



FOOD POLICY

Date of next review:

July 2027

Food Policy

Aim

To ensure that all aspects of food and drink in school promote the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors to St. Mary's CE Primary School and to educate pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding to make informed, healthy lifestyle choices throughout their lives.

Objectives

To ensure:

- All aspects of food and drink in school promote the health and well-being of pupils, staff and visitors.
- Pupils have the basic knowledge to formulate life-long skills e.g cooking a nutrition as part of the curriculum, opportunities to develop food and cooking skills
- Our pupils have the information they need to make healthy choices

To promote:

- A well-balanced and healthy lifestyle.
- A welcoming eating environment to encourage the positive social interaction of staff and pupils. The school recognises that sharing food is an excellent opportunity to build relationships and promote good social skills.
- The healthy, physical development of all members of our school community.
- The important connection between a healthy, balanced diet and a child's ability to learn effectively.
- Mental wellbeing as an important aspect of children's overall health and provide children with the tools to help regulate their own emotions.

Introduction

The government introduced new food and nutrient-based standards for school food in 2013 following advice from the School Food Trust. The standards cover all food sold or served in schools: breakfast, lunch and tuck, vending, mid-morning break and after-school clubs.

In the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (LBRuT), the responsibility for school meals is fully delegated to the governing body of each school. St Mary's works with Caterlink, who cook from fresh on site everyday. School lunches are freshly prepared daily, and we are delighted they surpass the Government's standards for nutrition and meet the higher level, Food for Life's Gold Standard of Nutrition.

All Caterlink's food is made fresh on-site using quality produce in line with both Food For Life Gold standards, and the School Food Standards. Caterlink are committed to source only free range RSPCA assured eggs. They use red tractor meat, MSC sustainably sourced fish products and a range of Fairtrade products. They deliver a termly three week menu cycle, which will be developed alongside our local teams, development chefs and nutritionist with input from pupils and staff within the schools. There is a range of both meat and vegetarian options, as well as a daily salad bar,

vegetables and a choice of two fresh breads baked on site. Freshly cut fruit and natural flavoured yoghurt will be available daily as an alternative to our homemade desserts. All desserts are in line with lower sugar recommendations and all contain less than 6.5g of free sugars per portion. Menus will reflect the requirements and tastes of pupils and staff and will be continually monitored to ensure that menu choices encourage the highest levels of uptake.

Rationale

This policy has been formulated to enable St Mary's to develop a shared philosophy on all aspects of food and drink. Its key aim is to develop healthy eating and drinking activities within the school that benefit pupils, staff, parents, caterers and others associated with the school. It has been developed in conjunction with our other relevant policies.

Our school supports the 'five a day' campaign to encourage children to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day, which has been shown to reduce the onset of certain life-threatening conditions as well as being helpful in tackling childhood obesity.

Our school is committed to using the latest government advice on healthy choices for children and will refer to their guidance when making decisions about food in school.

Definition

Our school defines healthy eating as providing the body with well-balanced, nutritional food which will ensure good health and well-being. We aim to give children the skills they need to make healthy choices which will stay with them throughout their lives.

Specific Aspects of Food in Schools

Water

Children are actively encouraged to bring their own bottles for water consumption during the day and are given free access to these, as well as water fountains located on all three sites. Water is freely available throughout the day to all members of the school community, including chilled water in staffrooms. Children are regularly reminded and encouraged to drink water at break times.

Nut-free school

Due to the risk to those who have an intolerance to and / or serious allergic reactions to nuts, St Mary's makes every effort to be a nut-free school. This is enforced, as well as possible, in school through a ban on nuts and nut products. Epipens are kept in the classroom and carried throughout the day in designated bags for children with allergies. Extra Epipens kept in the school office for additional authorised use. Off the premises, on a school trips for example, pupils with these allergies take their Epipens with them and are supported by a teacher who is capable of helping to administer it. Teachers who accompany children on school trips have all had training in the use of Epipens.

Allergies

Lunchtime staff are aware of children who have allergies and this is recorded on the 'allergy sheet'. Those serving children lunches must refer to the sheet, ensuring all children are cared for. Children must present individual cards to the lunchtime staff

serving food, to ensure they are having the correct meal that is safe and appropriate for them.

School Lunches

Pupils up to and including Year 2 are provided with a free school lunch under the Government's Universal Free School Meals agenda. Beyond Year 2 pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium are also provided with a free lunch. Pupils may also choose to eat a packed lunch if they wish to. These are provided by parents and must conform to the school's suggested guidelines. At the time of writing this policy, the Mayor of London has committed to an indefinite provision of free school meals for all primary school children.

Dining Environment

The school is committed to providing a welcoming eating environment to encourage the positive social interaction of pupils and teachers. It is recognised that the physical constraints mean we must operate a number of sittings. The school aims to provide a calm, ordered environment - conducive to enjoyable eating and good manners.

