

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

Food & Drink Policy

Revised: January 2010

MISSION STATEMENT

St Mary's is a welcoming Christian community which upholds the values of justice, respect and equality and promotes and enthusiasm for life and learning.

PROCESS

This policy was discussed and amended by the head teacher, governors, teachers, parents, catering staff and lunchtime organisers, School Council and pupils. The final draft was approved by the full governing body.

RATIONALE

We believe that education about health issues is very important for the development of our pupils both now and for the future. We acknowledge the important link between a healthy diet and the ability to learn effectively. We also recognise that school can play a significant role, as part of the larger community, to promote healthy issues. This is fully embraced in our school aims and ethos which express that we are a learning community and all learn together. As a result we would aspire to improve the health of the school community by teaching ways to establish and maintain life long healthy eating habits.

We recognise that it is important for the whole school to use consistent messages around healthy eating. Therefore our message is:

There is no such thing as bad foods just poor diets. We need to eat more fruit and vegetables but some foods, like crisps and sweets need to be eaten in moderation.

AIMS

Proper nutrition is essential for good health and effective learning.

We aim to:

- provide a consistent programme of cross-curricular nutrition education that enables pupils to make informed choices without guilt or anxiety;
- provide a 'whole school, whole day' approach to nutrition that makes the 'healthier choices, easier choices';
- work in partnership with catering staff to ensure that nutritional standards are implemented by providing attractive, value for money meals that are appropriate to local needs;
- work in partnership to achieve a pleasant and sociable dining experience which enhances the social development of each pupil;
- involve pupils and parents in all decision making.

We aim to promote healthy & balanced eating by:

- encouraging pupils to choose a variety of foods to ensure a balanced intake in line with the national nutrition guide – ‘The Balance of Good Health’ and the new nutritional standards;
- encouraging foods which are rich in vitamins, iron and calcium, in particular fruit, vegetables, meat, beans, bread and low fat dairy products;
- encouraging starchy foods as a source of energy (such as bread, pasta, rice and potatoes) rather than fatty foods;
- encouraging fruit juices, lower fat milk and sugar-free drinks;
- discouraging sugary drinks and less healthy snacks between meals.

OBJECTIVES

To work towards ensuring that this policy is both accepted and embraced by

- governors
- school management
- teachers and support staff
- pupils
- parents
- food providers
- the wider school community

To integrate these aims into all aspects of school life, in particular

- food provision within school
- the curriculum
- pastoral and social activities

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

Several policies link to this whole school food and drink policy, including:

- curriculum policies such as Science, DT and PSHE through which healthy eating messages are taught;
- teaching and learning policy, particularly the fact that well nourished and hydrated pupils learn better;
- behaviour management policy which identifies the link between behaviour and food and sets out the reward systems used within school.
- health and safety policy which clearly sets out how food is stored, prepared and cooked on the premises, including cooking within the classroom.

PROVISION OF FOOD AND DRINK ACROSS THE SCHOOL DAY

Breakfast

Cereal, milk, toast, bagels, pancakes, fruit juice and water are available to children who attend the breakfast club. The importance of having a good breakfast is reinforced and encouraged.

Mid-morning snack

In consultation with parents and pupils it has been agreed that all children will aim to bring a snack which does not include chocolate bars or sweets Monday-Thursday, with parental/child choice of snack on Fridays. Toast and dried fruit are available for the pupils to purchase at breaktime.

We are involved in the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme. Every child in the infants is encouraged to have an extra piece of fruit or vegetables each day. This is given during the afternoon break time. KS2 children have the option of purchasing fruit for daily consumption.

Drinks Policy

Children are encouraged to drink 3–4 glasses of water at school particularly after PE, active play and in hot weather.

Water fountains have been installed in the KS2 toilets and the children are encouraged on a regular basis to bring in bottles from home, or purchase clear plastic bottles from the school, which can be refilled at these fountains, and drink from them throughout the day. The messages about the importance of drinking water are reinforced on a regular basis.

Subsidised school milk is promoted as a vital contribution to calcium intakes and is available for infant children. They are all encouraged to have milk. A specific time is set aside for this and those that do not wish to have milk have a drink of water instead.

Packed Lunches

Suggested websites giving guidance for packed lunches are given to parents. They promote the following examples :

Packed lunches should include some fruit or vegetable eg piece of fruit or fruit juice, dried fruit, cherry tomato, raw carrot, cucumber wedge. Sweets, sugary drinks and chocolate should not be included. Diluted fruit juice in a screw top bottle is cheaper and easier to manage than prepared drinks. The school provides a suitable storage area for lunch boxes. All waste and uneaten food is returned in the lunch box so that parents know what has been eaten.

School meals

We believe that the subtle messages that pupils receive about food and health from the daily life of school are as important as those given during lessons, eg school menus, peer pressure to eat certain snacks in packed lunches. By working together, we promote healthier eating habits.

School lunchtime menus are agreed between the school and catering staff. Local preferences are considered within the framework of the nutritional standards.

