

Gloucestershire County Council – Food and Nutrition Education Guidance



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School Food Standards

All food delivered as part of the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme must align with the School Food Standards. Please see below a breakdown of the School Food Standards, including a handy checklist to plan and cross-reference your food provision.

A. Starchy Foods

1. One or more portions of food from this group every day

B. Fruits and vegetables

1. One or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day

C. Dairy and alternatives

1. A portion of food from this group every day
2. Lower fat milk must be available for drinking at least once a day during school hours

D. Protein sources

1. A portion of food from this group every day

E. Discretionary foods

1. No snacks, except nuts, seeds, vegetables, and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat.
2. No confectionary, chocolate, or chocolate-coated products
3. Desserts, cakes and biscuits are allowed at lunchtime. They must not contain any confectionary
4. Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked
5. Any condiments must be limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10g or one teaspoonful

F. Healthier drinks

1. One or more of the below permitted drinks:
 - Plain water (still or carbonated);
 - Lower fat milk or lactose-reduced milk;
 - Fruit or vegetable juice (max 150ml);
 - Plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (e.g., yoghurt) drinks;
 - Combinations of fruit or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated, with no added sugars or honey);
 - Combinations of fruit and lower fat milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice, or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and lower fat milk; flavoured low-fat milk, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey;

- Tea, coffee, or hot chocolate.
- Combination drinks are limited to a portion size of 330mls. They may contain added vitamins or minerals, and no more than 150mls of fruit or vegetable juice.
- Fruit or vegetable juice combination drinks must be at least 45% fruit or vegetable juice

Guideline	Guideline Met (Y/N)
Starchy Foods	
<i>One or more portions of food from this group every day</i>	
Fruits and vegetables	
<i>One or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day</i>	
Dairy and alternatives	
<i>A portion of food from this group every day</i>	
Protein sources	
<i>A portion of food from this group every day</i>	
Discretionary foods	
<i>No snacks, except nuts, seeds, vegetables, and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat</i>	
<i>No confectionary, chocolate, or chocolate-coated products</i>	
<i>Desserts, cakes and biscuits are allowed at lunchtime. They must not contain any confectionary</i>	
<i>Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked</i>	
<i>Any condiments must be limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10g or one teaspoonful</i>	
Healthier drinks	
<i>Plain water (still or carbonated)</i>	
<i>Lower fat milk or lactose-reduced milk</i>	
<i>Fruit or vegetable juice (max 150ml)</i>	
<i>Plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium; plain fermented milk (e.g., yoghurt) drinks</i>	
<i>Combinations of fruit or vegetable juice with plain water (still or carbonated, with no added sugars or honey)</i>	
<i>Combinations of fruit and lower fat milk or plain yoghurt, plain soya, rice, or oat drinks enriched with calcium; cocoa and lower fat milk; flavoured low-fat milk, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey</i>	
<i>Tea, coffee, or hot chocolate</i>	

Guidance for Packaging Food

Introduction

Here are some useful tips when packing up food parcels for meal provisions at home.

This factsheet is designed to help you ensure the food you are packing up is safe to use and eat.

The first thing is to make sure that any volunteers handling the food are fit and healthy and wash their hands before touching anything.

Although no open food is touched it is recommended that long hair is tied up and if you have clothes with pet hair on it may be worth using a disposable apron as the person may have allergies to pets.

Handwashing / Infection Control

Correct handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent contamination of food and spread of infection. This should be done:

- Before preparing food
- After going to the toilet
- After touching raw food, including eggs and vegetables
- After changing nappies or taking children to the toilet
- After handling pets



Hands should be dried with clean hand towels or paper towels.

Cuts and skin infections must be covered with a waterproof dressing.

If you or a family member shows symptoms of food poisoning (vomiting, diarrhoea, stomach cramps, fever) you must not prepare food for at least 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.

Stock Rotation

If anyone is showing symptoms of Covid 19, they must follow [current government guidance](#).

Check dates on food

Check 'Use By' and 'Best Before' dates on your food. Food must NEVER be used past its 'Use by' date and it is recommended food is used before it 'Best before' date

Always use the stock with the shortest shelf life/ oldest dates first.

Always check that the packaging is still sealed.

