



HEALTHY FOOD POLICY (2025 – 2026)

POLICY INFORMATION

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Introduction

Driven by our strong belief in the importance of both physical and mental health for our students, and recognizing the vital role a balanced diet plays in enhancing academic and psychological performance At YPS Al Yahar Private School adopts a Healthy Food Policy aimed at instilling lifelong healthy eating habits in students. Healthy eating is not just a choice it is an investment in a conscious and creative generation equipped with the tools needed for success and growth. This policy seeks to provide a school environment that promotes nutritional awareness ensures students' access to healthy food options, and encourages them to make positive and sustainable dietary choices.

Scope

This policy applies to all food services provided within the school, including the school canteen, events, and programs that involve food service to students..

Definitions

- ❖ Carbon Footprint: The amount of greenhouse gases emitted as a result of a particular activity.
- ❖ Food Labeling: Any written information or labels attached to a food package or product, including ingredients, quality, and nutritional value.
- ❖ Food Services: Arrangements provided by the school to supply food to students and staff during the school day.
- ❖ Healthy Nutrition: The consumption of a variety of foods to ensure the intake of essential nutrients and fluids in appropriate proportions and quantities to support overall health.
- ❖ Nutritional Value: A measure of the healthfulness of food items based on the quantity of nutrients they contain.
- ❖ School Canteen: A facility designated for preparing, distributing, and selling permitted and healthy food to students and staff.
- ❖ Sustainable Meal Practices: Meal practices characterized by low environmental impact, including a low carbon footprint, accessibility, affordability, and health benefits.
- ❖ Waste Management: Processes and procedures necessary for managing waste from its origin to final disposal.

Roles and Responsibilities

School Management: Ensure the implementation and compliance with the food safety policy, facilitate regular training sessions, and supervise all food services.

Health and Safety Officer: Ensure the consistent application and monitoring of safety protocols, conduct regular inspections, develop emergency response plans, and oversee food safety measures.

School Nurse: Monitor the health impact of meal programs, provide necessary medical care, contribute to health education programs, and collect a daily food sample to be retained for 24 hours before disposal in accordance with approved procedures

Teachers :Encourage healthy eating, participate in training sessions, and report any concerns regarding student nutrition or food reactions.

Cafeteria Staff: Prepare and serve food in accordance with established nutritional and safety standards, maintain hygiene and sanitation, and keep accurate records.

Parents Provide up to date medical information, support school food policies, and participate in discussions and feedback.

Students Follow healthy eating guidelines, report any dietary or food safety issues, and participate in educational sessions on healthy nutrition and sustainability.

Goals

1. Provide healthy and sustainable food options, ensure food safety, and promote an inclusive environment.
 2. Improve the overall health of students and staff.
 3. Instill lifelong healthy eating habits by encouraging students to make informed food choices.
 4. Reduce health risks such as obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes by limiting unhealthy food consumption and focusing on nutritious foods.
 5. Raise awareness about healthy eating through workshops and educational materials, and encourage students and parents to engage in initiatives that deepen understanding of proper nutrition.
- Ensure food safety and quality by adhering to health and hygiene standards and minimizing risks associated with unsafe food.

Requirements and Documents Needed to Operate the Cafeteria

1. Commercial license for the school and operator, and kiosk sales permit in the name of the school.
2. Kiosk ad license
3. Cooking permit issued by the Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority.
4. Food and vegetable transport vehicle permit.
5. Food supply permit for each supplier.
6. Food safety certificate for the vendor.
7. Disease-free certificate from the Health Authority.
8. Work permit from the Department of Education and Knowledge.
9. Temperature and refrigeration log.
10. Product log with production and expiration dates.
11. Registration certificate in the Health Program from Abu Dhabi Public Health Center

Food container control levels at YPS

Item	Recommended Temperature	Condition
Salads	1 – 5°C	Refrigeration
Fresh Juices	1 – 5°C	Refrigeration
Hot Foods (Cooked)	Not less than 60°C	Heating / Hot Holding

Prohibited Food Items in the School Cafeteria

The following food and drink items are strictly prohibited from being sold or served at school, as they do not meet the required health and nutritional standards:

1. Foods high in fat and sugar including items with excessive added sugars or fats.
2. Artificially flavored or colored products including those made with chemical additives or synthetic flavors.
3. Items containing monosodium glutamate (MSG).
4. Foods with alcohol or alcohol derivatives including ethanol or any of its by products
5. Products made with coconut milk, butter, ghee, or coconut cream.
6. Foods containing hydrogenated fats (trans fats).
7. Products containing the following food additives:

- ❖ Sunset Yellow (E110)
- ❖ Quinoline Yellow (E104)
- ❖ Carmoisine (E122)
- ❖ Allura Red (E129)
- ❖ Tartrazine (E102)

❖ Ponceau 4R (E124)

