

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**Cheshire East Catering****CATERING****FOOD POLICY****1. FOOD ADDITIVE AND INGREDIENT POLICY**

Cheshire East Catering has a policy of not using foods that contain certain additives that have been found to have an adverse effect on a small number of children and adults.

The banned list includes additives that could be linked to a negative effect on childrens behaviour, according to 2007 Southampton University research commissioned by the Food Standards Agency. The banned list also includes other additives common in some childrens foods that have been identified as problematic by the Hyperactive Childrens support group.

Artificial trans fats or trans fatty acids (TFA'S) are chemically altered vegetable oils, used to give processed foods a longer shelf life. They are produced artificially by a process called hydrogenation which turns liquid oil into solid fat.

The primary health concerns relating to trans fats are an association between increasing TFA intakes, coronary heart disease risk and raised “ bad “ cholesterol levels. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence(NICE) guidelines call for trans fats to be eliminated from food in England.

Cheshire East Catering currently hold the Food For Life Catering Silver Catering Mark for Primary school menus.

Catering Mark menus are based around food that is freshly prepared on site from predominantly unprocessed ingredients. They are free from controversial additives and artificial trans fats.

Please see below list of additives not permitted in any of our ingredients.

| COLOURINGS | FLAVOURS/ENHANCERS | SWEETENERS |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| E102 – tartrazine | E621 – monosodium glutamate | E950 – acesulfame K |
| E104 – quinolone yellow | E635 – sodium 6-ribonucleotide | E951 - aspartame |
| E107 – yellow 2G | | E954 – sodium sacharin |
| E110 – sunset yellow | | |
| E120 – cochineal | PRESERVATIVES | |
| E122 – carmoisine | E211 – sodium benzoate | |
| E123 – amaranth | | |
| E124 – ponceau 4R | | |
| E129 – Allura red | | |
| E131 – patent blue V | | |
| E132 – indigo carmine | | |
| E 133 – brilliant blue FCF | | |
| E151 – black PN | | |

Any food that is identified by an E number has been considered to be safe to use in the food industry and some E numbers are natural products. The concern is in the sensitivity of individuals and the quantities they are exposed to.

Each new product that is introduced into the menu is checked that it does not contain food additives from the above list.

As Catering Mark holders, Cheshire East Catering demonstrate compliance with national standards on food and nutrition where these apply for our sector.

2. GOVERNMENT NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES

The revised school food standards are part of the school food plan and were introduced in January 2015

Cheshire East Catering are following the new school food standards introduced from January 2015. The government want to bring about a “Whole School” approach to food in schools and for schools to adopt their own “Food in Schools” policy.

The revised school food standards are intended to help children develop healthy eating habits and ensure that they get the energy and nutrition they need across the whole school day. Cheshire East Catering thrive to cook food that looks good and tastes delicious.

As a general principle, it is important to provide a wide variety of food across the week. Variety is key – whether it is different fruits, vegetables, grains, pulses, or types of meat and fish.

Food Based Standards (from January 2015)

