

Winstedt's Healthy School Guideline & Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Winstedt School believes that when school health policies and practices are put in place, healthy students can grow to be healthy and successful adults. The Winstedt School has direct contact with our students for about 7 hours per day and plays a major role as part of the students' critical years of their social, psychological, physical, and intellectual development. School is an ideal setting to teach and provide students with opportunities to improve their dietary and physical activity behaviours.

The School currently advances various initiatives to promote a healthy school including:

- **School Fruit Scheme**
The school introduced a School Fruit Scheme, following a proposal led by the Student Council in 2021. Fresh fruit is provided to all students in the morning and available throughout the day (complimentary).
- **Curriculum**
Nutrition and Food is taught at an appropriate level throughout each key stage by incorporating teaching into subject areas such as IPC (UNIT examples), IMYC (UNIT examples), Physical Education and Health (Middle School and Senior School electives), Career Studies (Culinary Arts) and Science.
- **Vending Machines on School Campus**
Snacks and drinks in the school vending machines do not contain any "junk food" that are high in sugar/fat content and have no or low nutritional value.
- **Lunch Provider**
The School is selective in engaging a lunch vendor that focuses on sustainability, and provides allergen-free and vegetarian, plant-based meal options freshly



made each day. Lunch meals for our students do not contain nuts, pork or shellfish. Products and meats are also sourced from Halal suppliers.

2. OUR AIM

Healthy School Guideline and Policy is specifically aimed at:

- Establishing clear policies within the School to foster healthy school practices to help instil life-long healthy habits which are also friendly to the environment;
- Providing guidelines for lunches, snacks, celebratory food and festivals to ensure that the School is setting the correct example; and
- Providing opportunities within the curriculum to teach the students about healthy eating and respect for food; growing food, cooking food, sustainability, food waste and composting.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Below are key principles that the School used to develop the Healthy School Guideline and Policy:

- Using a *schoolwide and community wide approach* to addressing health and nutrition in school. The model is student-centred and emphasises the role of the Winstedt community including staff, students, and parents in supporting the School.
- Applying *evidence-based policies and practices* as a basis for Healthy School Guideline and Policy.
- Taking a holistic consideration in School practices that also take into account *respect for different cultures, and celebrations* to promote a vibrant School community and enjoyable experience for the students.

4. WHAT RESEARCH SHOW

The [USA's Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) advises parents of students with ADHD to:

- **Provide a healthy lifestyle.** [Nutritious food, regular physical activity](#), and [sufficient sleep](#) are important; they can help keep ADHD symptoms from getting worse.
- [Australia's Health Eating Advisory Service](#) highlighted the link between food, mood, and learning. They note the following:
 - What children eat can affect their physical health, mood, mental health, and learning.
 - Children should be eating plenty of nutritious, minimally processed foods from the five food groups: fruit; vegetables and legumes/beans; grains; lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts, and seeds; milk, yoghurt, and cheese.
 - Consuming too many nutritionally-poor foods and drinks that are high in added fats, sugars and salt, such as lollies, chips and fried foods has been connected to emotional and behavioural problems in children and adolescents.
 - Young people that have the unhealthiest diets are nearly 80% more likely to have depression than those with the healthiest diets.
 - Schools should use non-food rewards in the classroom to help students develop healthy relationships between food and behaviour.



- Using food as a reward can affect children's relationship with food (Fedewa and Davis, 2015).
 - Children's food preferences are strongly influenced by how often they are exposed to food and drinks. Regular exposure to unhealthy options can normalise foods that should be consumed only occasionally (Wadhera et al., 2015).
- [Dani et al. \(2005\)](#) studied the importance of nutrition on children's learning and behaviour. They concluded that a balanced, nutrition-rich diet is essential for children's learning, and full intellectual and behavioural development. They also recommend that the consumption of foods rich in refined sugars, starches and corn/sunflower/safflower oil should be limited. They note that commercially available snacks and cookies tend to be high in the aforementioned. Further studies that support Dani et al. (2005) are below.
 - Studies have found that essential fatty acid deficiencies produce ADHD-like symptoms; and highly unsaturated fatty acid deficiencies contribute to learning and behavioural challenges associated with ADHD (Richardson and Puri, 2002; Stevens et al., 2003).
 - Studies have also found that children who received high doses of mineral and vitamin supplements displayed improved mood and behaviour (Voigt et al., 2001; Bilici et al., 2004; Kaplan et al., 2004).
 - Another study showed the benefits of a whole food diet, consisting of vegetables, fruits, fish, nuts, whole grains, lean meats, herbs, and spices, on health (Caballero, 2003).
 - Scrimshaw (1998) found that protein and iron deficiencies impact student's intelligence, cognition, learning and behaviour.
 - Studies of the School Breakfast Program in the United States have shown the positive correlation between nutrition and learning (Kleinman et al., 1998).
 - Jacques et al. (2019) highlighted the link between a diet high in sugars and changes in neurobiological brain function, which alters an individual's emotional state and subsequent behaviours. They also found that sugar consumption increases the impulsivity to consume and therefore lowers an individual's ability to resist food high in fat/sugar.
 - [Sorhaindo and Feinstein \(2006\)](#) studied the relationship between child nutrition and school outcomes. They made the following findings:
 - Children with nutritional deficiencies are particularly susceptible to the moment-to-moment metabolic changes that impact upon cognitive ability and performance of the brain.
 - Maintaining adequate levels of glucose throughout the day contributes to optimising cognition. There are implications for the appropriate timing of meals and snacks throughout the school day.
 - Poor nutrition may result in decreased immunity and greater susceptibility to infectious disease. This in turn could lead to increased levels of absence from school through ill health.
 - Nutrition, particularly in the short term, is believed to impact upon individual behaviour. In its more extreme form, this may manifest itself through the PRESENCE OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS, INCLUDING ADHD, DYSLEXIA, DYSPRAXIA AND AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS.