8. All fried foods such as fried chicken, samosas, and falafel.
9. Sweetened baked goods and pastries including cakes, croissants, donuts, etc.
10. Chips and puffs like fried potato chips, puffed corn balls/sticks, etc.
11. Sugary candies including marshmallows, jelly, hard candy, lollipops, cotton candy, toffee, chewing gum.
12. Chocolate except for dark chocolate.
13. Artificial frozen desserts like ice cream, slushies, and similar items.
14. Flavored milk or yogurt with artificial flavors.
15. Full-fat dairy beverages and cheeses.
16. Soy-based drinks and sauces like soy milk and soy sauce.
17. Energy drinks and sports drinks including isotonic beverages unless approved.
18. Caffeinated beverages such as coffee and tea (hot or iced).
19. Carbonated beverages except plain sparkling water.
20. Juices made from fruit syrup not 100% natural.
21. Certain sauces and dressings such as high-fat mayonnaise, ketchup (except low-sugar/salt versions), ranch, jalapeño sauces, etc.
22. Pickles and spicy condiments.
23. Processed meats such as sausages, hot dogs, mortadella

Health and Safety Requirements for Food Handlers

1. All food handlers and anyone involved in food service must hold a valid Food Safety Certificate. They are not allowed to begin work until they have undergone a medical examination by authorized health authorities. This examination must be repeated periodically as per applicable regulations.
 2. Food service staff must have all required vaccinations, especially for hepatitis.
 3. All cafeteria staff must wear clean, standardized uniforms including protective clothing, clean head covers, and appropriate shoes depending on the nature of their work.
 4. All staff must attend training on the basic principles of food safety.
 5. The number of workers must match the size and operational needs of the cafeteria. No unauthorized individuals are allowed to be present in food preparation areas.
 6. A documented and up-to-date cleaning schedule must be maintained.
 7. Any staff member who becomes ill, or is found to be a carrier of infectious microorganisms, must immediately stop working even if no symptoms are present. Staff with infections, open wounds, or skin issues must not return to work until fully recovered and cleared by a doctor.
 8. Food handlers must inform management immediately if they experience symptoms such as diarrhea, vomiting, fever, gastrointestinal infection, sore throat, rash, eye/nose/ear discharge, infected wounds, boils, burns, scratches, or any other concerning symptoms.
 9. There must be full-time, qualified staff present on-site during official working hours who are skilled, knowledgeable of their responsibilities, and able to respond to emergencies.
 10. All workers must be at least 20 years old, and a percentage of the workforce must be Arabic-speaking.
 11. The food service company must provide the school administration with copies of the passports and residency visas of all supervisors and staff under its sponsorship, at least one month prior to the start of operations.
 12. The catering company must appoint qualified supervisors in the field of food services to monitor daily operations. Supervisors must hold a relevant university degree or a diploma in hospitality/tourism and have at least three years of experience in food service.
 13. The school administration reserves the right to reject or replace any employee who does not meet the required conditions or fails to comply with labor laws or school conduct standards.
- learning.

General Hygiene Guidelines

- 1.Refrigerators must be cleaned weekly All utensils and preparation equipment must be washed with hot water and quality detergents before and after food preparation.
- 2.Tables and shelves must be disinfected after washing and drying.
- 3.Garbage bins must be emptied regularly, and lids must remain closed at all times.
- 4.Floors must be swept and mopped daily.
- 5.The premises must be kept free of insects and pests.
- 6.It is strictly prohibited to use any raw ingredients that show signs of spoilage, are expired, or are of unknown origin when preparing meals.
- 7.Only materials and ingredients that meet UAE and Gulf standard specifications should be used.
- 8.There must be clear separation in the use of cutting boards for

- ❖ Hot dishes
- ❖ Meat
- ❖ Salads and cold dishes
- ❖ Desserts

- 9.Cooked foods must never come into contact with raw or uncooked foods.
- 10.Separate containers and utensils must be used for cooked foods. Wearing jewelry or rings during food preparation is strictly prohibited.
- 11.Staff must not prepare or handle food while sick. They must stop working if experiencing nausea, diarrhea, or any abnormal symptoms.
- 12.Eating during food preparation is not allowed. Fruits and vegetables must be washed thoroughly before use.
- 13.Do not blow into or open plastic bags with the mouth before filling them.
- 14.Any cuts or wounds must be covered with waterproof bandages, and gloves must be worn over them.
- 15.Raw (uncooked) and cooked foods must be separated, and the same containers or utensils must not be used for both during preparation and accountability.

Educational Initiatives

At YPS, food education is promoted through the integration of nutritional awareness into the curriculum, staff training, and dedicated food education programs.

Parent and Community Engagement

Regular communication with parents is maintained, including community events that promote healthy eating. The school encourages families to participate in healthy food initiatives and requires a signed declaration from parents confirming that their child does not have any food allergies. If a child has any allergy, the school administration must be informed so continuous monitoring can be arranged.