| Food Group | Food Based Standard |
|---|--|
| Starchy Food – This includes all breads, potatoes, rice, cous cous, bulgar wheat, semolina, tapioca, maize, cornmeal, noodles, pasta, oats, millet, barley, buckwheat, rye, spelt, plantain, yam, sweet potato and cassava | One or more portion from this group every day. Three or more different starchy foods each week. One or more wholegrain varieties each week. Starchy food cooked in fat or oil no more than two days each week. |
| Fruit & Vegetables – This includes vegetables in all forms, including fresh, frozen, canned, dried, juiced, as well as pulses such as beans & lentils. | One or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day. One or more portions of fruit every day A dessert containing at least 50% fruit two or more times per week. |
| Meat, Fish, Beans & Other Non Dairy Sources of Protein – This group includes fresh and frozen meat, poultry, frozen and canned fish, shell fish, eggs, meat alternatives(including products such as soya & quorn), tofu, pulse such as beans(cannellini, kidney, pinto, borlotti, haricot, butter, but not green beans), chick peas, lentils and nuts. | A portion of meat or poultry on three or more days each week. Oily fish once or more every three weeks. For vegetarians, a portion of non – dairy protein tree or more times a week. A meat or poultry product eg, sausage or burger, (manufactured or homemade and meeting the legal requirement) no more than once a week in primary schools and twice a week in secondary schools. |
| Milk & Dairy – This includes all types of milk, cheese, yogurt (including plain or fruit, frozen and drinking yogurt), or fromage frais, | A portion from this group every day. Lower fat milk and lactose reduced milk must be available for drinking at least once a day |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>milk based sauces, custard (made with milk), puddings made from milk and milk based sauces.</p> | <p>during school hours.</p> |
| <p>Food High in Fat, Sugar, & Salt. Deep Fried Food – Including those deep fried or flash fried in the kitchen or in the manufacturing process, such as chips (including oven chips), potato waffles, hash browns, samosas, plantain chips, spring rolls, doughnuts, pakora and bhajis. Batter Coated and Breadcrumbs Coated Foods – Including any bought in or homemade products such as chicken nuggets, fish fingers, battered onion rings and tempura. Pastry – Including shortcrust, flaky, filo, choux, and puff used in quiches, meat pies, fruit pies, fruit tarts, sausage rolls, pasties and samosa. Desserts – Include cereal and starch based desserts such as rice, semolina, tapioca pudding, fruit based dessert such as jelly, fruit compote, crumbles and sponge puddings, vegetable desserts such as soya based mousse , egg based desserts such as ready to eat products and products prepared from egg such as flans, egg custard, custard fillings in pies. Meringues, dairy based desserts such as puddings with dairy based fillings, fruit or flavoured yogurt or other fermented milk and or milk products, ice cream, mousse, and fat based desserts, such as ice cream made with vegetable fats. Cakes & Biscuits - include manufactured, bought in products, and prepared from scratch cakes and biscuits such as individual buns and pastires, scones, sweet and savoury biscuits Savoury Crackers, Breadsticks – (served with fruit, vegetables or dairy foods) portion size excludes fruit. Condiments – include ketchup, mayonnaise, salad cream, brown sauce, chutney etc.</p> | <p>No more than two portions a week of food that has been deep fried, batter coated or breadcrumb.</p> <p>No more than two portions of food which include pastry each week.</p> <p>No snacks except nuts, seeds, vegetables, and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat.</p> <p>Savoury crackers or breadsticks can be served at lunch time with fruit or vegetables or dairy food.</p> <p>No confectionary, chocolate and chocolate coated products.</p> <p>Desserts, cakes, and biscuits are allowed at lunchtime. They must not contain any confectionary.</p> <p>Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked.</p> <p>Any condiments limited to sachets or portions of no more than 10 grams or one teaspoonful.</p> |
| <p>Healthier Drinks – Water should be the default drink for every child. The more it is offered, the more readily they will accept it.</p> | <p>Free, fresh drinking water at all times. The only drinks permitted are :- Plain water Lower fat milk or lactose reduced milk Fruit or veg juice (max 150mls) Unsweetened combinations of fruit or veg juice with plain water.</p> |

The government has set out specific portion sizes for each food group, Cheshire East Catering follow these guidelines and serve the relevant portion size within these standards.

Target Nutrient Specifications have been given by the government to food manufacturers for each food group with maximum fat, saturated fat, salt, sugar and minimum protein content to adhere to. New products are checked for this information before being purchased.

3. OTHER TOPICS

❖ **Special Diets**

Cheshire East Catering is responsible for the provision of special diets for all schools for which we provide a catering service. These are wide ranging and vary from diabetic to food allergies: gluten, crustaceans, eggs, milk (including lactose), fish, peanuts, soybeans, tree nuts, celery and celeriac, mustard, sesame seeds and sulphites at concentrations of over ten parts per million.

With the increase in potentially worrying allergies, particularly those involving nuts it is important that unofficial diets are not provided for pupils at lunchtime. For this reason a reminder of the procedure to follow for those pupils with special dietary requirements is sent out annually to all schools.