Always check the condition of the packaging to ensure there are no holes.



Do not use any dented or 'blown' canned food. This can be dangerous as air could have got in or the food could have fermented in the tin.



Cleaning

Make sure any surface used for food is cleaned using disinfectant spray and either paper towels or a disposable cloth. Do not put delivery boxes or crates on the table without cleaning after - they could have been placed on a dirty floor before being delivered to you.

Allergens

Always make sure labels are still in place and easy to read.

If foods with allergens are included in lunch bags, they must be clearly labelled according to [Natasha's Law guidance](#).

Some foods can cause an allergic reaction. It is important to keep these foods apart. The most common foods are nuts, dairy, gluten, eggs, fish, shellfish, but there are [14 main allergens](#) in total.

If anyone starts to show symptoms of a [severe allergic reaction](#), such as anaphylaxis, call 999 straight away.



Training

Whilst there is no requirement for you to have formal food hygiene training you must understand what you need to do to ensure food is safe to eat and carry out the required checks.

For any further information, please contact Gloucester City Council Environmental Health

Tel 01452 396396

Email community.wellbeing@gloucester.gov.uk

www.gloucester.gov.uk

Guidance for Serving Hot Food

Introduction

Here are some useful tips when serving hot food - this factsheet is designed to help you ensure the food you are serving is safe to use and eat.

The first thing is to make sure that any volunteers/ employees handling the foods are fit and healthy and wash their hands before touching anything. Do not attend if you have any Covid 19 or cold-like symptoms and please follow up-to-date [Government guidance](#).

Handwashing/ Infection Control/ Personal Hygiene

Correct handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent contamination of food and spread of infection. This should be done:

- Before preparing/ serving food
- After going to the toilet
- After coughing or sneezing
- After touching raw food, including eggs and vegetables
- After handling pets
- After cleaning or handing waste bags



Hands should be dried with clean hand towels or paper towels. Hand sanitizer may be used as an addition to hand washing but should never replace it.

Cuts and skin infections must be covered with a waterproof dressing. A glove may be worn to cover this.

If you or a family member shows symptoms of food poisoning (vomiting, diarrhoea, stomach cramps, fever) you must not prepare food for at least 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.

Unless it is a wedding band, please do not wear jewellery as it may fall off into the food.

Hair must be tied up off the face and a clean apron must be worn.

Cleaning

Tables used to serve the food must be cleaned prior to use. Please use anti-bacterial spray and paper towels.

All equipment must be washed up and clean prior to being used. They could be covered or stored in a box before use.

Food Delivery

If food is delivered in insulated boxes, keep them shut until you need them. The designated person will test the temperature of the food using a clean probe and record the temperatures on the separate sheet. If the food is below 63c the food must be served and eaten within 2 hours.

Serving the food

Serve hot food as quickly as possible.

Non-powdered gloves may be used to serve the food and changed regularly.
Ensure you use separate tongs for different foods.
Protect the food from flying insects.

Prepacked extra dinner

The instructions should be followed on the lid of the packaging.

Allergens

Always make sure labels are still in place and easy to read.

If foods with allergens are included in lunch bags, they must be clearly labelled according to [Natasha's Law guidance](#).

Some foods can cause an allergic reaction. It is important to keep these foods apart. The most common foods are nuts, dairy, gluten, eggs, fish, shellfish, but there are [14 main allergens](#) in total.

If anyone starts to show symptoms of a [severe allergic reaction](#), such as anaphylaxis, call 999 straight away.

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Whilst there is no requirement for you to have formal food hygiene training you must understand what you need to do to ensure food is safe to eat and carry out the required checks.



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HAF Programme: Nutrition Education Guidance

DFE Aims: What's relevant to nutrition education?

