



1.0 Overview

1.1 Why Have A Kashrut Policy?

At The King David School we recognise the values and practices of the past while embracing the insights and wisdom of the modern world. In light of the biblical injunctions regarding *Kashrut*, we view dietary laws as expressing the central Jewish concept of *kedusha* (holiness), which strengthens our commitment to God and enhances our sense of reverence for life. Through *Kashrut* we exercise control over one of the basic activities of our life – the preparing and eating of food.

The laws of *Kashrut*, though clearly defined, may be applied in a variety of ways. Especially in a modern Jewish context, the practice of *Kashrut* may vary from one individual or family to another.

This policy has been developed in order to provide clear guidelines for the application of *Kashrut* at The King David School, outlining the base norms and expectations of our School community. As such, it details the minimum expectations for observance, but does not prevent the organisers of any event or activity from adopting a higher standard.

The use of this policy is as a reference for:

- Students
- Teachers
- Parents
- Those who prepare food for school activities
- Those who use the school facilities.

1.2 What Does This Kashrut Policy Cover?

This policy covers the activities of The King David School and other organisations that use The King David School facilities.

This *Kashrut* policy applies where food is:

- Supplied by or at the School
- Prepared at the School
- Prepared at a venue other than the School for a School event
- Brought to a venue other than the School for a school event.

Some examples of where food is served include:

- Tuckshops at each campus
- Fundraising food
- Official functions to which parents are invited
- End of year functions at the School or a venue other than the School
- School excursions
- School camps
- Events held at the School but hosted by other organisations.

This policy does not cover instances where individuals from the School meet outside the framework of the school and “self-cater”, such as:

- End-of-year functions not organised by the School
- Birthday parties not at the School
- Lunches that students bring to School for their own consumption.

Our hope and intention, however, remains that the *Kashrut* values of others are considered and respected in the planning of these events.

2.0 Principles

The main principles that guide this policy are:

- The recognition of *Kashrut* as a core Jewish practice and the importance of its observance within the School community.
- The commitment to study and teach about *kashrut* in order to provide students with the knowledge and opportunity to define their own personal practice.
- The distinction between “public” and “private” domains and the acceptance that an individual's
- “private practice” (e.g., school lunch) falls outside the remit of this policy.

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The base norms and expectations of this policy are:

- The separation of both meat and milk products and utensils during the preparation and serving of food.
- The avoidance of treif ingredients or items (including gelatine, suet, rennet, whey and certain “E-numbers” that are derived from animal products) during the preparation and serving of food.
- The furtherance of Tikkun Olam through the observance of eco-kashrut - restricting the purchase and consumption of foods to those that are produced in an ethical manner.
- The commitment to source all meat being prepared and served by the School from a recognised kosher butcher while ensuring that a vegetarian option is always made available.

These guiding principles and base norms comprise the School’s minimum expectations for observance but do not prevent the organisers of any event or activity from adopting a higher standard (including rabbinic supervision). For example, the KDS Foundation currently chooses to run its events under rabbinic supervision, while the KDS Parents Association always allows for individuals to select food prepared under rabbinic supervision.

3.0 The Specifics

3.1 Hashgacha

Adherence to one of the published “kosher lists” is not required. Rather, the School excludes the use and consumption of certain foods, specifically foods that contain rennet, suet, gelatine and animal fats or their by-products. In cases in which a question arises about a certain food, the query will be referred to the Director of Jewish Life.

When buying or preparing food for the sorts of events listed in 1.2 above, careful attention should be paid to the ingredients on the package. Rennet, suet and gelatine are used in a wide range of items, including some yoghurts and cheeses. Packed and processed products should be checked carefully for their ingredients, especially for certain “E-numbers”, for example, E120 (cochineal), E542 (edible bone phosphate) and E904 (shellac). Whey products are also not suitable.

3.2 Student Lunches Brought To School

Lunches that students bring to school for their own consumption are considered to be their private domain and fall outside the remit of this policy. However, we remind our families that there is a strict “No Sharing Policy” applied to student food, in order to prevent allergy and breach of individual Kashrut standards. While the school avoids prescribing personal religious standards to families, we ask that families be mindful of the principles expressed throughout this policy and do not explicitly breach its base norms and expectations when preparing lunches.

