

ST. HELEN'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL



Food Policy

Written by	Date	Ratified by	Date
A. McAuliffe	2024	Governors	May 2024

To be reviewed	Annually	Every 3 Years
Reviewed on	Reviewed by	Next review date
May 2025	A. McAuliffe	May 2026

With Jesus alive in our hearts, we celebrate each other and learn together as a family.

We are committed to giving all our pupils consistent messages about all aspects of health including an active lifestyle and a well-balanced diet which can enhance the health of all children and help them understand the impact of particular behaviours and encourage them to take responsibility for the choices they make. This in turn has been shown to reduce the onset of certain life-threatening conditions as well as being helpful in tackling and preventing childhood obesity.

Rationale

The whole school Food Policy enables St. Helen's Catholic Infant School to support government initiatives and the individual needs of children by developing and maintaining a shared philosophy on all aspects of food and drink. Our school is an accredited healthy school. It is important that we consider all elements of our work to ensure that we promote health awareness in all members of the school community. We can provide a valuable role model to children and their families with regard to food and healthy-eating patterns. Through effective leadership, the school ethos and the curriculum, all school staff can bring together all elements of the school day to create an environment that supports a healthy lifestyle.

Aims and Objectives

At St. Helen's Catholic Infant School we believe that every child is entitled to safe and appropriate provision of food and drink in order to stay as well-nourished as possible and maintain and develop their existing skills in eating and drinking. We promote a positive and healthy attitude towards nutrition which also takes account of medical complexity and individual diversity. We foster an ethos of teamwork and will strive to ensure that all members of staff feel supported, informed and comfortable in working with children who have eating and drinking difficulties.

To ensure that we are giving consistent messages about food and health, we will

- Give our children the information they need to make healthy choices
- Promote health awareness
- Contribute to the healthy physical development of all members of our school community
- Encourage all children to take part in the '5-A-DAY' campaign

Partnership 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. Each must reinforce the other. Parents and carers are regularly updated on our healthy school ethos through the school newsletters. Parents of children who are on special diets or have medical needs will be asked to provide as much information as possible about suitable foods for their child.

Involvement with children

The children are consulted through school council and class councils regarding the school dinner menu and healthy snacks.

Snacks

As part of the Fruit for Schools Government Scheme, all children in our school are provided with a piece of washed fruit or vegetable. KS1 children will eat their fruit or vegetable during the morning break. In Reception, children are allowed to eat their fruit when they require it. The class helpers are given the responsibility to collect the fruit bowls and buckets in the morning and to pass the fruit out and help clear away at the end of playtime. Any leftover fruit is taken onto the playground by the class helpers. No other snack is allowed during break.

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School Meals

- As far as possible, all school meals served will meet the Government's Nutritional Guidelines food based standards to ensure that children are getting a nutritious balanced and healthy options meal.
- School catering staff will have Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering, Royal Society of Public Health (RSPH) and follow the Safer Food, better business for caterers handbook by the Food Standards Agency.
- The school is supported by Essex County Council School Meals Support Service.
- All catering at School is 'in house' with a strong emphasis on 'home-made' and healthy food. The school provides a hot meal, which includes the use of fresh produce, fruit and vegetables from local suppliers each day as a choice for the children.
- School lunches are based on three weekly rolling menus. There is always a vegetarian and non-vegetarian option, both of which pay regard to nutritional balance and healthy options.
- Each day Reception eat first at 11.45am, then Year 1 and then Year 2. Within each year group there is a rota for which class goes first.
- The school does not allow any nuts on the school premises.
- Children with special medical or dietary needs will be catered for.
- Children entitled to free school meals will be integrated with the other children during lunchtime.
- The children will be responsible for collecting their own food served by the catering staff and encouraged to carry their trays and to find their seat where directed.
- Children will be encouraged and helped to use a knife and fork during their meal and are encouraged to display good table manners and eating skills.
- All children will be encouraged to eat all of their school meals during lunchtime.
- The children are responsible to clearing their trays, cups and bowls at the waste disposal area.
- Water, semi skimmed or lactose free milk will be served with all meals and pupils will be encouraged to drink it all up.
- All children whether eating a school meal or packed lunch, will eat together in the school hall at lunchtime.
- Strategies are in place to address behaviour, particularly linked around food and lunch-time activities.
- The school has a procedure for identifying children who are at risk, eg failing to thrive, allergies, eating disorder, overweight or obese, dietary related condition.
- All staff, parents, governors and visitors are aware of the policies in dealing with pupil health and wellbeing.