Aims of the programme

As a result of this programme, we want children who attend this provision to:

- eat healthily over the school holidays
- be active during the school holidays
- take part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character and wellbeing along with their wider educational attainment
- be safe and not to be socially isolated
- have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition
- be more engaged with school and other local services

We also want to ensure that the families who participate in this programme:

- develop their understanding of nutrition and food budgeting
- are signposted towards other information and support, for example, health, employment, and education

DFE, 2022

What does nutrition education consist of? The DFE's 5 recommendations

Nutritional education

Providers must include an element of nutritional education each day aimed at improving the knowledge and awareness of healthy eating for children. These do not need to be formal learning activities and could for example include activities such as:

- getting children involved in food preparation and cooking
- growing fruit and vegetables
- taste tests
- discussing food and nutrition
- including food and nutrition in other activities

DFE, 2022

We appreciate that providers are likely to have varying levels of capacity/ resources/ knowledge when it comes to nutrition education; that is why it is important to work within your limitations (or strengths). Whilst some providers will have capacity to offer a structured session around food preparation and cooking, others may only be able to offer nutrition education resources. Most importantly, children should have the opportunity to learn something new.

Does your target group need nutrition education?

In short, **YES**.

- Regardless of socioeconomic status, we know that children and families have varying levels of understanding when it comes to food. Whilst some families are fortunate enough to have great knowledge around food and nutrition, others would not have been exposed to any such information before.
- The fact that nutrition education is a mandatory part of the HAF programme does not mean that families are being stigmatized as

having a lack of understanding around food. Instead, it recognises that all children and families should have the opportunity to be within an environment that allows them to learn more about the wonders of food.

Providing food on site can provide an opportunity to engage children and families in food preparation and nutrition. Providers have reported that when children are involved in designing menus and the preparation of food, they are more engaged and more willing to try new and healthier food. We recommend that local authorities consider the provision of the food element of the HAF programme, in particular in making sure that providers and children are involved in the planning and preparation of food. Such a developmental approach is key to effecting long-term change in engagement with food and nutrition.

DFE, 2022

Food/ nutritional education does not have to consist of ‘formal’ learning activities. Instead, food information can be integrated throughout the day to engage children in all things food.

Benefits of food preparation and cooking

Although research is in its infancy, there is increasing evidence to suggest that hands-on healthy meal preparation could be a useful strategy for improving children’s nutrition regardless of cultural background and country of origin ([Choo Ming et al., 2021](#)).

A recent [scoping review](#) suggests that children who are more involved in healthy meal preparation could have several improved outcomes, including:

- Preference for fruit and vegetable consumption
- Self-efficacy for making healthy choices
- Food knowledge (fruit and vegetable knowledge/ identification; cooking knowledge; health knowledge)
- Food preparation and cooking skills
- Attitude (increased positivity towards fruit, vegetables, health, cooking)
- Food familiarity (due to exposure of handling ingredients)

Allowing children to be involved in food preparation/ cooking offers so many other learning opportunities, including knowledge around food hygiene, food exposure, following instructions, maths, dexterity (and many more!). See these resources for ideas and considerations when involving children in food preparation:

- BBC Good Food – [Cookery Skills by Age](#)
- British Dietetic Association - [Cooking with children of different ages](#)

Empowering children to make their own food choices (e.g., designing menus, preparing food) could help to increase food engagement, enticing children to try new foods. Here are a few ‘quick-win’ suggestions that have been successful in HAF provisions so far:

- [Pizza topping](#) session (base options: [homemade base](#); pre-bought pizza base, [puff pastry](#), [crumpets](#), [pitta breads](#))
- Create your own [burrito](#)/ [fajita](#) (using vegetarian or [meat](#) options, burrito bowl with tortilla chips as a GF option)
- Pinwheel wrap creation: [Pinwheel creation](#)
- Food preparation session (practising the claw and bridge with staple ingredients): [How to prep like a Pro - The Onion](#)
- Skewer making session (e.g., [Rainbow fruit skewers](#) or [Vegetable Skewers](#) – just keep on top of health and safety practises with children and skewers!)

We appreciate that your HAF ‘space’ might not have the facilities to get children involved in food preparation. If not, could children watch GCC’s cookery and nutrition videos during their lunchbreak to help spark conversations around food?

GCC Food and Nutrition Videos for Children and Families

Food Facts: Low-Fat Doesn't Mean Healthy

Age range: 7+

Purpose: To engage children and families in food and nutrition.

To provide evidence-based nutrition information to children and families.

To promote nutritious food options to children and families.

To prompt families to read nutrition labels when shopping.

To increase families confidence to be able to make smart choices when shopping in the supermarket or online.

To reduce food stigma, e.g., 'fats are bad'.