The school is also committed to:

- Ensuring all children wash their hands before entering the lunch hall.
- Helping children where necessary eg. opening of packets, carrying trays.
- Encouraging children to eat as much of their dinner as is appropriate with a focus on eating their fruit and vegetables before dessert.
- Monitoring wasted food.
- Supervising children having school dinners and packed lunches
- Providing water jugs and clean cups on every table.

Packed Lunches

The Food Standards Agency survey of packed lunchboxes showed that in general children's lunchboxes contained too much salt, fat and sugar and too little fruit and vegetables. Our School encourages parents and children to pack healthy lunchboxes and provides information and guidance on balanced meals with plenty of fruit and vegetables, bread and protein. Food not eaten in a packed lunch should be sent home to ensure parents are aware of how much has been eaten.

Healthy Mid-Morning Snacks

All children in KS1 and Reception receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable everyday as part of the Government's School Fruit and Vegetable scheme, children in these years are not permitted to bring an additional or replacement morning snack. From KS2 onwards, if they wish to have a break time snack, they can bring in one item from the designated healthy snacks list which consists of either vegetables or fruit only. St Mary's use the guidelines from the *NHS* and *Change4life* on healthy snacks and ask pupils and parents to follow these rules when bringing snacks into school.

Healthy lunch boxes

Healthier Lunch boxes

- Based on starchy carbohydrates (bread/potatoes/rice/pasta)
- Include fresh fruit and vegetables/salad

- Include a source of protein such as beans and pulses, eggs, fish, meat, cheese (or dairy alternative)
- Include a side dish such as a low-fat and lower-sugar yoghurt (or dairy alternative), tea cake, fruit bread, plain rice/corn cakes, homemade plain popcorn, sugar-free jelly
- Include a drink such as water, skimmed or semi-skimmed milk, sugar-free or no-added sugar drinks
- On Friday's children are permitted to bring one item from a food group that isn't included in the daily healthy lunch box list. This could be something such as crisps and suggestions are listed below, those on a school lunch enjoy chips.

Further guidance (please see Appendix One) has been made available to parents and is also stored on the school website regarding ideas for healthy packed lunches. This guidance is also on display in each of the dinner halls so that lunchtime supervisors and teachers can help children understand if their packed lunch is healthy. The school is committed to ensuring that these guidelines are followed by periodically monitoring packed lunches.

Healthier Break Time Snacks

- Chopped up raw vegetables– e.g. carrots, cucumber or peppers
 - Chopped up fruit/Whole fruit – e.g. apple, satsuma, strawberries, halved grapes, melon slices
- (Dried fruit is not permitted as a snack between meals as it is high in sugar and can be bad for teeth.)

Birthdays

We are aware that many parents like to celebrate their child's birthday in school as well as at home, however, we do not allow any cake or sweets into school for this purpose. Parents are encouraged to send in a class book for the story corner if they wish to. Adding a name plate leaves a lasting gift for the class from the child.

Celebrations and Festivals

The school recognises that food plays an important role in the celebration of different cultures and religious festivals. As part of our curriculum children will have the opportunity to experience foods significant to different countries and beliefs. It is our aim to keep these experiences in line with our healthy eating ambitions. However, at times we will need to be flexible to account for the different experiences e.g. eating croissants on French Day.

Food in the Curriculum

The significance of food in our lives means it can and should be used to enrich the curriculum. In turn, the curriculum can enrich pupil's experience of food and healthy eating. The curriculum offers opportunities for children to experience food from different countries, historical periods and cultures as well as reinforcing the need for a healthy, balanced diet. Children learn about the principles of a healthy and varied diet as part of the Design and Technology curriculum and are encouraged to use what they have learnt to make informed decision about what they are eating. Cooking and food preparation skills are developed in the Design and Technology curriculum.

Out of School Activities

On special occasions eg. Christmas Fair, we accept that a wider range of confectionery, drinks and crisps may be available, with parental supervision. However, we will encourage the Friends of St Mary's to consider this Food Policy, especially with regard to quality and choice. For example, it may be possible to purchase good quality sausages and burgers with an accompaniment of lettuce or cucumber. Where healthy options have been used we need to highlight this and advertise the fact that we are making healthy choices.

We will continue to run cake sales and other such initiatives keeping our healthy eating policy in mind. This is an opportunity for us to educate the children about all food categories being appropriate to include in your diet, so long as consumption is moderated by portion size and frequency. It is a key part of their education that they learn to regulate their own eating habits and eating choices.

Food as a reward

St Mary's does not use food as a reward in classrooms and aims to use other initiatives to reward effort and behavior e.g. extra playtime, house points.

