Health Eating and Food Safety Policy

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A nutritious and balanced diet plays a crucial role in the physical and mental health of individuals, which is essential for overall wellbeing. LFITM has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy food environment that promotes positive eating habits among students, staff, and visitors. Additionally, LFITM strives to ensure that food provision supports environmental sustainability efforts. This policy outlines the fundamental requirements for LFITM to ensure a healthy and sustainable food environment.

Purpose

- Ensure that LFITM's food services, including canteens, comply with the Abu Dhabi Guideline for Food in Educational Institutions (QCC, 2022) and other relevant guidelines from authorities related to safe and healthy food provision.
- Promote nutritional awareness and healthy meal practices within the school community, increasing their understanding of healthy and sustainable food habits, and fostering a school environment that encourages these practices.

1.1 Policy Requirements

LFITM establishes and implements a Healthy Eating and Food Safety Policy, which adheres to the following principles:

1-Promote an environment conducive to healthy eating, aligning with the Promotion of Healthy and Sustainable Eating (Section 2).

2-Ensure adherence to the nutritional standards outlined in the Abu Dhabi Guideline for Food in Educational Institutions if food services are provided by the school.

3- Establish measures to actively supervise students during snack and mealtimes to:

- Ensure students are consuming acceptable foods (e.g., preventing allergens that may harm other students).
- Ensure all students have access to meals daily, except during fasting periods.
- Monitor and address concerns regarding food-related behaviors (e.g., eating disorders or food-related bullying).
- Implement strategies to improve sustainability in food consumption, aligning with the school's sustainability goals (refer to Section 5).

The policy outlines adherence to the hygiene and food safety standards set by the Abu Dhabi Guideline for Food in Educational Institutions, covering areas such as food preparation, packaging, transportation, and handling.

The policy defines measures for shared events, ensuring that food items such as alcohol, carbonated drinks, pork, and allergens are prohibited. LFITM implements additional, stricter measures for shared events to align with enhanced healthy eating or sustainability guidelines.

The policy outlines measures to promote the inclusion of minority groups and ensure the safety of students with allergies or food intolerances (refer to Section 4: Special Considerations).

The policy is publicly available on the school's website and accessible to staff, students, vendors, and parents.

2. Promotion of Healthy Eating
2.1 Healthy Food Promotion

LFITM fosters a healthy food culture that encourages a nutrition-rich environment for all members of the school community. This includes:

- Prohibiting unsafe food items, such as those containing allergens (e.g., nuts), from being consumed or distributed on school premises.

2.2 Healthy Food Services

1. LFITM provides healthy, nutrient-rich food that complies with the Abu Dhabi Guideline for Food in Educational Institutions.
2. LFITM obtains necessary licenses for food services and maintains inspection records and related notifications.

2.3 Nutrition Education

LFITM provides nutrition education to students, integrating it into the formal curriculum and through other engagement strategies such as competitions and workshops. The curriculum shall cover at a minimum:

1. Healthy and balanced eating.
2. Reading of food labels.
3. Sustainable meal practices.

2.4 Staff Awareness

LFITM ensures that all teachers and canteen staff attend relevant training provided by the Abu Dhabi Public Health Center (ADPHC) and other entities on healthy eating. This will empower staff to actively promote healthy eating when supervising and interacting with students.

2.5 Parent Engagement

1. LFITM shares guidelines with parents regarding healthy and balanced eating. These will include:
    - Restrictions on certain foods, such as allergens (e.g., nuts) and caffeinated beverages, as mandated by the Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council (QCC).
    - Unhealthy foods (e.g., fried food) that should be avoided to prevent long-term health issues like obesity, high cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes.
    - These guidelines shall be referenced in the school-parent agreement, in line with the ADEK School Parent Engagement Policy.
2. LFITM shares any relevant guidelines provided by ADEK, ADPHC, QCC, ADAFSA, or DoH related to children's health, nutrition, and allergies.
3. For events where food sharing has been approved by ADEK, LFITM ensures that any food brought adheres to the Abu Dhabi Guideline for Food in Educational Institutions.
4. Food-related concerns (such as those outlined in Section 1.1.c) are communicated to parents on the same day they are identified.

3. Food Services
3.1 Quality Check and Compliance

LFITM complies with the Abu Dhabi Guideline for Food in Educational Institutions and Federal Law No. (10) of 2015 on Food Safety in the provision of food services.

3.2 Food Delivery Services

LFITM does not permit students to use external food delivery services (e.g., Talabat) during school hours to ensure control over the quality and safety of food consumed on campus.

3.3 Student Feedback

LFITM actively engages the student body in planning and improving school food services. This may include the use of feedback forms to collect student opinions and suggestions.

4. Special Considerations

4.1 Consideration for Minority Groups

LFITM respects the religious, cultural, and ethical needs of minority groups within the school community. The school involves these groups in decision-making related to food services and the use of food labels.

4.2 Consideration for Students with Food Allergies and Intolerances

LFITM takes the following actions to support students with food allergies and intolerances, in line with the Abu Dhabi Guideline for Food in Educational Institutions:

1. Maintain records of students' food allergies and intolerances, ensuring these records are kept in the school canteen.
2. Ensure that food labels on food provided through the school's services clearly identify allergens.

Additionally, LFITM shall:

1. Consider students' allergies and intolerances when planning school activities and meals, ensuring that the basic food offerings are suitable for as many students as possible, with minor modifications if necessary.
2. Require parents to notify the school immediately if their child develops an allergy and to provide relevant medications.
3. Share food allergy records with relevant staff members, parents, and students to minimize the risk of exposure to allergenic foods.
4. Conduct risk assessments related to food allergies and implement effective risk mitigation measures.
5. Establish procedures to manage allergic reactions effectively, including clear steps for handling severe allergic reactions.
6. Appropriately label and store medicines required to manage allergic reactions.

5. Sustainability

5.1 Sustainable Meal Practices

LFITM develops and implements a comprehensive strategy to enhance the sustainability of its food services and foster sustainable meal practices, aligning with the ADEK School Sustainability Policy.

1. Sustainable Practices in Food Service Delivery:

a. Offering sustainable meal options, such as:

- Plant-based meals.
- Locally produced and low carbon footprint products.

b. Implementing waste reduction and management practices, such as:

- Preventing overstocking and ensuring portion control to minimize waste.
- Recycling food and packaging waste.
- Reducing reliance on non-recyclable and single-use packaging materials.

2. Promotion of Sustainable Practices:

a. Educating staff, students, and parents on the importance of:

- Reducing food waste.
- Recycling food-related and other waste materials.

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- Avoiding the use of single-use containers and utensils.

LFITM aims to instill these practices into the school culture, ensuring a collective effort toward sustainability across all levels of the school community.

Reference

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