Food labelling / nutrition information resources:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-labelling-terms/>



“We were so grateful for the food hamper the meal book it bought our family closer together for Christmas preparing meals and took a great weight off our shoulders, thanks so much” (Parent, winter HAF feedback)

‘Discussing food and nutrition’

- If you do not have the facilities to allow for food preparation and cooking, an alternative may be to dedicate some time for discussions around food and nutrition. This does not have to be a formal lecture around food and nutrition; it could be a simple discussion asking children their thoughts around different foods.
 - This provides a good opportunity to get food messaging right from an early age. In particular, hosts may want to pay attention to specific *food language*. For example, recognising that no food should be labelled as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ and some top

tips on how to include the foods we like as part of a healthy balanced diet: [The Food Medic: A Healthy Mindset](#)

As a reminder, here is what the *British Dietetic Association* say about food demonization (e.g., labelling foods as ‘good’ or ‘bad’): *“When food groups are demonised, and internal cues around hunger and fullness ignored, this can lead to cycles of weight loss followed by weight regain. This cycle can affect our relationship with food, leading to feelings of failure rather than developing the skills and confidence to manage diet and weight in a healthy manner”* (BDA, 2021).

We also appreciate that discussing food is not a point of comfort for everyone. For this reason, you may want to consider providing children with a variety of resources that could spark a natural conversation around food:

[Food: a fact of life](#) – take a look at some of the ‘Fibre February’ resources!

[Taster Session \(All age groups\)](#) – allow children to be exposed to new ingredients/ flavours/ textures (just be mindful of allergens)

[Eat well \(age range: 5-7 year olds\)](#) - various activities, including how to introduce children to the Eatwell guide and understanding of what makes up a healthy balanced diet

[Be healthy, be active Challenge](#) (downloadable PowerPoint at the bottom of page) – this is a brilliant resource aimed at **7-11 year olds**, take a look at the language used

[Where is my food from?](#) – Downloadable presentation and activity around food availability (target age: **11-14 year olds**)

[Eat more fruit and vegetables](#) – For more information on how we can reduce our carbon footprint see ‘Seasonality’ presentation (target age: **14-16 year olds**)

[British Nutrition Foundation - Children and Food](#) – more specific information around dietary requirements for children, a resource to increase provider’s

knowledge around what healthy eating looks like for children (provider/ parent appropriate resource).

‘Growing fruit and vegetables’

Engaging children in a farm-to-fork style approach to food has many benefits that crossover with school curriculum, including:

- Increased understanding of how fruit and veg is grown which may encourage healthy eating and preference for more nutritious options
- Develops social skills, prompting lunchtime conversations about how fruit and vegetables make their way to the plate
- Understanding of seasonality, e.g., when fruit and vegetables are at their best quality; linking with food sustainability and trying to buy local (or UK) produce wherever possible to reduce food miles
- Wider learning: understanding of topics such as seasons, life cycles, animal involvement.
- If involved in planting, numeracy (e.g., measuring and counting) and literacy skills (e.g., reading instructions, describing colours and shapes of plants) can also be developed.

If your dedicated HAF space does allow for growing fruit and vegetables, there are a variety of resources to help guide you through this process:

[Better health - gardening for children](#)

[BBC Good Food - fruit and veg for kids to grow](#)

[Food - A fact of life: growing](#)

However, if your activity does not lend itself to ‘grow your own’ sessions, guidance is available on how you can help children understand the farm-to-fork process instead:

[Food - A fact of life: from field to fork](#) - [Food - A fact of life: Potatoes](#)
[Countryside Classroom](#)
[Growing Local](#)
[Educational Resources](#)

In previous HAF programmes, we have also been able to fulfil this element of nutrition education by distributing [Pot Gang](#) 'grow your own' kits.

'Taste Tests'

Introducing children to new ingredients/ foods from a young age helps to develop important sensory skills (e.g., identifying specific tastes, smells, textures and appearances). [Research](#) shows that repeated taste exposure is an effective strategy for promoting the consumption of unfamiliar fruit and vegetables in young children (Nekitsing et al., 2018). Allowing children to try new foods covers several aspects of nutrition education to expand the child's knowledge, awareness, and willingness to taste new foods.

