



# Whole School Food Policy

## Introduction

The school is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes healthy eating and enabling pupils to make informed choices about the food they eat. This will be achieved by the whole school approach to food and nutrition documented in this whole school food policy. This policy covers all aspects of food and drink at school.

The policy was formulated through consultation between members of staff, governors, caterers, parents/carers, children/young people, and support from our Food for Life partnership. The policy will be available on the school website and is therefore communicated to the entire school community. It is adhered to by all groups involved with the teaching/serving/cooking of food/drink in school during the day.

The nutritional principles of this policy are based on current evidence based findings; and the 'Eatwell Guide' is the agreed model for ensuring a healthy balanced diet. See [www.nhs.uk/livewell/goodfood/pages/the-eatwell-guide.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/goodfood/pages/the-eatwell-guide.aspx)

Current Government Food Standards for school food throughout the school day are in place and information regarding this can be seen at [www.schoolfoodplan.com](http://www.schoolfoodplan.com).

### (a) Food Policy Co-ordinator

This school food policy and healthy eating strategy is co-ordinated by Mrs Hill, Food Route Co- Ordinator.

The member of the Senior Leadership Team that oversees all aspects of food in school is the Headteacher, Miss Jordan.

### (b) Food Policy Aims

The main aims of our school food policy are:

- (i) To enable pupils to make healthy food choices through the provision of information and development of appropriate cooking skills and attitudes through the Food Route programme.
- (ii) To provide healthy food/drink choices throughout the school day.
- (iii) To ensure that all aspects of food and drink in school promote the health and well-being of pupils, staff and visitors to our school including consideration of food allergy sufferers/children with specific dietary needs.
- (iv) To promote the drinking of water and ensure availability of drinking water.

(v) To achieve the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards from the Food for Life organisation backed by the Soil Association. To do this the school must provide evidence of four aspects covered under the headings: food leadership and school food; food education; community partnerships and food quality (for which we rely on our catering service to provide quality ingredients, locally & organically produced food, and meat and fish from responsibly sourced producers.)

(vi) To maintain our Enhanced Healthy School status by being proactive. The school identifies areas where children's health can be improved and works towards these goals.

These aims will be addressed through the following areas:

### **1. Equal Opportunities**

In school we value all individuals and strive to provide equal access of opportunity for all people.

### **2. Curriculum**

- Nutrition and healthy eating are included in the creative curriculum for ALL children primarily through the Food Route programme, but is also evident in English, maths, science, RE, DT projects, sustainability, art and PE across different year groups. No child will be excluded but we rely on parents/carers to advise us of any allergies/special dietary requirements, religious or cultural beliefs that prevent them from handling or tasting certain foods.
- There are whole school healthy eating assemblies, and we achieved the Bronze Award from the Food for Life Partnership transforming school food culture, improving school meals using more fresh food and increasing uptake, improving the dining room experience, and promoting food education.
- We offer regular extra-curricular activities to complement classroom learning, e.g. After school family cookery club runs half-termly, out of term time grub clubs, half termly family gardening events and annual celebration of multi-cultural day where we share cooking and dishes from the variety of cultured pupils we have in our school.
- Children have opportunities to grow vegetables and plants, e.g. potatoes, beetroot, onions and rhubarb in regular science units, some of which are used within DT projects.
- Nutrition education is embedded in the curriculum and it remains consistent with the Whole School Food Policy, following the Science curriculum.

There are numerous opportunities the curriculum for pupils to develop knowledge of health. This is addressed through:

#### **2.1 Teaching Methods/Resources**

(i) All children take part in a four - six week 'DT project course which covers four main themes: Diet and Health, Shopping, Cooking and Food Safety. It also considers Energy Balance and Healthy Lifestyles. It is based on the Eatwell Guide which is used as a direct teaching resource along with the websites [www.foodfactoflife.org.uk](http://www.foodfactoflife.org.uk) and

[www.change4life.co.uk](http://www.change4life.co.uk) . All children are encouraged to eat the food they cook in a KS2 kitchen in school and take part in food tasting sessions. Older children may go on a supermarket shopping trip to the Sainsburys or Tescos, while all younger children visit a farm to learn where food comes from and how it is processed. This is currently Stonehurst Family Farm and/or Manor Farm for EYFS and KS1. KS2 children will also be visiting ROOTS farm, Barkby on a regular basis due to family links within school.

(ii) As part of the curriculum younger children take part in practical outdoor gardening lessons where they learn about growing plants and vegetables and harvesting them for food. The school has raised growing beds, composting bins, water butts and an outdoor forest area classroom.

(iii) Food and nutrition is also taught in art, e.g. healthy balanced diet; in maths, e.g. through data handling; in RE as part of religious celebrations; in science, e.g. discrete lessons on teeth and healthy eating/balanced diet. In PE fitness includes discussing eating foods for energy. It is taught in English as part of curriculum topics such as

(iv) Work is displayed prominently in classrooms and corridor boards for all to see.

