



School Food Policy

Introduction

At St. Mary's CE VA Primary School we recognise the important part a healthy diet plays in a child's well being and their ability to learn and achieve effectively. We believe that the school, in partnership with parents and carers, can make a major contribution to improving children's health by increasing their knowledge and understanding of food and helping them make healthy choices.

The member of staff who leads on matters relating to health education is the PSHE subject leader.

Aims

This policy has been written to reflect [The School Food Standards](#) that were revised in 2015. It has also been written to reflect the [Eatwell Guide](#) and supports the key outcomes of [The School Food Plan](#). The policy supports Ofsted's commitment to assess pupils' knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy and our school ethos of healthy eating.

At St Mary's Primary School we aim to promote healthy eating through:

- Providing healthy food at breakfast club, snack time, lunch time and after school.
- Encouraging parents and children to eat healthily through our lunch box guidance and by celebrating healthy lunch boxes.
- Teaching children and parents about the effects of poor diet and sugary foods on health and oral health.
- Offering advice and support to parents on how to encourage healthy eating.
- Encouraging children to eat healthy school lunches.
- Creating a culture and ethos in our school where healthy food and living is promoted and expected.
- Building opportunities into the curriculum to teach children about healthy eating and cooking.
- Teaching children about growing their own food and the provenance of food.



Breakfast Club

We recognise that a healthy breakfast is an essential start to a child's day. Breakfast club is open to all children and opens at 7.45am. It is staffed by our own teaching assistants and offers children the following options:

- A selection of cereals, including low sugar, low salt and high fibre varieties.
- Porridge
- Toast made with wholegrain and brown bread as well as white.
- Baked beans on toast
- Eggs on toast
- Tinned fruit in natural juice
- Fresh fruit
- Fruit smoothies
- Fruit juice

Snacks and drinks

At St Mary's CEVA Primary School we recognise that snacks are an important part of a young person's diet and can contribute positively to a healthy balanced diet. As part of the Government's school fruit and vegetable scheme, children in KS1 are offered a free piece of fruit or vegetable at morning snack time. KS2 children are permitted to bring in their own fruit, dried fruit or vegetables to eat at midmorning break. Biscuits, crisps, cereal bars, chocolate or nuts are not permitted unless they are recommended by a doctor on medical grounds (eg. Dietary need, diabetes etc.)

Our school provides a mandatory milk scheme for all pupils, in accordance with Government guidelines. Parents are invited to register and pay for their child to participate in this scheme which provides a carton of semi-skimmed milk every day. Further information is available from the school office.

Clean drinking water is available for pupils throughout the day and children are encouraged to bring in their own water bottle and to drink regularly from it throughout the day.

School lunches

The school outsources its catering arrangements to [Caterlink](#) who hold the contract for providing Gloucestershire schools' lunches: Caterlink are committed to meeting the national school food based standards and delivering fresh local food with a clear provenance trail. The school leadership team regularly monitor the food provided by Caterlink and provide feedback to ensure that it is appealing to the



children and continues to meet our high standards. Lunches provided offer a choice of hot main course with a vegetarian option, vegetables and/or salad and a pudding. Jacket potatoes with a variety of fillings and freshly baked bread are available every day as is a daily salad selection and fresh fruit and yoghurt.

In September 2014 the government introduced Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) for all children from Reception to Year 2 and the school encourages parents to opt for school lunches for their children by regularly promoting school meals.

The Midday Supervisors encourage children to eat their school lunches by:

- Children in EYFS and KS1 ask an adult before they can eat their pudding.
- Children are encouraged to try everything on their plate and to 'eat a few more mouthfuls' before finishing.
- Encouraging good table manners and not rushing their food.
- Providing appropriate, relaxed and stress free environments for eating lunch.

Children have fresh water provided throughout lunchtime.

After School Club

Children who attend the school's After School Care – 'Twiglets at Twilight' – are offered a light tea. This includes sandwiches, fruit and a piece of tray bake. The food is provided through the school's catering service and meets their standards.

Food and drink brought into school

Lunch Boxes

The School Food Plan launched by the government in 2013 stated that only 1% of packed lunches meet nutritional standards and two thirds of packed lunches contain sweets and sugary drinks and snacks like crisps.

Parents are encouraged to provide healthy well balanced packed lunches and have been offered advice on how to ensure they are. At St. Mary's we follow the advice from [The Children's Food Trust](#). We recommend that a child's packed lunch contains the following:

1. Starchy foods such as bread, pasta, rice or potatoes to give children energy.
2. Fruit and Vegetables to provide essential vitamins and minerals and protect against illness.
3. Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein to help children grow.



4. Milk and dairy foods as a source of calcium to help strong bones and teeth.

Parents are encouraged to avoid food high in saturated fats and sugar and/or salt. Water is provided at the tables at lunchtime so there is no need for children to bring in other drinks.

The school regularly offers advice and support on healthy eating to parents through our pastoral team and the contents of lunch boxes are monitored by the Midday Supervisors and other staff. Where it is seen that children are regularly eating an unhealthy lunch, the school will reach out to parents and carers to offer support and advice. Healthy lunches are celebrated through stickers and notes home.

The school is unable to provide refrigerated facilities for lunch boxes however it is recommended that parents send packed lunches in insulated bags or boxes with freezer blocks to keep lunches cool.

Children are only permitted to eat their own food and should not share their food.

Due to children who have severe nut allergies we ask parents not to pack nuts or nut products in lunch boxes.

School trips

If children are attending activities off the school site, children who are normally entitled to a free school lunch will be provided with a healthy packed lunch.

Birthdays and other celebrations

Celebrating children's birthdays with cake or other treats, such as sweets, is not encouraged in school time. If parents wish to share treats with their children's classmates they may do so in the playground after school with the other parents' permission.

At Christmas time and at the end of the school year, classes may have a class party in which food is brought in by parents. We will provide a balance between 'treat' foods and healthy fruit and vegetables at these times.

PTfA events and fundraising

The school encourages the PTfA to pay attention to the school's culture of promoting healthy eating when selling food products at their events and after school. The school is not responsible for the decisions made by the PTfA around food when organising fund raising events. Any comments or concerns about the food sold by the PTfA should be directed to the Chair of the PTfA directly.



Cooking and food education in the curriculum

Children at St Mary's are taught how to cook and apply the principles of nutrition and healthy eating. In KS1 children are taught about the basic principles of a healthy and varied diet to prepare dishes and they learn about where food comes from. In KS2 children are taught to understand and apply the principles of a healthy and varied diet and to prepare and cook a variety of predominantly savoury dishes using a range of cooking techniques. Children in KS2 are also taught to understand seasonality, and know where and how a variety of ingredients are grown, caught and processed.

The school has a 'teaching kitchen' where children can participate in food technology lessons.

Extra Curricular activities

- Children can participate in gardening club which includes growing vegetables.
- Staff run cooking club which focuses on healthy eating.
- Chefs and people in the food industry are invited into school to talk to the children about healthy eating and cooking.

Special dietary requirements

The school catering service can provide meals for children from specific religious and ethnic groups and for vegetarians and vegans.

Allergies and Intolerances

For information about how the school manages food allergies and intolerances, please see the School's Allergy Policy.

Approved by LGB 07-02-24

Signed by Headteacher:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jo Woolley'.

Signed by Chair of Governors:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Elizabeth Dunning'.

Date of next review: February 2027