

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Whole School Food Policy

Date policy adopted: Summer 2026
Review date: Summer 2028

Mission Statement

“Learning together in Faith and Love”

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School exists to serve the Catholic families of the Parish of Our Lady of the Holy Souls, Kensal New Town and other local parishes. The aims of our school are:

- To promote Christian values where children live, learn and celebrate the teaching of Christ.
- To provide a curriculum which is broad, balanced and meaningful and where children can experience enjoyment and fulfilment.
- To promote the highest standards of teaching and learning within the framework of the National Curriculum.
- To develop in each child a sense of achievement, value and self-worth and to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- To help our children acquire the skills of independent learning and make sufficiently rapid progress.
- To provide a safe and secure environment where children feel valued, and where they respect, help and care for each other.
- To involve parents in all aspects of their child's education and promote good home/school partnership.
- To develop in our children awareness and respect for the different cultures and religions represented in society and their responsibility to the wider community.
- To foster the continuing development of staff, parents and governors in serving the community.

1. Purpose of Food Policy

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we want children to develop positive, healthy attitudes towards food and drink. We know that good nutrition supports children's health, wellbeing, concentration and readiness to learn.

This policy gives clear guidance to staff, outside visitors, parents/carers and pupils about food and drink provision during the school day. It also explains how we promote healthy eating, good oral health and positive mealtime experiences across the school.

We recognise that food is an important part of school life. Through our approach, we aim to help pupils make healthy choices, enjoy a balanced diet, understand where food comes from and develop habits that will support their wellbeing now and in the future.

2. Food and Drink Provision Throughout the Day

2.1 Food Standards for Schools, Maintained Nurseries and Nursery Units Attached to Schools

The school food standards are mandatory for all maintained schools. They are intended to help children develop healthy eating habits and ensure they receive the energy and nutrition they need across the whole school day. This includes food provided between 8am and 6pm, such as breakfast, mid-morning snacks, lunch, tuck shops and after-school clubs.

All academies and free schools are also expected to comply with these standards, and this has been an explicit requirement within funding agreements since 2014.

For more information, please refer to:

- [The DfE Standards for School Food in England](#)
- [The DfE School Food Standards – Resources for schools](#)

- The School Food Plan

For maintained nurseries and nursery units attached to primary schools, there is a shorter set of standards for food served at lunchtime. Maintained nurseries and nursery units are encouraged to consider enhancing their menus to meet the Eat Better, Start Better Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings.

For children aged under five years, schools should ensure they access free foods and drinks where available to support younger children, who have slightly different energy and nutrient needs. This includes the free fruit and vegetable scheme and access to free milk where eligible.

2.2 Breakfast

Breakfast is an important meal and helps children to start the day ready to learn. It contributes to children's energy needs and provides an opportunity to include essential vitamins and minerals.

Where breakfast is provided, we offer healthy foods and select lower sugar, lower fat and lower salt options. Fruit and/or vegetables are made available where appropriate. We only offer healthy drinks, including plain milk and tap water.

Our breakfast provision is compliant with the school food standards. We do not offer foods that are restricted across the whole school day or week, such as restricted meat products or pastry items.

2.3 Snacks

Snacks can play an important part in children's diets and can contribute positively towards a balanced diet. Snacks also provide an opportunity for children to have one of their five-a-day.

As part of the School Food Standards, schools are only able to provide fruit, vegetables, nuts and seeds as snacks. However, as a nut-aware school, nuts and products containing nuts should not be brought into school.

Dried fruit is not offered as a snack and is only offered at mealtimes as part of a meal or dessert.

The Government's school fruit and vegetable scheme entitles all children in Key Stage 1 to one piece of fruit and/or vegetable per day.

2.4 School Lunches

School lunches meet the statutory school food standards. Our lunch offer is compliant with the school food standards, where certain foods and drinks are required, restricted or not permitted.

At present, primary school pupils in London are eligible for free school meals through the Mayor of London's scheme, subject to continuation of funding.

Our lunch menu is advertised on our school website and can be found here:

<https://st-marys.rbkc.sch.uk/parents/lunch-menu>

2.5 Drinks

Water is available to all pupils throughout the day. Pupils are able to refill water bottles easily and are actively encouraged to drink water regularly.

Lower-fat milk is available for pupils at least once a day, where appropriate. Milk is provided free of charge for eligible pupils, including children under five and pupils entitled through relevant schemes. Children under two should only be offered whole milk.

Other than milk provision, as required by the School Food Standards, we operate as a water-only school for all pupils of Reception age and above.

3. Special Dietary Requirements

St Mary's Catholic Primary School does everything possible to accommodate pupils' special dietary requirements, including allergies, intolerances, religious or cultural requirements and medical needs.

We work closely with parents/carers, catering staff and relevant professionals to manage individual dietary needs and reduce risk. Parents/carers are asked to keep the school informed of any allergies, intolerances or dietary requirements and to provide updated medical information where needed.

The Office Manager holds a record of pupils with food allergies and dietary requirements. A copy is also held in the dining hall and relevant information is shared with appropriate staff.