(v) Copies of the Children's Food Trust food nutrient guidance documents available in school. [www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk](http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk)

(vi) Children actively discuss food issues in class and learn how to make informed decisions.

(vii) Our whole school Healthy Eating Week promotes healthy eating choices and attitudes towards a healthy active lifestyle including special assemblies, designing a healthy meal competition and dressing up opportunities.

(viii) Children may plan and hold a School Farmer's Market in the Summer Term. They will organize stalls involving cooking, growing, preparing, promoting the event to the wider local community, including our Parish community.

### **3. Food and Drink Provision Throughout the School Day**

National Nutritional Standards for School Lunches became compulsory in April 2001 followed by the Government introducing new standards for school food. Together they apply to all food and drink sold or served in schools up to 6pm: breakfast, lunch and after-school meals; and tuck, vending, mid-morning break and after-school clubs.

St Mary's follows the School Food Standards (Jan 2015) covering all aspects of school food offered and eaten in school throughout the school day. (Full details and the documents and guidance relating to this are available from the Children's Food Trust, [www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk](http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk) and the School Food Plan [www.schoolfoodplan.com](http://www.schoolfoodplan.com) .

#### **3.1 Breakfast**

Breakfast is an important meal that should provide 25% of a child's energy requirement and contribute significantly to their vitamin and mineral requirements. There are occasional events held in school e.g. Y6 SATs breakfast week, where children are offered a variety of toasted breads, cereal, fruit juice, hot drinks and fruit.

### **3.2 Break time Snacks**

The school understands that snacks can be an important part of the diet of young people and can contribute positively towards a balanced diet. The school has a fruit only policy for mid-morning snacks. Parents are encouraged to send fruit in for break time. Staff are encouraged to bring in fruit snacks and these are occasionally provided, e.g. during staff meetings/inset training/ healthy eating/anti-bullying weeks.

### **3.3 School Lunch**

Food prepared by the school catering team meets the School Food Standards for School Lunches (Jan 2015). Check lists are available to look at these standards. [www.schoolfoodplan.com](http://www.schoolfoodplan.com) The school kitchen provides 1 meal a day for St Mary's pupils on site. Food tasting is usually offered at Parents' Evening. As a school we actively encourage pupils to have a school lunch provided by our catering service (LTS), and free school meals are provided to all those pupils who are entitled to them. We take part in special themed lunch days eg World Food Day to promote school meals. Parents may qualify for free school meals if they receive Child Tax Credits (but are not entitled to Working Tax Credits), receive Income Support or Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, or Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or State Pension Credit or are an Asylum Seeker. Information is available from the school office and regularly promoted in newsletters and on the school website. Healthy options are promoted at lunchtime by dining supervisors and reward stickers offered. Children/young people are consulted about food choices, e.g. through surveys conducted by the co-ordinator. School dinner menus (3 week rota system) are available on the school website and copies can be obtained from the school office. Themed days are also included and children can put ideas forward for these occasions. The school takes part in Roast Dinner Day twice a year offering parents the chance to come in and join us for school dinner and lunchtime activities. The number of parents/grandparents coming in is increasing with each event, particularly since the COVID pandemic.

### **3.4 Packed Lunches**

Through our food ethos and using the principles of the Eatwell Guide the school encourages parents and carers to provide children with healthy packed lunches. Guidance is available from the leaflet entitled Packed with Health? which shows healthy ways to fill a lunch box and children are given the information during cookery lessons. There is expert advice available from dietitians from the Leicestershire Nutrition and Dietetic Service (LNDS) who support our Food Route programme in school.

Information around packed lunches and other topical food issues are conveyed to parents via the school prospectus, school newsletters, notices and occasional workshops run by a nutritional expert for dining supervisors.

St Mary's does not allow sweets or fizzy drinks like cola and lemonade, and discourages snacks high in salt and fat, such as crisps, confectionery, pastry products being included in packed lunches. To monitor this lunchbox audits are conducted by the Co-ordinator on a regular basis after training from Leicestershire's Dietician to encourage and promote healthier changes, class to class.

### **3.5 After School Club**

The school has an After-School Club five days a week. Pupils are given healthy snacks e.g. malt loaf, scones, fresh and dried fruit, chopped vegetables, plain biscuits and a drink. In addition, the school has other after school clubs including Dance and multi-sports where children are asked to bring fresh fruit snacks from home.

### **3.6 Use of Food as a Reward**

The school actively discourages the regular eating of sweets or other foods high in sugar or fat, especially as a reward for good behaviour or academic or other achievements. Other methods of positive reinforcement are used in school, for example DOJO points certificates, praise, stickers, golden time. (Refer to the school's Behaviour Policy for more details.)

### **3.7 Birthday & Celebration Occasions**

We positively encourage pupils and parents to consider bringing alternatives to sweets/chocolate for children's birthdays and celebrations. We ask them to consider bringing healthy alternatives, like small whole fruit such as grapes/strawberries or larger fruit such as melon/pineapple that can be cut up in school. Children can bring in packets of raisins or apricots. Other suggestions from parents include small inexpensive gifts such as stationery or stickers or bringing in items for the class like a book. We ask no nuts are brought into school. Similarly, adults in school are also encouraged to follow suit and bring in healthy birthday treats. This is in line with other healthy schools.

