



**RAINBOW**  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL UGANDA

# Healthy Eating Policy

Rainbow International School Uganda is committed to encouraging and developing positive attitudes towards food and a healthy diet. We recognise the importance of offering children and young adults the opportunity to make informed choices about what they eat.

## **Policy Statement:**

As a school, we know that food is fundamental to the quality of a person's well-being. Therefore, we believe in not just providing essential nutrition but in communicating and sharing positive values, attitudes and experiences. Adults (staff and parents) should be role models and support children and young adults in understanding how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and general well-being. As meal times represent a social time, and adults can help children and young adults learn about healthy eating, we encourage parents and carers to continue the importance of healthy eating at home as well as in school.

## **Aims and Objectives:**

- To improve the health of students, staff and the wider school community.
- To increase knowledge and awareness of food issues, including what constitutes a healthy diet.
- To ensure pupils are well-nourished at school and have access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and a safe, easily available water supply during the school day.
- To encourage parents to send in healthy and appropriate food and drinks for snacks and meals.
- To provide guidelines for parents and carers to follow when providing snacks or packed lunches for their children.
- To ensure that food provision in the school acknowledges the cultural, ethical and medical requirements of staff and pupils, e.g. religious, vegetarian, medical and allergenic needs.
- To introduce and promote practices within the school to reinforce these aims and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

## **Food and Drink Guidelines**

For clarity, foods and drinks will be grouped using guidelines adapted from the World Health Organisation's advice. These groups are as follows:

- **ALWAYS** → Nutritional value is high.
- **SOMETIMES** → Although these foods include some nutrients, their calorie, saturated fat, salt and sugar contents may be high.
- **NEVER** → Nutritional value is low, and calorie, saturated fat, salt and sugar contents are high.

Foods and drinks in the **ALWAYS** and **SOMETIMES** groups are allowed in school while food and drinks in the **NEVER** group are prohibited.

Where ambiguity exists regarding the grouping of foods, the decision of the school's leadership team is final.

### ALWAYS GROUP

Foods and beverages in this group are high in nutrients and recommended for school-aged students.

These foods and drinks include:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Nuts
- Milk
- Fresh fruit and vegetable juice (no added sugar, less than 250ml)
- Unsweetened yoghurt
- Cheese
- Boiled eggs
- Bread
- Water

### SOMETIMES GROUP - SELECT CAREFULLY

Foods and drinks in this group contain some valuable nutrients, but may also be high in calories, saturated fat, salt and sugar. Foods and drinks categorised in this group should be consumed infrequently and portions should be kept small.

These foods and drinks include:

- Concentrated fruit juices and flavoured milk (less than 250ml)
- Chips and crisp snacks
- Sweet bakery products (bagels, pastries, cakes, muffins, etc.)
- Packaged foods (cakes, cookies, crackers, flavoured yoghurts, etc.)
- Breakfast cereals
- Lean processed meats and meat products (burgers, meatballs, chicken nuggets, etc.)
- Fried foods (samosas, chapatis, mandazis, rolexes, etc.)
- Sauces (ketchup, mayonnaise, etc.)
- Tea, coffee and similar drinks containing natural caffeine (only for Senior School students)
- Ice cream

### NEVER GROUP - PROHIBITED IN SCHOOL

In this group of food and drinks, calorie, saturated fat, sugar, and salt content are much higher than the low nutritional value so they are prohibited in school.

These foods and drinks include:

- Energy drinks and fizzy drinks
- Chocolate
- Sweets/candy
- Products containing added caffeine
- Intensely sweetened foods and drinks

### **Curriculum:**

- We regard healthy eating education as a whole-school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. The importance of balanced nutrition and healthy food choices is explicitly taught through the Science, Food & Nutrition and PSHE curriculum.
- All pupils have the opportunity to learn about safe food preparation and to learn about where food has come from. Pupils learn about the requirements for plant growth, the food chain, and the components of a healthy diet through the Science curriculum.
- Students have additional opportunities to learn about healthy eating through assemblies, school initiatives and enrichment activities.
- Parents can get involved by having their child help with cooking at home a few times a week or preparing snacks and lunch. In this way, they will try new foods and enjoy the process of preparing healthy food.
- The school will run healthy eating workshops that parents can attend.