3.3 Communal Events

All food sourced and served at communal events must adhere to the minimum standards outlined in this policy. At events where both “meat” and “milk” are served simultaneously, such as the School Fete, this must be done from separate demarcated stalls, thereby allowing attendees to make the choice between eating “milk” or “meat”.

3.4 Fundraising Food

All food sourced and sold for fundraising purposes must adhere to the minimum standards outlined in this policy. Some examples of fundraising foods include student stalls to raise money for *tzedakah*, and food donated to the School Fete.

3.5 School Excursions

All food sourced and served at school excursions must adhere to the minimum standards outlined in this policy. If students are permitted to buy foods on excursions, this should be considered their private domain and therefore outside the remit of this policy. However, we remind our families that there is a strict “No Sharing Policy” applied to student food, in order to prevent allergy and breach of individual Kashrut standards. We also ask that students be mindful of the principles expressed throughout this policy and do not explicitly breach its base norms and expectations when purchasing food.

3.6 School Tuckshop

The School tuckshop primarily serves a milk or *pareve* menu. However, on occasions when meat is being served by either the tuckshop or the School, no milk products will be served at the tuckshop. All meat and milk meals will be prepared with separate utensils and served with separate cutlery and crockery.

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3.7 School Camps

Caterers are required to adhere to this *Kashrut* policy.

- In accordance with the Tikkun Olam principle of valuing the environment, the use of disposable plates, cups and cutlery should be kept to an absolute minimum, and composting will occur whenever possible.
- All meat and milk meals will be prepared with separate utensils and served with separate cutlery and crockery. No meat products will be served at milk meals and no milk products will be served at meat meals. Food served between meals will be limited to food that is pareve.
- Effort should be made to buy and serve only the amount of food that is required, and excessive consumption is to be avoided.

3.8 Wine and Grape Juice

It is acceptable to serve ordinary wine or grape juice produced without rabbinic supervision at school events. Similarly, it is acceptable to use ordinary wine vinegar and other wine-based products.

3.9 Specific Areas to Monitor

Bread: When bread is bought from a commercial bakery, look out for the use of lard or other animal fats to grease the trays

Cheese: Many cheeses contain rennet as a hardening agent. Vegetarian cheeses do not contain animal rennet.

Sweets: Gelatine is used in many yoghurts, candies, sweets, and marshmallows. Gelatine may be substituted by arrowroot or other vegetable-based thickeners that are acceptable. It is essential to check the ingredients.

4.0 Glossary

Hashgacha: Literally “supervision”. This refers to the practice of having an individual supervise the preparation and serving of food to ensure that no *Kashrut* laws are breached. The person employed to supervise the food preparation process is called a *mashiach*.

Kashrut: The laws within Judaism pertaining to the way that food is prepared and consumed. Today, many Jews include an awareness of ethical and ecological concerns in the preparation and consumption of food. Some rabbis speak of *eco-kashrut* as a sub-species of traditional *Kashrut*.

Kosher: This word has a threefold meaning:

- Fit or proper for ritual use.
- Food that can be eaten in accordance with Jewish dietary laws.
- Separation of milk and meat. The word “milk” here refers to any food containing dairy products. The Hebrew word used is *chalavi*; the Yiddish word is *milchig*. The word “meat” here refers to any food containing kosher meat products. The Hebrew word used is *basari*; the Yiddish word is *fleishig*.

Pareve: The Hebrew or Yiddish word for any food product that is neither milk nor meat, e.g., vegetables and fruits.

Rennet: A curdling agent used in the production of cheese. Rennet is a secretion that comes from the stomach lining of pigs, calves and other animals. During the cheese-making process, rennet is reduced to its basic chemical components.

Tikkun Olam: Literally “repairing the world”. This is a Jewish concept that describes activities relating to helping others and the environment. The *Kashrut mitzvah* (divinely inspired activity) of “not causing undue pain to animals” (*tsha’ar ba’alei chayyim*) falls under this category.

Treif: A Yiddish word derived from the Hebrew *t’reifah* that refers to:

- any food that may not be eaten in accordance with Jewish dietary laws, or
- any utensil that might have become unfit for use

Some items used in the preparation of foods can render an item *treif*. These include gelatine (unless specified as non-animal), rennet (unless specified as non-animal), suet (beef or sheep fat).

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