In order for a special diet to be arranged, the parent or guardian must obtain written permission from a hospital, clinic or own doctor, together with the necessary dietary information. Once this information is received, a letter authorising the diet will be sent to the school concerned and the appropriate Manager will contact the Head of Kitchen to discuss arrangements for implementing the diet.

Cheshire East Catering is able to cater for cultural diets by offering vegetarian food and some Halal products.

Cheshire East Catering does recognise that as a result of the complexity of some diets there may be occasions when we are unable to provide this service.

Cheshire East Catering's policy has been to remove nut products such as mixed nuts and peanut butter from the kitchens. No other nut products have been used.

❖ **Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)**

It has always been policy that pupils and staff who do not wish to eat beef or beef products should be offered a non - beef alternative. In 1996 following considerable media interest in and public concern about possible links between BSE in cows and Creutzfeldt - Jakob disease in humans, the Authority decided to remove beef from its menus in schools. In 2000 when it was identified that beef was safe this decision was reversed. The current situation is that beef is provided as part of a wider choice menu and individual schools can make the decision to implement a beef ban in their establishment.

- **Genetically Modified Food (GMO)**

Based on the declarations received from our many suppliers none of the products which we specify for use in our school catering service contain any genetically modified protein or DNA.

- **Fair Trade**

We are constantly looking for Fair Trade products that we can cost effectively make available to our customers.

Currently the products we purchase across the whole sector of our business include:-

Orange juice
Apple Juice
Tea
Coffee

- **Use of Eggs**

Raw eggs are not used in dishes which will be eaten without further cooking e.g. Home – made Mayonnaises, Mousse, Royal Icing, Almond paste. It should be noted that commercially produced mayonnaise in bottles or jars does not present a risk. Additionally, meringues must be made from pasteurised egg whites not fresh. The eggs we purchase are Free Range from the Northwest.

- **Mechanically Reformed Meat (MRM) –**

What is MRM? This is mechanically recovered meat which is a product obtained by recovering residual raw meat from bones under high pressure after other boning processes have been completed. It has been made from beef, pig, sheep or chicken bones. It is known to have been used in products such as cheaper burgers, sausages and pies and cannot legally be added to minced meat.

It is the policy of Cheshire East Catering that MRM is not used in any of the foodstuffs purchased. With the move to “whole muscle” products this minimizes the risk of MRM being used.

- **Meat and Poultry**

All meat and poultry is Farm Assured, it comes from farms which satisfy UK Animal Welfare Standards.

All meat, poultry and meat products served in primary schools is accredited by one of the following Welfare Schemes :-

Assured Food Standards (Red Tractor Assurance)
EBLEX Quality Standard Mark (English Beef and Lamb Executive)
Organic
Freedom Food
British Quality Assured Pig.

Cheshire East Catering can claim with confidence that UK minimum standards on animal welfare are being met (and some products meet higher animal welfare standards eg, freedom food, organic and free range), and that meat can be traced back to the farm.

UK welfare standards prevent certain adverse practices in livestock farming still legal elsewhere, including sow stalls and higher stocking densities for indoor housed poultry

- **Healthy Eating**

Cheshire East Catering is committed to providing Healthy Eating to the pupils and staff of Cheshire East. The School Catering Service supports and adheres to the Nutritional Standards for School Lunches that recommend a varied diet with lots of different fruit and vegetables, high in fibre, low in fat, sugar and salt.

Salt

Following the reports by the Committee on Medical Aspects of Food Policy (COMA) and the National Advisory Committee on Nutrition Education (NACNE) in the 1980's and 1990's we have endeavoured – in the midst of many other guidelines – always to be conscious of the health implications of sodium in the diet and (where we have had an influence) to reduce the salt content of products used in our kitchens.

A prime example is our insistence on specifying the use of Low Sugar/Low Salt Baked Beans, even in the face of a cost premium.

In addition, Cheshire East's policy is to keep any salt additions in recipes to a minimum with current recipes being reviewed as required.

