides a multi professional approach to healthy eating and policy development. Outcomes of meetings and new initiatives are disseminated to school staff, governors and parents.

A "Healthy Schools" parent governor representative liaises with the Head to monitor school food. Progress on Healthy Eating and Well Being are given to Governors via the Head's termly report.

All teachers have responsibility for the snacks (prepared or brought in) provided to the class.

The Head monitors school meals and consults with the School Nurse and Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) to look at pupil's preferred foods, range of foods being eaten and special diets required in line with eating and drinking programmes. The School Nurse liaises with the Dietician as required. Packed lunches are also monitored and parents contacted to discuss healthier options where necessary. Parents are encouraged to choose school lunches for their children rather than provide a packed lunch but this is not always possible due to the special needs and unique dietary requirements of the children. If children's diets are very restricted and therefore parents send in a packed lunch, parents are offered a 'taster meal' daily to try and extend their diets.

The school works with parents to promote Healthy Eating. As part of the "Starter Programme" for new parents, healthy eating will be discussed, led by the Head and a copy of this policy distributed. School menus and special diets will be discussed. Parents will also meet with the School Nurse, dietician (if required), SaLT and Occupational therapist, regarding special diets and eating and drinking programmes.

Eating and Drinking, special diets and monitoring of the height and weight of individual pupils are discussed with parents as part of the annual review of the pupil's statement of special educational needs.

### **Parental and Children's involvement in monitoring Food provision**

Wherever possible children are consulted regarding the quality of Food provision at the school. Due to the learning disabilities of the children their responses are given in a variety of forms. Whilst a few are able to discuss their preferences, for the majority a judgement will need to be made based on how they have responded when an option was offered. The responses of the children are fed back to the cook on a daily basis and at the HSAG meetings.

At snack times great emphasis is placed on the children's ability to make choices and they are supported in this by the use of symbols and photographs as well as speech and gestures.

Menus are sent home to parents and they are invited to comment on the provision. A parent governor with special responsibility for food represents the views of parents on the Board of Governors.

### **Meeting the needs of pupils with special dietary needs**

All parents are asked if their children have any special dietary needs when they come to the school. Special dietary needs, whether for medical, religious or cultural/moral reasons will always be respected. The school will seek to ensure that all school staff and catering staff are given this information in written form.

It is recognized as a medical need that some children need a particular texture of food e.g. through difficulty chewing/swallowing or because of another condition e.g. autism.

## **The Rewards system within Red Gates school**

Food (whether unhealthy or healthy) is not used as a reward to recognise the positive behaviour and achievements of children at Red Gates School.

Red Gates School recognises achievement through verbal praise, stickers, certificates (awarded publicly in school assemblies) and as part of the "Celebration of Achievement" Ceremony held at the end of each Academic year which directly involves each child at the school.

## **Celebrations**

Red Gates promotes good relationships and understanding among children and celebrates the large number of different cultures within the school. For this reason food from a range of cultures is often shared as part of religious and cultural festivals. On some occasions people will be invited in to cook foods for the children or parents and friends will send in food to be shared at school.

Due to their disabilities and the wide catchment area of the school, Red Gates pupils do not have the opportunity to have the same peer links outside of school as most other young people. The sharing of important occasions such as birthdays with their peers and friends are celebrated at school. Parents are invited to send in healthy food for these celebrations and a birthday cake if they wish to.

## **Aims**

The school will promote the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors to Red Gates by:

- Providing access to and promoting healthy nutritious food and drink
- Delivering clear and consistent messages about food, nutrition and healthy eating
- Providing opportunities to learn about diet, nutrition, food safety and hygiene, food preparation, as well as where food comes from as part of the curriculum.
- Actively promoting healthy food and drink as part of an enjoyable and balanced diet and restricting the availability and promotion of unhealthy options.
- Providing the appropriate dining furniture and eating utensils to meet the very specific needs of Red Gates children, some of whom will also require additional support from the Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist and Speech and Language Therapist.

The school will promote the importance of physical activity as part of a healthy life style by:

- Ensuring all pupils have regular physical exercise as part of the school curriculum
- Ensuring all pupils will have access to lunch time clubs and be encouraged to participate in physical activities at play times.

- Provide training for staff so they are skilled in maximizing opportunities to increase and enjoy physical activity.

### **Review and development**

Healthy Eating will be reviewed as part of the HSAG half termly meeting, maintaining healthy options at snack times and continuing to promote the Red Gates Healthy Eating and Well-Being Policy to all stake holders. The quality of school meals will be reviewed at termly meetings to monitor the catering contract.

This policy plan will be monitored and reviewed by staff and the Governors Premises and Health and Safety Committee.

### **Policy reviewed and updated September 2017**

**Headteacher**

**Chair of Governors**

**Date**

**Date**