### **Expectations of Healthy Eating:**

- All students should bring a water bottle to school so they can have access to water throughout the day. Water coolers are located throughout the school for additional access to drinking water. Students should not use their water bottles to consume large quantities of concentrated fruit juice. Juice and flavoured water will not be allowed to be consumed in the class environment (unless for a specific event such as a class Christmas party).
- Pupils' lunch boxes should offer balanced nutrition. Across a week, parents are encouraged to offer a variety of healthy foods from the ALWAYS group but may also include some items from the SOMETIMES group in moderation. Food and drinks from the NEVER group are prohibited and will not be allowed in school. If pupils are found with prohibited items, they will be removed and must be collected by parents or

caregivers at the end of the day. Please see the Food and Drinks Guidelines for specific guidance.

- The contents of pupils' lunchboxes, including portion sizes, will be carefully monitored. Any concerns will be shared with the class teacher or form tutor and, where needed, concerns will be communicated to parents to ensure that foods and drinks brought from home are healthy and meet school policy.
- Those students who purchase a school lunch will be informed of healthy decisions. Choices will be monitored and any concerns communicated to parents, i.e. ensuring each child is getting a balanced diet.
- To protect students with food allergies and specific religious beliefs, we encourage them not to share or swap food with one another.
- Special events such as International Day and end-of-term parties are times when some 'treat foods' from the NEVER group may be allowed as they contribute to a sense of celebration.

### **Birthday Celebrations:**

Parents are permitted to provide a birthday cake or similar for their child's birthday but it should be limited to one moderate portion per child. In the Secondary School only, pupils also have the option to order food to be delivered that is then shared with their classmates and friends. Excessive quantities of food and drinks from the NEVER group are NOT permitted and birthday foods should be limited to one item/portion per child. Party bags or gifts are also NOT allowed. If you wish to bring a cake or something similar to share for your child's birthday, please check with your child's teacher or Head of Year beforehand. The same applies to secondary school students ordering takeaway.

### **Food Allergies:**

- The school nurse regularly updates the food allergy information, informing teachers of any changes. All teachers have access to this information via iSams.
- Parents are to update the nurse of any changes in their child's medical and dietary needs to ensure we can ensure your child's safety.
- Students must never be given foods containing ingredients they are allergic to. Parents should educate their children about which foods they may or may not eat. Parents and teachers must be especially vigilant during International Day and class parties, etc.
- Teachers must be aware of the emergency procedures for students with food allergies.

### **The Club:**

- School meals are provided by The Club who cater for the school canteen and parent café.
- During school hours, The Club must follow the RISU Healthy Eating Policy, including the Food and Drink Guidelines. This is monitored by the Business Manager and School Leadership Team.
- When designing the lunch menu and preparing school lunches, The Club will provide healthy and balanced meals, including a main dish, vegetarian dish, side dish, salad and fresh fruit each day.
- No pork or beef will be used in school lunches.
- When serving school lunch, the club staff will serve all items of food in each meal (unless there are allergens for a specific child). Students may return for seconds once their meal has been eaten, this will be monitored with a commonsense approach by the adults on duty.

### **Implementation and Review:**

- The school commits to providing the support necessary to implement the policy effectively.
- The school will promote and support the eating of healthy food in parent-provided lunch boxes and via school meals provided by The Club.
- Using surveys and committee meetings, the school will periodically evaluate parent and child views on the types of foods that are offered by The Club.
- The Healthy Eating policy will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team.

**This document was last reviewed by: members of the RISU Healthy Living Committee and SLT, June 2024**

**Next review by June 2026**