East Riding
CATERING
SERVICES

YOUR SCHOOL MEALS INFORMATION BOOKLET

School Year 2025 - 2026

Providing a **quality service** for a **healthier lifestyle**

EAST RIDING
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

WELCOME TO SCHOOL MEALS

Dear Parent/Guardian,

There are lots of things to worry about when your child is starting a new school or going to school for the very first time. But one of the most important things to a child is lunchtime and how they feel about it can often make or break how they feel about the whole school day.

Your child's school is best placed to offer the help and support you may require. Most schools in the East Riding of Yorkshire invite parents and children into their school during the summer term to meet the school team and many schools offer you and your child the opportunity to stay for a school lunch. If you're worried about how the lunch system operates in your child's school and haven't yet received an invite, please contact the school in the first instance.

In the East Riding we have a number of policies regarding school food to ensure that all of our food is safe, nutritious and wholesome. Where possible our dishes are freshly prepared using quality ingredients.

In this information booklet, our three weekly menu cycle offered for the Autumn/Winter meets the food standards for school food. The School Food Standards are compulsory and designed to provide a wide range of foods across the week to include, meat, fish, fruit, vegetables and other foods containing essential nutrients, such as iron and calcium, while restricting the consumption of fat, sugar and salt. To ensure your child enjoys our school meals, we develop our menus in consultation with our schools and school cooks who know their pupils best.

Thanks to government funding, free school meals are available for all Reception and Key Stage 1 children. This gives children the chance to try new food, packed full of the energy and essential nutrients to help them grow and learn. Since this scheme was launched, more than 85 per cent of children in Reception and Key Stage 1 are taking up the offer of a healthy school lunch every day in the East Riding.

Within this information booklet we hope that you find everything you need to assist you with regards to school meals within our schools, but if you need further assistance, please contact your child's school in the first instance or alternatively, the team by using our contact information on the reverse cover of this booklet.

Angela Goulton

Senior Catering Manager

THE SCHOOL FOOD STANDARDS

The 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.

The food standards are designed to provide a wide range of foods across the week which you can find more information on via the link below:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools

These standards are mandatory, which means that schools have a legal responsibility to comply. But it is important for everyone involved in school lunches, including parents, carers and pupils, to be able to see that the standards are being followed, Ofsted will be monitoring the way schools approach healthier eating as part of their regular inspections of schools.

PROCUREMENT OF FOOD AND DRINK FOR SCHOOL MEALS

The school meals team has many standards in place to ensure that all food and drink used for school lunches is safe and meets good practice guidelines on procurement.

Currently the standards do not permit the use of the following:

- **Food and drink containing artificial food colours**
- **Foods that have been genetically modified**
- **Foods which are known to contain nuts or nut derivatives**
- **Foods that have been mechanically recovered or separated**

In recent years, emphasis has been placed on sourcing local produce where possible; this helps to support local sustainability and to reduce the carbon footprint of food.

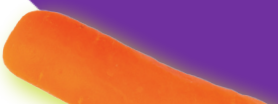
The school meals and procurement teams are in consultation with various suppliers with a view to further increasing our locally sourced produce where possible.

Use of Nuts and Nut Derivatives

The school meals team does not knowingly purchase any food or drink source that contains nuts or nut derivatives. Currently manufacturers will not declare that their products are 'Nut Free' due to the possible risks of cross contamination in production, processing, packaging or transportation. For this reason, we are unable to guarantee our menus are nut free.

Food Colours and Hyperactivity

Research funded by the Food Standards Agency has suggested that consumption of mixes of certain artificial food colours and the preservative sodium benzoate could be linked to increased hyperactivity in some children. For many years the school meals team has prohibited the use of artificial colours in school food and drink, because of the potential links to hyperactivity and poor concentration in children.



SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

We believe that there should be no barriers to school meals and understand that food is central to the health of all.

These food groups contain essential nutrients, such as iron and calcium, whilst restricting the consumption of fat, sugar and salt.

Therapeutic Diets

A therapeutic diet is a meal plan that controls the intake of certain foods or nutrients for medical reasons and forms part of the treatment for that condition.

The diet is normally prescribed by a consultant, dietitian or other medical professional to ensure a child is not having foods removed from their diet without a diagnosed medical need.

Therapeutic diets are available upon request at any school, provided a copy of the child's prescribed diet plan is given to the school in advance of the child wishing to stay for lunch. For the child's safety, only diet plans issued by consultants, state registered dietitians or other medical professionals can be accepted.

Cultural Diets

Cultural diets are available upon request at any school provided adequate notice is given to the school in advance of the child wishing to stay for lunch.

Whilst cultural diets can be catered for, please note it is not possible for schools to cater for individual personal preferences. If you would like to talk to someone further regarding your child's therapeutic or cultural dietary requirements please contact your child's school in the first instance.

Allergen Information

In December 2014, new allergen legislation came into effect.

The legislation identifies 14 allergens that need to be identified if they are used as ingredients in a dish.

Please contact your child's school if you have any queries relating to the allergen content of the daily lunch menu.

Please contact your school in the first instance for further information.

GIVE SCHOOL MEALS A TRY

Cauliflower Power!

If you are interested in trying school meals, simply contact the main office at your child's school.

Is your child missing out?

If you feel or are unsure if your child is eligible for a free school meal you can contact the council's benefits section on **(01482) 394799** or ask for an application form from your school secretary.

Comments

Should you require any further information, or would like to make comments on your child's school meal service, contact us as follows:

www.eastriding.gov.uk/schoolmeals

cateringservices@eastriding.gov.uk

(01482) 395320

East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Catering Services HF54, County Hall
Beverley
East Riding of Yorkshire
HU17 9BA

Further Information Links

Better Health healthier families

Make a change today! Discover healthy recipes, food swaps and nutritional advice and top tips for activities.

Download the free NHS food scanner app today, a speedy scan of your family's favourite products reveals a range of healthier swaps.

The next time you shop its as easy as scan, swipe and swap!
www.nhs.uk/healthier-families

Food scanner

Department of Education
Departmental advice for school food in England: School lunch requirements
www.gov.uk/dfe

The Food Standards Agency
A source of practical help on food legislation
www.food.gov.uk

This information can be made available in other languages or formats if required.
To request another format, please contact us via telephone **(01482) 395320**
or email **cateringservices@eastriding.gov.uk**