St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Healthy Eating Policy

Policy Owner: Headteacher / RSHE Lead
Review Frequency: Annual
Next Review Date: September 2027

Policy Statement

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting pupils in developing positive relationships with food. We believe that healthy eating contributes to children's physical health, emotional wellbeing, concentration, learning and long-term development.

We aim to create a positive food culture where healthy choices are encouraged and celebrated. Our approach reflects the requirements of the School Food Standards and supports the government's ambition to improve children's diets and reduce the consumption of foods high in fat, salt and sugar. The school works in partnership with parents and carers to help children develop healthy habits that will benefit them throughout their lives.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure all pupils have access to balanced and nutritious food throughout the school day.
- To educate children about healthy eating through the curriculum and wider school experiences.
- To support pupils in making informed food choices.
- To promote lifelong healthy eating habits.
- To reduce the availability of foods high in fat, salt and sugar during the school day.
- To respect cultural, religious, medical and dietary requirements.
- To foster a positive environment where food is enjoyed responsibly and socially.
- To support children's physical health, mental wellbeing and readiness to learn.

Food Provision

School Meals

School meals are provided in accordance with the School Food Standards and include a variety of vegetables, fruit, wholegrains, dairy products and protein sources. Pupils are encouraged to try a range of foods and develop a balanced diet. Meals are served in a positive and social dining environment.

Breaktime Snacks

Children are encouraged to bring healthy snacks for morning break. Suitable snacks include:

- Fresh fruit
- Vegetables
- Wholegrain crackers
- Plain rice cakes
- Other healthy alternatives approved by the school

The following items should not be brought for breaktimes:

- Sweets and chocolate
- Confectionery
- Energy drinks
- Sugary drinks
- Crisps and similar savoury snacks

Healthy Snack Provision

In preparation for the introduction of updated School Food Standards, St Mary's will replace the traditional weekly tuck shop with a **healthy snack offer**.

This provision will provide pupils with access to nutritious foods that support healthy eating habits. Options may include fresh fruit, vegetables, wholegrain products, dairy snacks and other items that meet the principles of the School Food Standards.

The school recognises that snacks can be both enjoyable and nutritious and seeks to provide children with positive experiences of healthy foods.

Rising Stars Snack

The school will introduce a **Rising Stars Snack** initiative to recognise positive behaviour, achievement, effort and contribution to school life.

The Rising Stars Snack will consist of healthy food choices and will reinforce the school's commitment to celebrating success in a way that promotes wellbeing and healthy lifestyles.

Drinks

Fresh drinking water is available throughout the school day and pupils are encouraged to drink water regularly.

Milk will continue to be available to eligible pupils in accordance with national schemes.

Special Celebrations and Treats

We recognise the importance of celebrating special occasions within school life. However, celebrations will be balanced with our commitment to healthy eating.

Occasional treats may be offered during special events, curriculum activities or celebrations. These occasions will be limited in frequency and staff will ensure that children with allergies, intolerances or dietary requirements are fully included.

Parents wishing to discuss alternative arrangements for their child are encouraged to contact the school.

Forest School Snacks

As part of our Forest School experience, pupils may occasionally be offered:

- One marshmallow
- One cup of hot chocolate

These treats form part of a supervised outdoor learning activity and are provided in moderation. Parents may opt out by informing the Forest School Lead.

Curriculum Links

Healthy eating is taught throughout the curriculum and is embedded within a range of subjects, including:

Science

- Nutrition

- Healthy bodies
- Food groups

RSHE

- Healthy lifestyles
- Personal wellbeing
- Making informed choices

Design and Technology

- Food preparation
- Cooking skills
- Understanding ingredients

Religious Education

- Food within different cultures and faith traditions

Children are also encouraged to develop practical food skills through cooking experiences and wider enrichment activities.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Healthy eating is promoted daily within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children are provided with a healthy snack and drink each morning whilst seated together and supervised by appropriately trained staff. Weekly cooking opportunities allow children to prepare and taste a variety of healthy foods whilst learning about balanced diets and healthy choices.

All allergies, medical needs and parental preferences are carefully considered when planning food-based activities.

Children under five continue to be offered milk through the national scheme.

Any snacks provided as part of the Early Years provision will align with the principles of healthy eating promoted throughout the school. Occasional treats may be provided during significant celebrations and special events, but these will be balanced with the school's wider commitment to healthy lifestyles.

Packed Lunches

Parents and carers are encouraged to provide healthy packed lunches which include a balance of food groups.

We recommend including:

- Fruit and vegetables
- Wholegrain products
- Dairy products or suitable alternatives
- Protein sources such as lean meat, fish, eggs, beans or pulses
- Water as the main drink

We discourage:

- Energy drinks
- Large quantities of sweets or chocolate
- Sugary fizzy drinks

The school may provide guidance and support to families seeking assistance with healthy lunchbox choices.

Food Allergies and Dietary Requirements

The school is committed to ensuring the safety and inclusion of all pupils.

We will:

- Maintain appropriate allergy awareness procedures.
- Follow individual healthcare plans where required.
- Work with parents to accommodate medical, cultural and religious dietary requirements.
- Promote awareness of food allergies amongst staff and pupils.

Parental Engagement

We recognise the important role families play in developing healthy eating habits.

The school will:

- Share information through newsletters and communications.
- Provide guidance on healthy lunchboxes and snacks.
- Consult with parents regarding significant changes to food provision.
- Encourage positive partnerships between home and school to support healthy lifestyles.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, RSHE Lead and Senior Leadership Team.

The school will monitor:

- Compliance with School Food Standards.
- Uptake of healthy snack initiatives.
- Effectiveness of the Rising Stars Snack programme.
- Feedback from pupils, staff and parents.
- Any future updates to national food standards and guidance.

The policy will be amended as necessary to ensure continued compliance with statutory requirements and best practice.

References

- School Food Standards Practical Guide (GOV.UK)