Other initiatives include:-

- The removal of salt cellars from tables (primary schools)
- Where possible replacing salt in cooking with herbs, spices, lemon juice etc to enhance the flavours of foods.
- Where possible replacing salt in cooking with LoSalt (a low sodium substitute).

As part of the 2006 Guidelines food manufacturers have been asked to reduce the salt content of their products.

Fat

National concerns regarding the Health of the Nation clearly identify that too much harmful fat in the diet can contribute to both obesity and other associated health problems.

Cheshire East Catering is working closely with our suppliers to continually reduce the amount of fat that is present in the foodstuffs we purchase.

Other initiatives that we have implemented are:-

- Offering a reduced number of fried foods
- Controlling the frequency of chips
- Grilling, baking, poaching or steaming instead of frying
- Omitting butter or margarine to cooked vegetables
- Cutting down on hidden fats by looking carefully at food specifications
- Use of reduced fat spread for sandwiches.
- Cooking oil used contains only $\frac{2}{3}$ of the maximum saturated fat recommended under Government Guidelines
- Reducing saturated fat in dessert recipes by using reduced fat spread or oil in place of hard margarine.
- Reducing/removing the amount of oil used to fry off meat for such dishes as Cottage Pie and Spaghetti Bolognese.

Sugar

Excessive sugar in the diet can contribute to obesity and dental problems. Back in 1982 there was a review of all homemade desserts. In view of the Nutrient Group Guidelines that were introduced in 2008 for Primary Schools and 2009 for High Schools and the revised food standards Jan 2015, Cheshire East Catering is continually working towards reducing the sugar content of the meal even further.

Additional Measures to Ensure a More Healthy Approach

- All fish products (breaded and in batter) have a natural coloured coating are oven bake able and do not contain Monosodium Glutamate
- Tinned baked beans have a reduced sugar and salt content.
- Sausages have had their fat content reduced and burgers contain 80% meat. Both products can be oven baked.
- Fresh semi- skimmed milk is supplied and is at subsidised prices in primary schools for drinking milk
- Cheshire East Catering supports serving milk under the WFRU scheme
- Frozen or fresh vegetables are used instead of tinned vegetables that contain artificial colouring, salt, and sugar.
- All dessert whips are free from artificial colouring
- Instant custard powder mix is free from artificial colouring
- Pot yoghurts are reduced in fat and contain real fruit pulp
- Fresh fruit is on the menu daily
- Salad items are on the menu daily
- Frozen Potato products (sauté, roast, hash browns etc) are oven baked and must not be on the menu more than twice a week.
- Jacket potatoes are available daily/weekly (dependant on the type of service)

• Food & Sustainable Development

Much effort has been made to source local food and to ensure the best use of sustainable resources. All suppliers are required to avoid non-vital transportation of goods and are asked to offer Cheshire sourced products wherever possible.

As Catering Mark holders, Cheshire East Catering aim to champion local produce and local producers. This is an investment in the local community and local economy and is a way to reconnect people with where their food comes from and how it is produced.

We use organic mornflake oats, produced in a factory in Crewe.

Our bread is supplied by Roberts Bakery in Northwich.

Most of our soft drinks are supplied by Calypso, who used to be based in Tattenhall but have relocated to nearby Wrexham and provide school compliant soft drinks.

We use 3 local butchers to provide fresh meat into our schools:-

- Barrows of Bollington
- Quality Cuts form Sandbach
- Littlers of Sandiway

Meat supplied from these butchers can be traced back to farms in Sandbach, Nantwich, Whitchurch and other surrounding areas.

We use two organic beef products that are produced from Lower Hurst Farm in Derbyshire (Organic Beef Burger, Organic Meatballs)

The cheese we use is produced in a factory in Nantwich.

Our range of fish products are MSC certified under the Marine Stewardship Council scheme for sustainability.

Within the kitchens we require our staff to deploy our energy conservation policies to help avoid excess consumption of energy. While for a number of years we have been working with a local company to recycle waste food oil.

We continue to seek local and environmentally sustainable sourcing of all products within our range and expect that the list of locally sourced foods will continue to grow.