

HEALTHY EATING AND FOOD SAFETY POLICY

"There is no better policy in a society than pursuing the health and safety of its people."

Introduction

APS is committed to promoting healthy eating and nutrition as vital for our students' well-being and success. In line with the ADEK Healthy Eating and Food Safety Policy, we will provide nutritious food choices, foster an environment that supports healthy eating, and adhere to Abu Dhabi's nutritional standards. We will actively supervise students during meals to ensure their health and safety while promoting sustainable food practices. Through these efforts, we aim to build a culture of health and well-being in our school community.

Objective

To promote healthy eating habits among students by providing nutritious meals and snacks, and educating them on the importance of a balanced diet.

1. Nutritional Standards

1.1 Meals and Snacks:

- Adhere to nutritional guidelines set by the Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority.
- Offer a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and dairy in daily menus.
- Limit high-sugar, high-fat, and high-salt foods, and prioritize fresh, minimally processed ingredients.

1.2 Drinks:

- Ensure access to clean drinking water throughout the day.
- Promote water, milk, and 100% fruit juices; limit sugary drinks and sodas.

2. Food Education

Curriculum Integration:

Integrate nutrition education into the curriculum, focusing on healthy eating benefits, food label reading, and sustainable meal practice.

Hands-on Learning:

Promote activities such as gardening, cooking classes, and farm visits to connect students with food sources.

Parental Involvement:

Offer resources and workshops to assist parents with healthy meal planning and lunchbox preparation.

Staff Awareness:

Teachers and canteen staff attend training from the Abu Dhabi Public Health Center (ADPHC) and other relevant organizations on healthy eating. This training will empower them to promote healthy eating while supervising and interacting with students.

3. Healthy Food Environment

3.1 School Canteen

- Ensure that the school canteen follows the healthy eating guidelines.
- Display healthy food options prominently and at eye level to encourage selection.
- Require serving staff to hold a valid food safety certification.

3.2 Celebrations

- Promote healthy food choices during school events, celebrations.
- Strictly prohibit drinks with alcohol content.

Food Safety Policy

Objective

To ensure that all food served or consumed at the school is safe and serving according to the highest hygiene standards, minimizing the risk of foodborne illnesses.

1. Hygiene Standards

1.1 Food Serving

- Ensure all food is served in a clean, sanitized environment.
- Require all food handlers to be trained in food safety practices, including proper handwashing, avoiding cross-contamination, and using personal protective equipment.
- Conduct regular refresher training and assessments to maintain high standards.
- Implement and enforce strict protocols for cleaning and sanitizing food preparation and serving areas.

1.2 Storage

- Store perishable items at appropriate temperatures to prevent spoilage, using temperature logs to monitor and document compliance.
- Clearly label all food items with the date of preparation and expiration.
- Regularly check and maintain storage equipment to ensure proper functioning.
- Establish a rotation system to use older items first (FIFO: First In, First Out) to minimize waste and ensure freshness.

1.3 Handwashing Guidelines

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water, and dry them completely with a paper towel in the following situations:

- Before Touching Food
- After Blowing Your Nose or Sneezing into Your Hand
- After Touching Your Hair
- After Handling Garbage
- After Handling Money
- After Using the Toilet

Ensure hands are washed for at least 20 seconds, scrubbing all surfaces including between fingers and under nails.

2. Allergen Management

2.1 Identification

- Maintain a list of students with food allergies and ensure this information is accessible to all relevant staff.
- Update the list regularly to reflect any changes in students' allergy statuses.

2.2 Communication

- Clearly label foods that contain common allergens (e.g., nuts, sesame, dairy, gluten, etc.).
- Educate students about the importance of not sharing food and the risks of allergens.
- Conduct regular training for staff and students on allergen management and emergency procedures.
- Establish a protocol for quickly addressing any incidents of allergen exposure.

3. Inspections and Compliance

Regular Inspections

- Conduct regular inspections of the school canteen for compliance with food safety standards, overseen by the following school's designated food safety committee members:
 - School nurses
 - Health and Safety Officer

4. Emergency Procedures

4.1 Foodborne Illness Response

- Establish clear procedures for managing suspected foodborne illness outbreaks.
- Notify health authorities, parents, and relevant staff promptly.
- Implement an incident response plan, including immediate isolation of affected food items and areas.
- Conduct a thorough investigation to identify and address the cause of the outbreak.
- Communicate findings and actions taken to all stakeholders.

4.2 First Aid

- Ensure that all staff are trained in first aid for allergic reactions and other food-related emergencies.
- Regularly update training to cover new procedures or changes in guidelines.
- Maintain easily accessible first aid kits, including supplies for treating allergic reactions.

4.3 Implementation and Monitoring

- Policy Communication:
 - Clearly communicate the policy to all staff, students, and parents through meetings, written communications, and the school website.
 - Provide regular reminders and updates on policy changes.

4.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

- Regularly review the policy's effectiveness by collecting feedback from staff, students, and parents.
- Conduct periodic audits and drills to test the policy's implementation.
- Make adjustments based on feedback and evolving best practices to ensure continuous improvement.

5. Sustainability

5.1 Sustainable Meal Practices

- Providing sustainable meals, such as plant-based options and locally sourced products with a low carbon footprint. We will also focus on waste reduction and management through practices like portion control, prevention of overstocking, and recycling efforts, while minimizing packaging waste.

For Implementation

To be reviewed annually by the Principal and Review Committee.

Ms. Amira Gafer Goraish
Al Adhwa Private School