Packed Lunches

- As fridge space is not available in school, pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible to stop the food deteriorating in quality.
- Parents and pupils are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible and include at least one portion of fruit or one portion of vegetables every day.
- Children eating packed lunches are encouraged to take empty containers and their own rubbish home so that parents can see what has been eaten.
- Water will be provided for all pupils eating a packed lunch if they have forgotten their own drink.

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The following items should not be included in any packed lunch:

- Peanut butter or Nutella sandwiches
- Eggs
- Any nuts due to having children with serious nut allergies.
- Cereal bars containing nuts
- High fat crisps
- Individual sweets or lollipops
- Bars of chocolate
- Fruit Winders
- Fizzy drinks
- Hot food in flasks

Celebrations (including Birthdays)

- Children are permitted and encouraged to bring pre-wrapped sweets (eg: Haribo) in from home to share with the class due to allergies to various food. For those who are not allowed to have 'pork' related products (eg: Haribo) we ask the parent to provide a suitable alternative.
- During Activity week, parents are asked to complete a food allergy and food intolerance form to show which food their child can/cannot eat due to food allergies and these are circulated to the relevant class teacher.

Water

- Plain water is freely available throughout the school day to all members of the school community.
- Water fountains are located in all classrooms and in the playground. All the water fountains are 'mains fed' and children may drink the water at any time.
- The staff team are made aware of individual pupil's hydration needs and seek to ensure that these are met.
- Special provision for drinking water is made during hot weather and after physical activity
- Children in KS1 can bring a named water bottle to school with plain water.

Food across the Curriculum

In Reception and KS1, there are a number of opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of health, including healthy-eating patterns and practical skills that are needed to understand where food comes from such as shopping, preparing and cooking food.

- Literacy provides children with the opportunity to explore poetry, persuasion, argument and narrative work using food and food-related issues as a stimulus.
- Maths can offer the possibility of understanding nutrition labelling, calculating quantities for recipes, weighing and measuring ingredients.
- Science provides an opportunity to learn about the types of food available, their nutritional composition, digestion and the function of different nutrients in contributing to health, and how the body responds to exercise.
- RE provides the opportunity to discuss the role of certain foods in the major religions of the world. Children learn about different foods associated with religious festivals.
- ICT can afford pupils the opportunity to research food issues using the internet and other electronic resources. Pupils design packaging and adverts to promote healthy food choices.

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- PSHE encourages children to take responsibility for their own health and well-being, teaches them how to develop a healthy lifestyle and addresses issues such as body image. Pupils are able to discuss issues of interest to young people, e.g. advertising and sustainable development.
- History provides insight into changes in diet and food over time.
- Physical Education provides pupils with the opportunity to develop physically and to understand the practical impact of sport, exercise and other physical activity such as dance and walking.
- Extended learning opportunities and gardening clubs in Year 2
- The curriculum relates to food and nutrition in different subject areas and that it is consistent and up to date.
- Where appropriate, children will understand the requirements of a healthy balanced meal.

Roles & Responsibilities

- The Headteacher – to oversee all aspects of food provision throughout the school, including working with the school caterers, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Food policy.
- Catering Staff - are responsible for ensuring the high quality of food offered on a daily basis. They are committed to staff training and resource provision to make the policy work and achieve its aims (as part of the school development plan)
- Curriculum Leaders – to ensure the curriculum supports healthy eating.
- Teachers and Class Staff – to follow healthy eating guidelines in delivering the curriculum and in the provision of snacks.
- Office Staff – to provide support for all medical aspects of healthy eating ensuring that all pupils with specific dietary requirements are included within the healthy eating agenda.
- Midday Staff/LSAs – to monitor children's eating habits at lunchtimes and advise the class teacher if issues arise.

Monitoring & Evaluation

In order to effectively evaluate this policy, the Governing Body will review and research the school food standards and guidelines in relation to the Food policy on an annual basis. Governors will also monitor and check that the Food policy is upheld in light of any new developments in the School catering system run by Essex County Council, changes in school and any changes to individual needs of the children at St. Helen's Catholic Infant School. They will then identify what areas need to change to develop a more healthy approach to the issue of food in our school.

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