

**ST MARY MAGDALENE CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING
A WHOLE SCHOOL FOOD POLICY**



'Growing Together in Faith & Love'

Updated September 2025
Next Review September 2028

C O N T E N T S

Aims

Objectives

Healthier Choices

Healthier School Meals

Healthier Snacks and Sandwiches

Healthier Curriculum

Healthier Clubs and Activity Choices

Healthier Drinking

Breakfast Club

After School Club

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Rules for Lunchtime

Practical Matters

Monitoring & Evaluation

AIMS

It is widely known that a healthy balanced diet is vital for children's growth and development and for their long term health and well-being. This is particularly important in early years when lifetime habits are formed. To this end, the school has developed a whole school food policy to educate, equip and empower all pupils to live a healthy lifestyle through the curriculum we teach, the relationship we foster, the environment we provide and the opportunities we create. We strive to create a secure and caring atmosphere in which pupils, staff, parents and visitors can make informed choices about a balanced, healthy diet.

- To advise parents/carers on school policy and procedures during lunchtime.
- To promote the health and well-being of the whole school.

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure every 4-7 year old receives a Universal Free School Meal.
- To deliver a **curriculum** that provides information relating to food, nutrition and fitness and opportunity for at least 2 hours of exercise per week.
- To work in conjunction with the school caterer and ensure that the **school meals** provided meet with the requirements outlined by the 'Primary Nutritional School Standards' and parents are kept informed and up to date.
- To promote healthy eating for pupils in KS2 with lunch boxes and the eating of fruit at break time through implementing policies relating to **healthy snacks and sandwiches**.
- To promote healthy lifestyles through active engagement in **extra curricular clubs**, playtime games and creative choices.
- To assist healthy approaches to learning through the accessibility of **water in lessons** and its availability elsewhere in school.
- To promote healthy lifestyle through involvement in the **positive community activities** that promote health and a sense of pride.
- To give the children the information they need to make healthy choices.
- To ensure the food and drink available during the school day reinforces the healthy lifestyle message.
- To ensure food available is cut into appropriate size pieces,
- To include the whole school community in the promotion of healthier lifestyles.
- To incorporate health awareness and healthy eating into the school curriculum.

HEALTHIER SCHOOL MEALS

We seek to promote healthy school meals by:

- Working in conjunction with the school caterer and ensure that the school meals provided meet with the requirements outlined by the 'Primary Nutritional School Standards'.
- Ensuring parents are kept informed and up to date through access to menus and information of school meal developments via the school newsletter.
- Displaying menus and positive slogans promoting healthy eating.
- Awarding children with stickers for eating healthy food.
- Encouraging staff to have school meals and set a positive role model.
- Running a happy sociable dining room that is orderly and friendly and attractive.
- Advertising school meals to parents at parents' evenings.
- Compulsory hot meals for infants using Universal Free School Meals.

HEALTHIER SNACKS AND SANDWICHES

We seek to promote healthy eating:

- For pupils in KS2 with lunch boxes by implementing our policies that insist on healthy lunches and restrict unhealthy items supervising lunches rigorously.
- Through the eating of fruit at play time and prohibiting other less healthy items.
- By encouraging parents to take responsibility of monitoring their own child's 'leftovers' that are kept in the sandwich box to take home.
- Having a policy of 'no sharing' or 'swapping food' vital for pupils with allergies and to ensure parents know exactly what their children are eating at lunchtime.
- Providing healthy choices at breakfast and after school club.
- No sweets or chocolate bars to be included in lunch boxes.
- Due to allergies, nuts and shellfish are not allowed in school.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of choking risks and how to respond to them.
- A trained paediatric first aider will be present whenever EYFS children are eating (snacks and meals). All EYFS have paediatric first aid training.

HEALTHIER CURRICULUM

We seek to deliver a **curriculum** that provides:

- Information, understanding and application of the importance of healthy foods and nutrition and the need for a balanced diet.
- Opportunity for weekly indoor and outdoor fitness activities.
- At least 2 hours of exercise per week.
- Carefully planned PE that develops pupil's suppleness, strength, skills and speed.
- Scientific understanding and experiences relating to keeping our bodies healthy.
- DT and provision of cooking experiences within the regular curriculum and extra curriculum.
- Equal opportunity for pupils in terms of access and inclusiveness and provision.
- Opportunity for all pupils to achieve their Cycling proficiency certificate, National Curriculum Swimming Standard.
- Opportunity for celebration of our healthy achievements in a weekly assembly.
- Enhanced PE provision using professional and liaison competitions at St Paul's.
- Daily mile activities.

HEALTHIER CLUBS AND ACTIVITY CHOICES

We seek to promote healthy lifestyles through:

- Extra curricular clubs, during and after school hours ensuring good value for money which promotes inclusiveness of all pupils regardless of their parent's ability to pay.
- The availability of a range of playtime games equipment for pupils to use every day.
- Developing a healthy playground that includes ball walls and marked out games.
- Running weekly sports clubs such as football, netball, cross country, rugby.
- Applying for sports funding and pupils collecting sports vouchers supplementing our extensive range of PE equipment.