All children are given a portion of vegetables as part of their meals. They are encouraged to try some, even if it is a small portion.

All children are offered a choice of school meal, with the fortnightly menu sent home and returned with their preferences.

The school recognises the particular value of school meals to children from low-income families. The system for free school meals is actively promoted to parents by the school and a non-discriminatory process is emphasised.

Dining room environment

The school recognises the importance of lunchtime organisation on the behaviour of pupils and the value of promoting social skills.

Teachers, caterers and lunchtime organisers work together to create a good dining room ambience and the development of appropriate table manners.

Non-teaching staff are supported by the school behaviour policy.

Liaison with secondary schools provides an opportunity for the smooth transition to a cash cafeteria system.

After School club

The after school club runs until 5.30pm and offers all pupils who attend a balanced choice of snack. Examples include toast, crisps, yoghurt.

Treats and Rewards

To ensure consistent messages, sweets are not used as behaviour rewards. Treats can occasionally include 'sweet treats' in line with annual celebrations.

SPONSORSHIP/INCENTIVE SCHEMES

The school will carefully consider the use of any promotional scheme and will not encourage children to collect tokens from foods which should only be eaten in moderation (eg foods high in fat, salt and sugar).

CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING

Key healthy eating messages will be taught within science, DT and PSHE. They will also be delivered through assemblies and theme days/ weeks.

The National Nutrition Guide "The Balance of Good Health" is used across the curriculum. Pupils are given the opportunity to apply this to school meals/ packed lunches.

Pupils are given the opportunity to taste, touch, smell and feel a variety of foods.

Opportunities are taken wherever possible to encourage pupils to taste multi-cultural aspects of food through cross curricular subjects including geography, history and RE and are linked with school meal theme days.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Inclusion is seen as fundamental to both the planning and delivery of work relating to healthy eating. The work is matched to the age and maturity of the pupils and due regard is given to children with SEN requirements. School also recognises that some children require specialist diets, including nut allergies, diabetes and Coeliacs. The schemes of work are sensitive to this and the teachers will be aware of any children within their class who this may apply to. Information is requested from parents on admission and whenever food is sampled within school, a letter is sent home informing them of this. Prior to residential trips, a form is sent home which includes information on dietary needs.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

All new parents are given a summary of the school food and drink policy plus a range of information leaflets on healthier eating.

Information about school catering is provided at parents' evenings and in school newsletters eg menus, theme days, free school meals.

Feedback from parents is invited in newsletters, via PTFA or governors.

The Headteacher speaks to parents during induction into school in the foundation stage. Information about healthy packed lunches and snacks is discussed at these meetings.

A progress report on the school food and drink policy is considered by the governors every 2 years and action identified in the school development plan. Parents are consulted before any major changes are made.

FOOD HYGIENE

Children are reminded on a regular basis about the importance of hand washing before eating and improved facilities are being installed to reinforce this message.

Whenever children are to sample or handle food in the classroom, there are a number of rules which should be followed:

- Clean all work surfaces to be used with anti-bacterial spray and a new jay cloth.
- If necessary, cover work surfaces with disposable/ plastic tablecloths before starting the task.
- Ensure all utensils have been thoroughly cleaned beforehand.
- Always wash hands using soap before any preparation/ sampling tasks.
- Ensure sleeves are "rolled up" and disposable plastic aprons are worn for all food preparation.

- Keep the group/s manageable and use support assistants where necessary.
- When sampling always let individuals have their own spoon/ cup etc.
- Allow plenty of space to work, with all “classroom items” away from food and utensils.
- Encourage thorough washing up after the tasks and return utensils to where they are stored.
- Dispose of finished/ unwanted food after the task.
- Remove disposable items and wash down work surfaces thoroughly.

Careful consideration is given to the correct storage of food within school. This includes the storage of packed lunch boxes which are kept in a cool area, away from radiators. Parents are encouraged to send packed lunches in cooler bag style packed lunch boxes.

This also includes the correct storage of fruit and vegetables from the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme. School follows the guidance set out within this scheme.

MONITORING AND ASSESSING THE POLICY

The whole school food and drink policy is monitored by the co-ordinator and senior management team. It will be reviewed on a planned two yearly cycle, with views of the whole school community taken into consideration, including those of the pupils.

The uptake of healthier options at lunchtimes and break times will be monitored and reviewed. Packed lunches will also be monitored on a regular basis.

Written work carried out will be monitored in line with the school’s monitoring procedures to ensure that the correct knowledge, understanding and skills are being developed and attitudes and values are explored. In line with the school’s teaching and learning policy, at the beginning and the end of topics, children will be encouraged to reflect on what they already know and what they have learnt. Their views will help to shape the future of the healthy eating programme within school.

The school will apply for accreditation on the Lancashire Healthy Schools Programme to achieve recognition for the school’s developments in this area.

Date written: February 2007

Reviewed January 2010

Next review date: January 2012