Taste tests appeal to children of various age ranges and cultural backgrounds as all households have their own unique food environment, with some children potentially having less exposure to a wider variety of foods than others. Here are a range of resources to help host your own taste sessions:

[Action for Healthy Kids: Host a Taste Test](#)
[Fruit and veg taste test ideas](#)
[Wholegrain taste test ideas](#)
[Dairy product taste test ideas](#)
[Food - A fact of life: taste tests](#)

Environment and Sustainability

With sustainability at the top of the [UK Government's agenda](#), 2022 HAF guidance recognises the importance of local authorities considering sustainable practices and their impact on the environment.

Starting conversations around food sustainability could be one way of delivering nutrition education. For example, introducing children to the concept of food miles and the benefits of eating food in season:

[EUCIF - Exploring Seasonal Fruit and Vegetables in Europe](#) – this search engine allows children/ families to discover what is in season throughout Europe on a monthly basis; a great way of encouraging cultural diversity!

[BBC Bitesize Session - Food Miles](#) – defining key words ('food miles' – 'carbon emissions' – 'local' – 'transport') with an interactive quiz to build engagement.

[Food Miles Calculator](#) - simply insert the country of origin from the ingredient's packaging for an approximation of how far your food item has had to travel to make it to your plate!

[BBC Good Food - Reduce, reuse and recycle plastic packaging](#) - top tips on how to reduce single use plastic.

Nutrition Education – a whole family approach

To engage families, and further enhance and support children, young people and families' knowledge of nutrition - programme partners are expected to offer **at least** weekly training or advice sessions for parents, carers or family members, which provide advice on how to source, prepare and cook nutritious, low-cost food.

Programme partners should consider how they will offer this element of their programme in a **respectful, inclusive** way that does not **stigmatise** or **patronise households**.

In situations where face-to-face engagement is difficult, it is down to programme partners to establish more creative ways of supporting and advising households. Examples here include:

- Providing daily or weekly information online (e.g., links to educational resources from [Food: A fact of life](#) or [NHS Better Health - healthier families](#))
 - Providing hard copies of recipe booklets to families which include affordable menus or recipes: [NHS - Healthy Recipes](#)
 - Engaging parents in children's cookery sessions
 - Providing resources around eating on a budget: [NHS: 20 tips to eat well for less](#) – [GCC HAF Resource Booklet](#)
- Food hampers, including educational recipe booklets are another way of reaching the whole household; these are distributed by each district.

Nutrition Education - what counts?

- Please note that you do not need to cover all aspects of nutrition education outlined by the DFE. Simply delivering **one** of DFE's five recommendations will contribute towards improving children's knowledge and awareness of healthy eating. From these five recommendations, focus on a nutrition education element that:
 - a) Is appropriate for your HAF space
 - b) Is appropriate to your staff's current understanding around food and nutrition
 - c) Is appropriate for your time constraints
 - d) Is within budget and resource constraints
 - e) Most importantly: what your staff feel comfortable delivering and what you think would engage children and families!

- Getting children involved in food preparation and cooking including their meals or snacks, with partners/staff giving them information, guidance, and support where appropriate.
 - Growing fruit and vegetables, even in grow bags or small pots, which they can either keep at the programme or take home with growing and care instructions.
 - Cooking activities on site with menus, recipes and/or enough food to take home to cook and share with families.
 - Taste tests of a variety of foods, including discussions about where the food comes from, how it is produced and how the food can be included in everyday snacks and meals.
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graph TD; A[Getting children involved in food preparation and cooking including their meals or snacks, with partners/staff giving them information, guidance, and support where appropriate.] --> B[Growing fruit and vegetables, even in grow bags or small pots, which they can either keep at the programme or take home with growing and care instructions.]; C[Taste tests of a variety of foods, including discussions about where the food comes from, how it is produced and how the food can be included in everyday snacks and meals.] --> D[Cooking activities on site with menus, recipes and/or enough food to take home to cook and share with families.]; D --> A;
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DFE, 2022

If you are unable to gain full access to any of the research in this resource, please email [callum.gutteridge@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:callum.gutteridge@gloucestershire.gov.uk) who will be able to forward the PDF download.

If you have any further questions, please contact:  
[callum.gutteridge@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:callum.gutteridge@gloucestershire.gov.uk)