HEALTHIER DRINKING

We seek to assist healthy approaches to learning through:

- Encouraging the drinking of water during lesson times.
- Providing drinking bottles for parents to purchase.
- Ensuring water is available at lunch times on the tables with the meal.
- Prohibiting other less healthy drinks.
- Providing water fountains around school.
- Encouraging school milk and providing time during the school day to drink it.
- Ensuring that at sports events liquids are accessible and used to prevent dehydration.
- Providing a chilled water facility in the Staff room.

BREAKFAST CLUB

The breakfast club runs each morning before the start of school 8.00am – 8.35am. The menu includes a range of hot and cold foods and the children are helped to make healthy choices.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

The after school club runs after school 3.20pm – 6.00pm. All snacks offered are healthy. The children are often involved in the preparation of the food, serving and encouraged to eat politely and use a knife and fork.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The partnership of home and school is critical in shaping how children and young people behave, particularly where health is concerned. The school is well placed to lead by example.

The school holds an annual “food tasting” event, whereby parents/carers are encouraged to come and taste the variety of food on offer to the children at lunchtimes by the school catering company.

Parents/Carers are encouraged not to send in sweets for birthday for celebrations. The school has provided alternative suggestions for ways to mark these celebrations.

RULES FOR LUNCHTIME

- Wash your hands thoroughly before eating.
- All children must sit down whilst eating and walk when entering and leaving the dining hall.
- All litter is to be disposed of in bins in the dining hall before leaving.
- Packed lunch remains (left over food) must be taken home.
- Children must remain in the hall for at least 20 minutes to ensure an adequate amount has been eaten before going out to play.
- Children may remain in the hall for as long as necessary to eat their lunch.
- If a child needs help they should remain seated and put up their hands. This avoids children walking around with food and drinks, and therefore preventing spillage and accidents.
- Running and shouting in the dining hall is not allowed.

- We have paid staff to supervise and assist the children during the lunchtime, one per class.
- Pupils should co-operate with requests made by lunchtime staff. Pupils who persistently refuse to behave, clear away their litter, follow rules or are disrespectful to staff may be asked to go home during lunchtime.
- After lunch your child will be supervised on the playground by the mid-day staff.
- The school employs a coach over lunchtime to organise active games and activities to promote exercise.
- In the summer/drier weather children are allowed on the field, outside play equipment (balls, footballs, beanbags, skipping ropes and bats) are provided. We also have fitness equipment and tyre parks for additional fun and exercise. We have a rota for outside lunch on the picnic benches, so all classes have a turn.
- There is also a shaded area for children to sit.
- In the summer it is essential you provide your child with a hat/sunscreen. We do have shade areas. On very hot days the children only spend a short time (15 minutes) outside at lunchtime.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

Provide a lunchbox your child can easily open - preferably a cooler type lunchbox.
 Provide your child with a water bottle.
 Provide a leak proof flask that your child can open and close.
 Don't put food in your child's lunchbox they do not like.

Try to keep food cool. This is sometimes difficult in warm classrooms. Try placing ice cubes in drinks to help keep them cool and keep the lunchbox cool at the same time, or mini ice packs could be used, or even better provide an insulated lunchbox - or small cool bag.

If you have any concerns about lunchtime, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or Mrs Jones. Please discuss this policy with your child. It is important for everyone to have an enjoyable and healthy lunchtime. If we work together I am sure this can be achieved.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

Review policy annually

Report progress to school council

PSHE Co-ordinator to observe sample lessons

Monitor number of pupils using breakfast club and take-up of school meals at KS2

Parental/pupil questionnaire on range and quality of food provided at school

Display photographs in hall of healthy eating events, themed days, multi-cultural and international food days for parents

Range of extra curricula activities and uptake monitored, cooking club/sport

Links with St Paul's Food Technology department liaison and training, to improve food technology curriculum. Primary Technology Days undertaken by Year 4 and Year 5.

Holding regular food tasting sessions for parents by school lunch providers, Chartwells.

UNIVERSAL FREE SCHOOL MEALS

These meals are available for all children in the reception, year 1 and year 2 classes. They are not means tested but free to all pupils. At St Mary Magdalene School we believe we have an important role in educating children in the importance of a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle, providing healthy and nutritious food choices. All infants (Reception, year 1 and year 2) are expected to take a universal free school meal. There is an option to order a packed lunch however we feel for some children, this may be the only hot meal they have each day. The benefits of making universal free school meals compulsory is as follows:

- Children have a healthy, balanced hot meal
- Children often eat better because their friends/peers are eating
- They are introduced to new foods that they try as their friends/peers are eating them
- They gain independence and learn how to use a knife and fork, feeding themselves
- Enjoy the social side of lunchtime
- The catering company can provide specialist meals for children with diagnosed medical needs and allergies

Our whole school policy ensures:

- Food complies to Nutritional Standards for school lunches and works closely with the catering providers
- Pupils have access to fresh drinking water
- Fruit is provided daily for 3-7 year olds as part of their 5-a-day healthy eating. No other snacks or food are allowed at break time
- We do not serve food too high in fat, salt or sugar
- Parents save over £540 per year by the taking up of universal free school meals
- Sweets are not used as rewards

This policy allows for other food and drinks for one-off school events such as school fairs, discos and parties that may not fully comply with the standards.