5. ROLE OF TWS STAFF

The School will ensure that students at School:



- Have fresh, clean filtered water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day (water bottles allowed in the classroom).
- Eat routinely at scheduled break times.
- Eat in a positive, supervised, appropriate social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours.
- Utilise/develop and maintain a school garden and integrate the garden across the curriculum.
- Understands and promotes the importance of breakfast for students.
- Teaches the importance of regular healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum.
- Reinforce and remind parents that ***The Winstedt School is a Nut Free School*** - some of our students are highly allergic to nuts. This includes nut products, like Nutella, chocolate bars, trail mix.
- Is a breastfeeding friendly site.

6. REWARDS AND CELEBRATIONS

The Winstedt School believes in helping children develop a healthy relationship with food. We do not encourage the regular eating of sweets or other foods high in sugar or fat, especially as a reward for good behaviour or academic or other achievements. Other methods of positive reinforcement are used in School.

Parties or celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions and fund-raising events are exempt from the standards, but organisers are strongly encouraged to consider healthier alternatives where possible.

7. FOR PARENTS ON BRINGING FOOD INTO SCHOOL CAMPUS

When bringing food into School for snacks, lunches, birthdays, class parties, festivals, celebrations, bake sales etc., parents are informed of the following:

- **No nuts:** The Winstedt School is a nut free school. No nuts are allowed on school campus. Some of our students are highly allergic to nuts. This includes nut products, like Nutella, chocolate bars, trail mix.
- **Use Natural Sweeteners*:** If you are baking or buying baked goods, consider using natural sweeteners, such as honey or coconut sugar, rather than sugar.
- No artificial colours, flavourings or preservatives. **See #6 for exceptions.*
- **No Sweets*:** Lollipops, drinks with artificial flavour, colour, sweeteners or preservatives (e.g., fizzy drinks, 'juice' drinks). **See #6 for exceptions.*
- **Allergies:** Check with teachers on the any allergies, food intolerances and special diets for students in your child's class.

8. FOR PARENTS ON UPDATING YOUR CHILD'S DIETARY INFORMATION

- If your child has an allergy, intolerance or other special diet, this should be listed on their admissions form and will be recorded in a database that will be shared with teachers and catering staff.
- If during the year, if there is a change to your child's information on dietary restrictions, let your teacher and the admissions staff know to update the summary document.
- Please email info@winstedt.edu.sg and admissions@winstedt.edu.sg to update your child's dietary information.



9. SHARING AND CARING

Making sure we enjoy food and learn social skills, our goal is to create an enjoyable and sociable experience for students in school and a lively food culture at within the Winstedt School community. We will achieve this by:

- Providing an enjoyable, safe and sociable lunchtime environment and experience.
- Involving parents and guardians in an ongoing healthy packed lunch and snack campaign.
- Involving the whole school community in growing and cooking projects and food events to help promote healthy and sustainable food.
- Sharing the lessons we learn on food issues with the local community and encouraging community members who share this ethos to be involved in our events.

10. GROWING FOOD

According to the USA's CDC, school garden programs can increase students' nutrition knowledge, willingness to try fruit and vegetables, and positive attitudes about fruits and vegetables. The [Children, Youth and Environments Center for Research and Design](#), also note several benefits of gardening for children. Some benefits include increasing social and interpersonal skills; encouraging healthy eating and nutrition; and increasing self-efficacy and pro-environmental attitudes.

The Winstedt School believes that giving young people the opportunity to grow food and learn about how food is produced is an important part of a whole school approach to food and nutrition. Our goal is to provide a well-planned curriculum that covers nutrition, food hygiene and sustainable and ethical food production. The School also aims to provide hands-on food education such as cooking and growing as well as farm links.

We will achieve this by:

- Helping students to understand the importance of a healthy diet and physical activity.
- Giving students and the wider community the opportunity to plan, prepare and cook healthy, safe meals.
- Giving students and the wider community the opportunity to learn about growing and farming of food and its impact on the environment.
- Encouraging students to eat and cook with vegetables that they have grown at home or within school.
- Creating opportunities for students to get to know local producers and food business.
- Providing more opportunities for students to get involved in growing food.

11. SUSTAINABILITY

The Winstedt School considers that it is important to teach children about the environment and the effect we have on it. In line with this we encourage all students to choose food items that have less packaging, to re-use containers, bags, cling film and foil, wash and refill bottles, and recycle glass, cans, bottles, and paper. Where possible food waste such as apple cores, banana, and orange skins, etc. are placed on a compost heap which is then used in the school garden.

12. USEFUL RESOURCES

- Singapore Health Promotion Board's [Healthy Meals in Schools Programme](#)
- US Center for Disease Control and Prevention [Healthy School Initiative](#)
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- Sorhaindo and Feinstein (2006). [What is the relationship between child nutrition and school outcomes?](#) *Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning*
- Health Eating Advisory Service, Victoria, Australia. [The link between food, mood and learning outcomes](#)
- [Benefits of Gardening for Children](#)

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