Values

At St Mary's we strive to work together as a whole community, sharing our ideas and beliefs and all working for the ultimate good of the children in our care. We aim to show respect for ourselves and each other and this is demonstrated by the empowerment we give to our children from an early age. We aim to give children information so that they are able to make sensible choices over food. Our School Council ensures the children's voices are heard so that policies like this remain relevant and new ideas are brought forward.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is extremely important that the whole school is united in providing the children with the correct information about healthy eating. We need to give consistent messages about the importance of a healthy, well-balanced diet and regular exercise, within lessons and extra-curricular activities. Communication with parents ensures that similar messages are reinforced at home. The Safety and Community committee report regularly to the Governing Body about all aspects of food in the school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Evaluation of the progress made by the school in implementing the aims and objectives of this policy will be made by the safety and Community committee supported by regular reports from ISS. These reports cover ISS's responsibilities and include:

- Updates on food content, presentation, nutritional standards and sourcing of ingredients
- Monitoring food waste
- Overall hygiene
- Equipment, kitchens and dining facilities
- Other issues including: variations from menu, staff changes, changes to numbers of pupils taking school meals; changes to costs and company developments.

Communication of this Policy

This document is freely available to the entire school community and located in the policy documentation files located on the school website.

Equality statement

St Mary's positively celebrates diversity and inclusion is core to its Christian ethos. The Governing Body recognises that no one should receive less favourable unlawful treatment than another on the grounds of gender, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religious beliefs, age, or sexual orientation. It is the Governors' aim that no-one at the School should suffer unlawful direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on any of these grounds. The Governing Body is committed to embedding fairness and equality at the heart of the school community, and in all aspects of the school's policies, procedures and practices.

Healthy Eating Choices

The below information is aimed at supporting parents and carers provide a healthy and nutritious snack and packed lunch for children when at school.

MORNING SNACK (KS2 only – EYFS and KS1 have fruit provided)

Whole/chopped up fruit – eg: apple, banana, peach, pear, plum, grapes, satsuma. No dried fruit

Vegetables – any prepared raw vegetables (e.g. cucumber, pepper, celery, cherry)

PACKED LUNCHES

Carbohydrates- Great for energy. <i>Recommended 1/3 of lunchbox.</i>	Protein foods- Supports growth.	A dairy item- Good for growing bones.	Vegetables, salad or fruit- Five-a-day options.	Drinks- Hydration is important.	FRIDAY TREAT (as on occasion School Lunches get a low sugar cake/treat desert)
<p>Sandwich or wrap</p> <p>wholemeal, granary, multi-grain or white bread, bread roll, pitta bread, naan, chapatti, bagel, tortilla/wrap.</p> <p>See protein for filling ideas.</p> <p>Other ideas - pasta salad, rice salad, cous cous, potato salad, tabbouleh, crackers, crisp bread, oatcakes, rice cakes, corn cakes, bread sticks, homemade popcorn, savoury muffin or</p>	<p>Fillings</p> <p>Meat - wafer thin cooked meats, cold meats (e.g. chicken, turkey, meatloaf, sausages).</p> <p>Fish – e.g. tuna mayo</p> <p>Vegetarian - egg salad, egg mayo, grated cheese, cheese and pickle, cheese spread, cream cheese, meat substitute slices, cottage cheese, veggie sausages, vegetarian pate,</p> <p>Finger food – e.g. hardboiled egg, mini</p>	<p>Fruit yoghurt</p> <p>e.g. fromage frais or dairy-free alternative.</p> <p>Greek or plain yoghurt.</p> <p>Cheese portion or cottage cheese.</p> <p>Dips – e.g. houmous, tzatziki, raita, cream cheese and plain yoghurt</p>	<p>Whole fruit – any including: apple, banana, peach, pear, plum, grapes, satsuma, (fruit in season) raisins, pumpkin or sunflower seeds, dried apricots, dates or prunes. Dried fruit is allowed at mealtimes.</p> <p>Fruit salad pot - any combination of prepared fruit e.g. strawberries, orange, melon, mango, kiwi etc., fruit jelly made with fruit pieces and pure fruit juice.</p> <p>Portion of tinned fruit (in natural juice) e.g. mandarins, pineapple, peaches, fruit salad, pears.</p> <p>Salad pot – any prepared raw vegetables (e.g. cucumber, pepper, celery, cherry tomatoes,</p>	<p>Water</p> <p>Fruit squash - well diluted.</p> <p>Fresh fruit juice.</p>	<p>Crisps, corn chips or other savoury snack.</p> <p>Chocolate item - e.g. chocolate biscuit, chocolate pancakes.</p> <p>Cakes – e.g. muffin cupcake, small piece of cake, scone, jam tart, shortbread, flapjack.</p> <p>Biscuits – e.g. cookie, gingerbread man, cereal bar.</p>

scone, potato cake quiche, mini quiche or frittata	sausages, falafel, cubes of cheese.		carrot, mange tout, slices of avocado), coleslaw		
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NEVER ALLOWED

Nuts and nut products

Sweets - including processed fruit products e.g. wound up lengths of fruit jelly.

Confectionary - chocolate bar.

Doughnuts

Fizzy drinks