Staff receive relevant training to support the safe management of food allergies and medical needs, including:

- Paediatric First Aid for selected staff
- Adrenaline auto-injector/anaphylaxis training
- Relevant food safety training for staff involved in food preparation or handling

The school is a **nut-aware school**. Parents/carers are asked not to send nuts or products containing nuts into school. While the school takes reasonable steps to reduce risk, we cannot guarantee a completely nut-free environment.

4. Food Safety

We ensure food safety at all stages of food preparation and storage.

This includes:

- Suitable facilities and equipment
- Appropriate food storage

- Risk assessments and identification of hazards
- Staff training, including Level 2 Food Safety certification for relevant staff
- Additional food safety measures for younger children where appropriate
- Clear communication with catering providers and staff

5. Ethos and Environment

At St Mary's, we want mealtimes to be calm, positive and sociable. We recognise that the dining environment plays an important role in helping children to enjoy food, try new things and develop healthy eating habits.

Our dining area offers a clean, welcoming and sociable environment. Pupils are able to sit at tables with their peers and are given sufficient time to eat their lunch.

Staff support pupils during mealtimes by encouraging good manners, positive social interaction and healthy choices. Staff also understand the importance of being good role models and sharing key messages that support healthy eating and wellbeing.

6. Menu Development and Consultation

Our school engages with key stakeholders before implementing significant menu changes. This may include pupils, parents/carers, staff, caterers, governors and relevant partners.

We promote good uptake of school meals by:

- Gathering feedback from pupils, parents/carers and staff
- Offering tasting sessions where appropriate
- Considering cultural, religious and special dietary needs
- Reviewing menus with catering providers

- Listening to pupil voice

The School Council may be used to gather pupils' views about food and drink provision.

7. Food and Drink Brought into School and Parent Engagement

We encourage parents/carers to support the school's approach to healthy eating and good oral health.

Parents/carers are asked to ensure that any food or drink brought into school supports healthy choices and follows the school's expectations. This includes packed lunches, snacks for trips and food brought in for special events where permitted.

The school will communicate key messages about healthy eating and food provision through newsletters, the website, workshops and direct communication where appropriate.

7.1 Packed Lunches

We encourage parents/carers to provide healthy, balanced packed lunches that support pupils' energy, concentration and wellbeing throughout the school day.

Packed lunches should include a balance of foods such as:

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Starchy foods, such as bread, pasta, rice or potatoes
- Protein, such as meat, fish, eggs, beans or pulses
- Dairy or dairy alternatives

Parents/carers are asked not to include:

- Sweets
- Chocolate bars
- Fizzy drinks
- Energy drinks
- Products containing nuts

Packed lunch guidance can be found on our school website:

<https://st-marys.rbkc.sch.uk/parents/lunch-menu>

For younger children, we also use guidance from the First Steps Nutrition Trust.

The school will work in partnership with families to promote healthy choices through newsletters, guidance, workshops and informal support where appropriate.

8. Breastfeeding and Healthy Start

We aim to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for families. Mothers are welcome to breastfeed or express breastmilk on site, and a suitable space will be provided if required.

We encourage pregnant women and mothers with children under four to register with the Healthy Start Scheme, where eligible, to access support with food, milk and vitamins.

9. Birthdays and Special Occasions

We recognise that birthdays and special occasions are important moments in school life. As part of our commitment to healthy eating and good oral health, we encourage non-food treats or healthier alternatives for celebrations.

Sweets, cakes and sugary items should not be brought into school for distribution to pupils. Staff will support children to celebrate special occasions in ways that are inclusive, healthy and in line with the school's food policy.

10. Cooking and Food Education in the Curriculum

Teaching pupils how to cook is an important part of our whole-school approach to health and wellbeing. It can stimulate pupils' interest and enjoyment of food, as well as building confidence and independence.

The school follows the National Curriculum, which states that healthy eating, nutrition and cooking must be taught through Science, Design and Technology, and Health Education.

We deliver a curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge and skills over time. Learning about food, nutrition, healthy choices and cooking is assessed as part of wider curriculum monitoring.

11. Enrichment Activities

Our children have the opportunity to work in our school garden with a trained gardener. Pupils grow vegetables and other foods, which may then be used in class cooking activities.

These opportunities help pupils understand where food comes from and encourage positive attitudes towards fresh, healthy foods.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually. The school will monitor food and drink provision through regular communication with catering providers, feedback from pupils, parents/carers and staff, and review of relevant procedures.

School leaders will ensure that food standards are being met and maintained and that the school's approach continues to support pupils' health, wellbeing and learning.

We will continue to monitor and develop our provision by considering:

- Pupil voice
- Parent/carer feedback
- Staff feedback
- Communication with catering providers
- Compliance with school food standards
- Support for pupils with allergies and dietary requirements
- Packed lunch guidance and expectations
- Curriculum links to food, nutrition and healthy eating

13. Policy Review

This policy was reviewed in July 2026 and will be reviewed again in July 2028, or sooner if guidance or school provision changes.

