



LOCATION : CURRICULUM HANDBOOK, DOCUMENT 9

## **LUNCHTIME ORGANISATION POLICY**

*“This policy should be read as part of a collection of policies that together form the overall Safeguarding Policy and procedure for Abbey Court School.”*

At Abbey Court School we regard the lunchtimes as an integral part of the learning process and they make a valuable contribution to the all round development of our pupils. Lunchtime contributes to a teachers directed hours.

It is essential that this policy is read in conjunction with the Abbey Court School Dysphagia policy (School Handbook, Section 3, Document 4).

### Educational:

#### Aims:

- To enable all children to take part in school lunchtimes in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.
- To enable children to learn positively from the experience.
- To develop individual eating, communication and social skills in accordance with the pupils feeding programme.
- To ensure that pupils have opportunities to consolidate their learning, e.g. PECs, TEACCH, use of communication aids.

(Each pupil either has a Dysphagia Risk Assessment or an individual eating plan to target their specific needs and guidelines for developing and monitoring these are included in the Dysphagia policy)

### Management:

#### Aims:

- To provide the necessary staffing levels to make lunchtimes a valuable and worthwhile learning experience for all pupils.
- To oversee that lunch times run smoothly and are productive both educationally and socially
- To be available to oversee and assist with any issues/difficulties which may arise, particularly with regard to the Dysphagia policy (A member of SMT is on site and available during every lunchtime.)
- To monitor and evaluate the lunchtime organisation and procedure on a regular basis.

### Rationale:

In both Primary and Secondary Departments, lunchtime runs from 12 noon until 1.15pm. During this time the children are able to prepare e.g. handwashing, eat their lunch and enjoy a time of indoor or outdoor play, or attend a range of clubs, e.g. Art, music, gardening, drama etc, before afternoon teaching begins at 1.15pm.

Lunchtime organisation needs to be flexible in order to provide for the wide-ranging needs of the children who range from independent to very dependent feeders who need extensive adult support and supervision.

Lunchtimes are regarded as opportunities for pupils to develop social skills and independent skills whenever possible. This includes giving pupils a range of worthwhile play activities. At all Key Stages, pupils are provided with a selection of stimulating equipment, which range from bats and balls to climbing frames and go-carts. Through these activities pupils are given the opportunities to develop their physical skills in addition to their social skills such as learning to co-operate, take turns etc. A rotational program of clubs or planned outdoor/indoor accessed activities is offered to all pupils. Pupils with PMLD are provided with a range of sensory activities both indoors and outdoors. During play activities, pupils are supervised by Teachers, HLTAs and Teaching Assistants. Where possible, pupils are encouraged to have some outdoor time, but during bad weather pupils remain indoors using the hall or other allocated classrooms, and can enjoy a range of stimulating indoor activities.

### Organisational Guidelines:

The dining areas on each school site are organised as follows:

- Pupils at Key Stage 1 and 2 eat together.
- Pupils at Key Stage 3 and 4 eat together
- In order to maintain consistency for the pupils as far as is possible, they are supported by the same member of staff every day.
- Students on placements in school also assist with lunchtime if appropriate
- Pupil groupings usually remain constant and are organised in order to take account of the various needs of the pupils.
- Throughout the lunchtime sessions, pupils are given every opportunity to take responsibility and to develop their independence.

### FE Students

- Students in the FE Department eat their lunch in the FE unit. They are responsible for setting up the FE3 classroom in a cafeteria style for their lunch and two students each day will go to the kitchen to collect the dinners for their peers on a trolley and bring it back into the unit.
- Once each week, every student in the Department has the opportunity to cook their own lunch. This involves prior work within the classroom. Students are able to choose the recipe that they would like to cook and then work on a budget plan, they then shop weekly using shopping lists that are written or in symbols for the more able students or by the use of objects of reference for those who require more specific input into their learning. Students then cook and eat their meal once each week in the food technology room. The students whom have PMLD needs have the opportunity to participate in a sensory cookery session once each week to prepare dishes that are designed to exploit the senses such as textured foods that have potent smells. This is an opportunity for those students who are nil by mouth to explore and engage in a more meaningful way in a cookery session that is appropriate to the level of their needs.

- After lunch, they have a choice of activities in one of the playgrounds or an indoor activity, e.g. music, computers, reading, relaxation and/or yoga.

Pupils are arranged in a variety of ways according to the level of ability and level of need. Some pupils sit in class groups whilst the cafeteria systems consists of pupils across classes and Key Stages.

For all students a cafeteria system operates within the unit, where pupils who are less able have the opportunity to spend time and socialise with a cross section of their peers developing social skills further and encouraging an inclusive environment. Some students are expected to serve their own lunch insofar as is possible and have oversight from staff if they should require support. At the end of the dinner time, students are expected to clear away their plates and load the dishwasher, return the trolley to the kitchen and clean the tables (where appropriate) and return the FE3 classroom to its original state.

Lunchtimes are important at Abbey Court School and are regarded as an important learning experience. As part of their 1265 working hours, teaching staff are required to undertake lunch-time duties. When appropriate, external agencies are involved in lunchtimes to ensure appropriate provision for certain pupils, eg. Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists and School Health. Specialist funding clinics are held termly and are attended by the groups of people listed above.

