



Healthy Eating and Nutrition Policy

Policy Statement:

Merryland International School is dedicated to promoting the health, wellbeing, and inclusion of all students, staff, and the wider school community. Recognising the critical role nutrition plays in physical, cognitive, and emotional development, the school is committed to fostering healthy eating habits that support lifelong wellness and meet the diverse needs of all learners. Through an inclusive and supportive environment, the school encourages nutritious food choices and promotes awareness of the benefits of a balanced diet while respecting cultural diversity, individual health requirements, and student wellbeing. This policy outlines the school's approach to promoting healthy nutrition practices and providing education on the importance of healthy eating and overall wellbeing.

Objectives:

1. Promote the consumption of nutritious foods among students and staff.
2. Educate the school community about the principles of healthy eating and sustainable food habits.
3. Create a supportive environment that facilitates healthy dietary choices.
4. Collaborate with parents, staff, and vendors to ensure the availability of healthy food options.

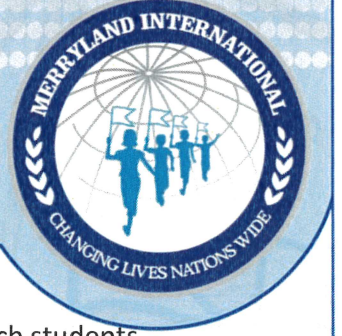
Scope:

This policy applies to all students, staff, parents, and food vendors associated with Merryland International School.

Healthy Eating Guidelines:

1. Balanced Diet

- Encourage the intake of a variety of foods from all major food groups: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and dairy.
- Limit foods high in sugar, salt, and saturated fats, promoting healthier alternatives.
- Ensure access to clean drinking water throughout the school day and encourage students and staff to stay hydrated.
- Restrict the availability of sugary and carbonated drinks.



2. Nutrition Education

- Integrate nutrition education into the school curriculum to teach students about the benefits of healthy eating.
- Provide resources and information to parents and staff to support healthy food choices at home and school.
- Encourage to eat sustainable meals and food products (e.g., plant-based meals, locally produced and low carbon footprint products)
- Organize events and activities such as health fairs and nutrition workshops.

Implementation and Monitoring:

1. Roles and Responsibilities:

- The school Principal is responsible for implementing and overseeing this policy and a designated Healthy Eating Coordinator and the student council will monitor compliance with the guidelines and ensure that:
 - a) Students are consuming acceptable foods, especially during the shared events (e.g., not bringing alcohol, carbonated drinks, pork and allergens (e.g.nuts) that may harm other students).
 - b) All students have access to a meal every day (unless fasting).
 - c) Food-related behaviour (eating disorders, food-related bullying, etc.) is identified and addressed
 - d) Students do not use external food delivery services (e.g., Talabat) during school hours.
 - e) The inclusion of minority groups is promoted as well as the safety of students with allergies and food intolerances.
 - f) Records of students' food allergies and intolerances are maintained and shared with relevant staff members , respective parents and students to minimize the risk of accidental exposure to allergenic food substances.
 - g) Students' allergies and intolerances are considered when planning school activities.
 - h) Risk assessments related to student allergies are conducted and appropriate risk mitigation measures are implemented.
 - i) Procedures in place to effectively manage allergic reactions of students, including clear procedures to deal with severe allergic reactions.
 - j) Medicines required to manage student allergies are appropriately labelled and stored in the clinic.



2. Training and Resources:

- Provide ongoing training for staff on nutrition, healthy eating practices, and how to support students in making nutritious choices.
- Ensure that teachers attend training conducted by the Abu Dhabi Public Health Center (ADPHC) and other relevant entities in relation to healthy eating, to enable them to promote healthy eating when supervising and/or interacting with students.
- Supply educational materials and resources to the school community to reinforce the importance of a balanced diet.
- Promote sustainable practices amongst staff, students, and parents (e.g., reduction of food waste, recycling, avoidance of single-use containers)

3. Environment and Facilities:

- Create a positive eating environment by providing adequate time and space for meals encouraging social interaction
- Take into consideration the religious, cultural, and ethical needs of minority groups, and involve these groups in decision-making related to food services.

4. Parental and Community Involvement:

- Engage parents in the promotion of healthy eating through regular communication, workshops, and events.
- Collaborate with local health organizations and food suppliers to support the school's nutrition goals.
- Share with parents any relevant guidelines shared by ADEK, ADPHC, QCC, Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority (ADAFSA), or the Department of Health (DoH) in relation to children's health, nutrition, and allergies.
- Communicate to parents that any food brought in for events where food sharing has been authorized by ADEK, has to adhere to the Abu Dhabi Guideline for Food Canteens in Educational Institutions.
- Communicate all food-related concerns to parents on the same day as the concern was noticed.
- Require parents to notify the school immediately if their child develops an allergy and provide the relevant medicines to the school.

5. Evaluation and Review:

- Conduct regular assessments of the policy's effectiveness and gather feedback from students, parents, and staff.
- Review and update the policy as necessary to reflect current nutritional guidelines and the needs of the school community.

MERRYLAND INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL L.L.C.

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Communication:

- Clearly communicate the Healthy Eating and Nutrition Policy to all members of the school community.
- Display guidelines and nutritional information in prominent locations, such as classrooms.
- Utilize newsletters, the school website, and meetings to keep parents and staff informed about healthy eating initiatives and policy updates.

By adhering to this Healthy Eating and Nutrition Policy, Merryland International School aims to create a supportive environment that promotes the health and well-being of all students and staff. This policy serves as a foundation for fostering lifelong healthy eating habits and ensuring that our school community understands the importance of good nutrition.

Approval

This policy was approved by the school's governing body and is effective as of 26 August 2024.

This policy will be reviewed every year.

Principal



Reviewed on 25 May 2026

Merryland International School is an outstanding, ISO 9001-certified, British Curriculum K-12 school located in Abu Dhabi, U.A.E. providing high quality education to pupils of more than 40 nationalities. Merryland has been a pioneer in education for the last four decades remaining true to its motto 'Changing lives...Nations wide'.