

# LEAP Federation Food Policy

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Mandeville, Kingsmead, Gayhurst, and Grasmere Primary Schools

London Borough of Hackney

Date Approved: November 2024

Review Date: November 2027

Approved by: Executive Headteacher and Governing Boards

Policy Lead: Executive Headteacher

## 1. Introduction

The LEAP Federation is a group of schools—Mandeville, Kingsmead, Gayhurst, and Grasmere—committed to supporting the health, wellbeing, and academic success of all children. Based in the London Borough of Hackney, we serve vibrant, culturally diverse communities where food is a central part of daily life, culture, and identity.

We believe access to nutritious, inclusive, and sustainably sourced food is a right, not a privilege. Through our partnership with the Hackney School of Food, located at Mandeville, we provide meaningful food education and high-quality meals that support every child's physical and social development.

## 2. Aims and Values

This policy supports a Federation-wide approach to:

- Promoting healthy eating habits and lifelong wellbeing.
- Providing nutritious, inclusive meals prepared to a high standard.
- Embedding sustainability and reducing food waste.
- Offering a rich and practical food education curriculum.
- Fostering a respectful, community-focused food culture.



### 3. School Meals and Dining Culture

Kingsmead, Gayhurst and Mandeville schools, are proud to be no packed lunch schools. This means:

- All children and staff eat together each day in our friendly, family service-style dining rooms.
- Mealtimes are calm, social experiences where food is enjoyed, manners are modelled, and positive relationships are built.
- Packed lunches are only permitted:
  - On educational trips.
  - For children with specific medical dietary needs, agreed in advance with the school.

At all LEAP schools meals are:

- Cooked from scratch on site by trained kitchen staff.
- Designed to meet or exceed the School Food Standards.
- Made using high-quality, sustainable, seasonal, and ethically sourced ingredients.
- Culturally inclusive, with halal, vegetarian, and vegan options.
- Planned to accommodate a wide range of dietary needs including allergies and intolerances.

Every dining hall offers a salad bar, fresh fruit, and drinking water daily, and pupils are encouraged to try new foods and eat a balanced meal.

### 4. Snacks and Drinks

- Pupils in EYFS and KS1 receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable each day via the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme.
- Other snacks brought from home (if applicable, such as for wraparound care) should be healthy—e.g. fruit, vegetable sticks, or plain crackers.
- Pupils are encouraged to bring reusable water bottles, and drinking water is available throughout the school day.



## 5. Food Education Across LEAP

Food education is embedded across the curriculum and enriched through our unique partnership with the Hackney School of Food, where children from all LEAP schools regularly take part in:

- Hands-on cooking classes using professional kitchen facilities.
- Gardening and food growing projects, promoting sustainability and understanding where food comes from.
- Integrated learning in PSHE, Science, and DT on topics such as nutrition, digestion, healthy choices, and environmental impact.
- Events such as Healthy Eating Week, Cultural Food Celebrations, and Zero Waste Days.

## 6. Sustainability and Food Waste

Our food practices reflect our wider commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility. Across all LEAP schools:

- Food is sourced with an emphasis on low food miles, seasonal produce, and minimal packaging.
- Waste is actively monitored and reduced through careful planning and education.
- Children learn to value food as a resource, eat mindfully, and avoid unnecessary waste.
- Kitchen staff and pupils participate in composting, recycling, and creative waste-reduction initiatives.

## 7. Allergies and Special Diets

We are an allergy-aware Federation, and every school has clear processes to ensure all dietary needs are safely met.

- Families must inform the school of any allergies, intolerances, or dietary requirements.
- Kitchen and supervisory staff are trained in allergy awareness and food handling procedures.
- Allergen information is available and communicated clearly.
- All pupils, regardless of need, are fully included in school meals and food learning.



## 8. Celebrations, Rewards, and Events

At LEAP, we celebrate with inclusion, respect, and health in mind:

- Non-food rewards are used to recognise achievement and positive behaviour.
- Food-based celebrations are welcome and thoughtfully planned, reflecting the cultural diversity of our communities.
- Families are asked not to send in sweets or cakes for birthdays or class celebrations.

## 9. Community Involvement

We believe that food brings people together—and this is reflected in the way we build relationships across our school communities.

- Families are supported through workshops, newsletters, and food events.
- We provide support and signposting for families experiencing food insecurity.
- The Hackney School of Food serves as a community hub, offering shared learning opportunities for pupils, staff, and parents.
- Community events such as International Evening and summer barbecues are annual highlights of our school calendars. These events celebrate the incredible diversity of our communities through food, bringing together children, families, staff, and local partners to share, cook, eat, and connect.

## 10. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Federation's Healthy Schools Lead in consultation with:

- Pupils (via school councils and pupil voice feedback)
- Staff teams across the four schools
- Parents and carers
- Executive Chef and Hackney Education



## 11. Linked Policies and Frameworks

- LEAP PSHE and Science Curriculum
- LEAP Sustainability and Environmental Policy
- Health and Safety and Allergy Protocols
- Equalities and Inclusion Policy
- School Food Standards (DfE)
- Hackney Education Healthy Schools Framework