#### Alternative Dining Arrangements:

As an extension of their class work some class groups regularly cook their own lunches. When this occurs the pupils will eat in the food technology rooms under the supervision of the class teacher and teaching assistant staff.

It is important that when teachers need to change their class lunchtime arrangements for any reason that they consult with a Deputy Headteacher or Key Stage Leader. It is also important that any relevant visit forms are completed and the school caterers are informed.

#### Health and Safety

In line with all school activities, lunchtimes must be carried out in accordance with Abbey Court's Health and Safety Policy. When necessary, appropriate health and safety risk assessments are undertaken and regularly reviewed termly. All pupils have either an individual eating plan or dysphagia risk assessment – please see the Dysphagia policy (School Handbook, Section 3, Document 4).

#### Evaluation

Lunchtime Organisation is reviewed termly with lead responsibility held by the Deputy Headteacher. External consultants are employed to provide an outside view of lunchtime arrangements/opportunities and activities. Senior staff, in consultation with teachers, review seating arrangements termly or earlier if necessary. Seating plans and staff allocations are reviewed annually in order to give all staff the opportunity to develop their skills in feeding a range of children. On occasions when an allocated feeder's pupil is absent the member of staff will be reallocated to another pupil by the Key Stage Leader.

#### Parents

Parents are provided with a school menu on a regular basis so they are able to see the choice of food options available. As appropriate parents are also informed of what their child has eaten via a food diary or the contact book. Parents are on occasions invited to join in a school lunch and/or to discuss appropriate feeding techniques with class teams. From time to time information on school meals forms the basis of a Parents Workshop.

### Healthy Schools

Abbey Court School is a Healthy School and we are committed to provide all pupils with a healthy and balanced diet. School meals are carefully planned by our school caterers who are able to provide for the wide range of dietary needs of our pupils. Menus are produced in line with Government good practice for healthy eating. The Headteacher liaises with the School employed Catering Department to ensure that menus etc conform to Government guidelines with regard to nutritional standards.

### Rotas

Lunchtime rotas are produced termly and lunchtime organisation is kept under constant review by SMT, Key Stage Leaders, teachers and where appropriate Teaching Assistants. It is the joint responsibility of all staff to see that all pupils benefit from the learning opportunities which the lunchtime offers.

K Joy 4.1.96

Updated 3.12.96

John Bosley 16.1.97

Paul Horsman 7.9.01

Paul Horsman September 2003

Paul Horsman September 2005

Paul Horsman September 2007

Paul Horsman September 2009

Andrew Webster/John Bosley/Becky Clark 2014

Andrew Webster/John Bosley/2015

Sam Bell June 2018

Sam Bell June 2020

## **Appendix I**

### **LUNCHTIME SUPPORT**

#### **Aim:**

To provide (eventually) an independent diner, making own choices.

Cutlery and drink making items are **arranged on the trolley** and pupils are encouraged to select their own cutlery.

To be offered food of the day and within reason make choices.

Supervisor may exercise discretion according to each child, but they should be encouraged to try a variety of foods. (This will be included in individual feeding programmes).

Children able to pour own drinks also.

This is a social time and communication skills are to be encouraged along with social integration, accepting the presence of others and sharing adult's attention.

Children will also be encouraged to sit properly – feet down, and behave appropriately at the table:

- Elbows off the table
- Hands off the table – ie. not grabbing at things
- Good manners
- Chewing with mouth closed.

All wait until all the children have finished before clearing plates and bringing desert over.

When children are developing independent eating skills they may be allowed to take their empty plate, clear it and stack plate and cutlery.

It is realised that as children become more independent eaters they will become messy initially.

They will be encouraged to clear around their mouth with a spoon or tissues.

## **Appendix 2**

### **CAFETERIA SYSTEM**

#### **CRITERIA**

1. Pupils should be able to eat meals independently.
2. Pupils should be able to collect their own tray of food.  
Pupils with a physical disability may need staff support, special equipment and a strategy to overcome their disability and become more independent.
3. Pupils should behave in a socially acceptable manner.

#### **PROCEDURE**

1. Pupils collect cutlery and set their place. Packed lunch pupils collect cutlery and a plate if necessary.
2. Pupils select their own meal at the b=hatch choosing what they would like to eat.
3. Pupils return to their table and begin to eat their meal immediately, ie. they do not wait for others to get their food.
4. Pupils may choose to leave food they do not wish to finish, ie. because they are full up or because they did not like the taste.
5. When pupils have finished their meal they take back their plates and cutlery, ie. without waiting for the rest of the pupils to finish their meal.
6. Pupils return to their table to chat to their friends until they are told to leave by a member of staff.

#### **APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR**

1. Pupils should sit correctly at the table, ie. not turning around or with their feet up on the chairs etc.
2. pupils should converse in a normal tone of voice, ie. not shouting.
3. Pupils should not pick up their food with their hands unless the type of food allows this, ie. biscuits, cakes, etc.
4. Pupils should eat their meal in the correct order, ie. dinner followed by pudding.

#### **MONITORING**

1. Monitoring of pupils skills at lunch time will be on-going and pupils will move between “family support” and the “cafeteria system” to fulfil the needs of the pupil.
2. Feeding programmes to help students cut food, etc. will need to be carried out by staff.
3. Lunch time supervisors will needs to be informed of procedures, etc.