### **3.8 Drinking Water**

The School Food Standards for Healthy School Lunches recommend that drinking water should be available to all pupils every day, free of charge. The school agrees with this recommendation and provides a supply of drinking water in school and in the dining hall. Pupils are encouraged to drink at frequent intervals throughout the day. Water is provided free for all pupils at the lunchtime meal service. Bottle filling fountains are installed in school and water cups are available in school all year round to encourage all children to bring water in and drink water at regular times. Bottles can be filled in school and should be named with secure lids to prevent spillages.

## **4. Special Dietary Requirements**

### **4.1 Special Diets - Religious and Ethnic Groups**

The school provides food in accordance with pupils' religious beliefs and cultural practices as required. Fasting is recognized and taken into account during lessons.

### **4.2 Vegetarians**

School caterers offer a vegetarian option at lunch every day. Vegetarian numbers are given to the school kitchen.

### **4.3 Special Diets - Medical**

St Mary's School requests we are advised of any food allergies/intolerance/special diet requirements giving emergency contact details together with any particular food requirements. Individual care plans have been created for pupils with special dietary needs/requirements (see classrooms folders, office, Kitchen posters). These document symptoms, adverse reactions and actions to be taken in an emergency. EpiPen training has been given to all school staff, as part of the First aid training every 2 to 3 years. School caterers are made aware of any food allergies/food intolerance/medical diets and requests for these diets are submitted to the catering manager. A Medical Diet Request Form can be obtained from the school office, must be completed by parents and signed by a health professional: the form is then handed into the office and sent to LTS in order for the dietitian to provide a suitable menu.

## **5. Food Safety**

Appropriate food safety precautions are taken when food is prepared or stored in school. These vary depending on the food on offer and include: ensuring that adequate cold storage ( we have a two additional fridge freezer in the KS1 & KS2 areas) and washing facilities are available; that all food handlers undergo appropriate food safety and hygiene training; and that suitable equipment and protective clothing are available. Any food safety hazards are identified and controlled. Information is cascaded to everyone who is involved with food related activities in school. We have food safety information displayed in the appropriate areas. Staff involved in food preparation are required to take part in Food Safety Level 2 training and have the appropriate certificates, this training is ongoing. All children learn about food safety and hygiene in Food Route lessons.

## **6. The Food and Eating Environment**

The school provides a clean, sociable environment for pupils to eat their lunch and has developed the healthy/welcoming aspects of the dining room environment. The dining hall has RE and ECO displays on walls along with up to date nutritional information and lots of other healthy eating posters. 'Menu choices' are displayed by the food hatches. Picnic tables and rugs are used in fine weather to enable all children (hot dinners and packed lunches) to eat outside in the fresh air if they chose to do so. This has proved very popular. Children in the same year group eat together at the same time. Children are appointed as dining hall helpers called 'Lunch monitors'. They provide jugs of water at tables, clean tables and encourage the use of bins to keep areas litter free, etc Lunch time supervisors will help to ensure a safe, enjoyable experience at lunchtime and will be able to encourage healthy eating. Supervisors receive nutritional training to help encourage healthy lunch eating choices (hot and

cold food). They also have stickers to give out to encourage children to make healthy choices at lunchtime.

## **7. Leading by Example and Staff Training**

Teachers, caterers, lunchtime supervisors and school nurses have a key role in influencing pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes about food, so it is important that they are familiar with healthy eating guidelines. To facilitate this there is a staff noticeboard in the dining hall and other information displayed in school and toilets, e.g. hand washing posters.

## **8. Food Related Action Plans**

As a school we are aware that we need to ensure healthy and nutritious food is available across the school day. St Mary's should be awarded our Silver Status in 2022 and are already working towards the GOLD criteria. was awarded Enhanced which means we have taken accreditation beyond the basic Healthy School Status by working on a specific healthy theme.

### **8.1 Action Plans**

Continued consultation with the whole school community about school food issues will be used to make improvements and review the policy. The policy will be reviewed by the School Council, the Parents' Forum, the Catering Manager, SLT, teachers, parish and the governing body. The policy will be available on the school website. The school will continue to constantly promote healthy eating/lifestyle choices both in the classroom and at lunchtimes.

## **9. Consultation, Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy has been developed through consultation with the whole school community. The policy and impact is reviewed on an ongoing basis to reflect current Government standards. The policy is communicated to the entire school community via the website and new families/staff to our school are made aware of its importance. Regular evaluations take place through discussions with SLT, Food Route co-ordinator, LTS Catering, and the School Council.

## **10. Review**

Date policy implemented: January 2022

Review Date: February 2022

Next Review Date: September 2023

Signed... (Headteacher) Date .....

Signed.....(Chair pf Governors) Date .....