Proactive Allergy Planning

- 1-Allergy Management: Maintain allergy records, clearly label food items, and incorporate allergy considerations into all school activities.
- 2-Risk Assessment and Emergency Preparedness: Conduct risk evaluations, implement emergency response protocols, and ensure access to required medications.
- 3-A dedicated student allergy list is maintained in the cafeteria and with the Health and Safety Officer. All section supervisors must be aware of these students to avoid exposing them to allergens.

Food Services and Sustainable Practices

1. Sustainable Cafeteria Program A comprehensive sustainability policy is implemented to ensure the provision of healthy, eco-friendly meals and to raise environmental and health awareness among students.
2. Use of Local and Seasonal Produce: Emphasizing locally sourced food reduces transportation-related carbon emissions and supports the consumption of fresh, seasonal items.
3. Reducing Plastic Use: Replace plastic plates and cups with biodegradable or reusable alternatives.
4. Waste Management: Monitor daily food waste, provide appropriate portion sizes, and collaborate with local entities to compost organic food waste.
5. Food Donation and Composting: Safe leftovers may be donated to community centers or converted into compost through partnerships with specialized organizations.
6. Regulatory Compliance and Quality Control: Conduct regular inspections, act on student feedback, maintain detailed records of audits, and ensure full compliance with safety and quality standards.

Implementation and Compliance

- 1-Monitoring and Evaluation: Conduct regular audits and inspections to ensure compliance with all policies and regulations.
- 2-Feedback and Continuous Improvement: Establish feedback channels for students, staff, and parents to support ongoing improvements in food services.

Inspection and Food Safety Practices

- 1-Facility Inspections: Ensure cleanliness in kitchen and dining areas.
- 2-Proper Storage: Verify appropriate storage conditions and hygiene of cooking and prep equipment.
- 3-Daily inspections of the cafeteria are conducted using an approved form international community Al falah
- 4-Food Safety Practices: Ensure proper food handling, temperature control for cooking and storage, compliance with expiration dates, and adherence to correct preparation guidelines.
- 5-Maintain personal hygiene, wear proper uniforms, follow food safety training, and provide handwashing stations

Emergency Preparedness

- 1-Ensure availability and suitability of first aid kits and emergency equipment in the food service area.
- 2-Staff must be trained to handle foodborne illnesses and allergic reactions.

Appendix

- ❖ Food Safety Training Curriculum
- ❖ Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for food handling
- ❖ Emergency Response Plan for food-related illnesses
- ❖ Compliance Checklist

Combating Student Obesity

ALyher private school, a comprehensive program is implemented to address student obesity through awareness, physical activity, and healthy food options. The school conducts regular screenings to identify students at risk of obesity.

Key Steps Include

1. Nutrition Awareness:

- ❖ Deliver lessons on healthy eating and calorie intake.
- ❖ Host workshops for students and parents on the impact of unhealthy foods and the importance of balanced diets.
- ❖ Display posters in the cafeteria and classrooms promoting nutritious eating.
- ❖ Offer balanced meals with fruits, vegetables, proteins, and whole grains.
- ❖ Ban junk food and soft drinks; promote water and fresh juices.
- ❖ Ensure meal portions are appropriate and supervised.

2. Physical Activity Promotion:

- ❖ Add extra PE classes.
- ❖ Encourage participation in sports, mini-marathons, and active recess sessions

1. Health Monitoring:

- ❖ Conduct regular height and weight checks by the school health team.
- ❖ Provide one-on-one consultations with a nutritionist or school doctor.
- ❖ Send regular health reports and tips to parents for healthy home meals.

2. Incentives and Motivation:

- ❖ Offer rewards for healthy eating and physical activity achievements.
- ❖ Launch a “Healthy Hero” program for students demonstrating good habits.
- ❖ Include mental health education and coping strategies to avoid emotional eating.
- ❖ Provide counseling support to guide students toward positive eating behaviors.

3. Parental Engagement:

- ❖ Involve parents in awareness programs and workshops.
- ❖ Distribute a Healthy Nutrition Guide with suggested balanced lunchbox ideas.

Implementing these steps supports a healthier school environment and reduces obesity rates among students.

Important Notes

1. No outside food is allowed during group meals or celebrations unless coordinated with the Health and Safety Officer.
2. The cafeteria service provider at *ALyaher private school* must be registered in the Abu Dhabi Public Health Center's Healthy Program, and the "healthy" label must be visibly applied to all meals and menus.
3. Birthday celebrations are strictly prohibited at the school due to non-compliant food items, lack of certified suppliers, and to ensure adherence to the approved healthy food policy. This rule protects students from allergy risks and ensures food safety.

Conclusion

at ALyaher private school is committed to the highest standards of health, safety, and sustainability in food services. Through the implementation of this policy, the school ensures a safe and compliant environment for all members of its community

References

The Healthy Food Policy at ALyaher private school is developed in alignment with the following official guidelines and regulatory frameworks:

1. Guideline for Food in Educational Institutions issued by the Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council (QCC).
2. Healthy Food Policy" issued by the Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK).
3. Food Policy Regulations issued by the Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority (ADAFSA).