Highfield St Matthew's CE Primary School

As Jesus tells us, 'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven' (Matthew 5:13).

School Food & Drink Policy

March 2026

Our School Vision

'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven' (Matthew 5:13). Our vision inspires and challenges the community we serve to achieve excellence in all they do, and to learn about life in all its fullness, within a welcoming Christian family.

School Aims – How we will Let Our Light Shine

- Every child feels valued, safe and cared for, and makes a positive contribution to their own development and the life of the school, with Christ at its centre
- Our bespoke SHINE curriculum, based on excellence and high expectations, provides rich experiences which motivates, challenges, develops resilience and meets the needs of all children
- Every child achieves their potential and develops their talents and creativity, preparing them for a role in a global society with a lifelong love for learning
- Children & families develop understanding of a faith and Christian values that can guide their lives; knowing Jesus, and putting into action what they are coming to believe and value
- The whole school family flourishes and serves the local Church and community

Introduction

This policy aims to provide an environment that promotes healthy eating and provides healthy, tasty and nutritious food and drink, enabling students to make informed choices about the food they eat

This policy exists to provide a framework for supporting our stated aim of "Every child feels valued, safe and cared for, and makes a positive contribution to their own development.

To maintain healthy development and growth children need to eat a nutritionally well balanced diet. As an Early Years and Primary setting, we are in a strong position to influence and can contribute significantly to improving the health and well-being of your child. Good nutrition in early childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many children are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables.

Objectives

- To enable students to make healthy food choices through the provision of information and development of appropriate skills and attitudes.
- To provide healthy food choices throughout the school day.
- To ensure the provision of drinks meet the relevant standards.
- To encourage students to make healthy food and drink choices

Guidelines

- The school is committed to ensuring that the provision of lunches and other food and drink provided meets the school food standards (Standards for school food in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)).
- It is understood that there is no requirement that lunches must be hot meals, however hot lunches will be provided wherever possible to ensure that all students are able, if they wish, to eat at least one hot meal every day. It is understood that there is no requirement that lunches must be hot meals, however hot lunches catered by the school will be made available to all students should they wish to make use of this service. Where possible the school will assist those eligible to access government funding for school meals.
- Water is available, freely accessible and free of charge at all times on the school premises. Children can access water at any time of the day. We ask that parents send their child into school with a clear, plastic water bottle (not screw top) of no more than 500ml which is the standard size.

- A school lunch is provided for students where a meal is requested and either the student is eligible for free school meals, or it would not be unreasonable for lunches to be provided.
- Facilities are provided for all students to eat the food they bring to school and who are not taking school meals. Children are provided with a supervised area furnished area to eat in, to encourage eating together in a safe social environment.
- Food and nutrition is taught at an appropriate level throughout each key stage in Design and Technology, Science and PSHE.
- Special dietary requirements - the school will endeavour wherever possible to accommodate students' specialist dietary requirements including allergies, intolerances, religious or cultural practices, which Parents are expected to communicate to the school.
- The school expects staff to contribute to and support this food policy across the school day. Staff and visitors will be expected to model good practice behaviour around food and drink and in line with the policy, when in the company of students.

Exemptions to the School Food Regulations
The School Food Regulations do not apply to food provided:
1. at parties or celebrations to mark religious, cultural or special occasions
2. at fundraising events
3. as rewards for achievement, good behaviour or effort
4. for use in teaching food preparation and cookery skills, including where the food prepared is served to pupils as part of a school lunch
5. on an occasional basis by parents or pupils

How healthy food and drink choices are taught through our SHINE Curriculum

Whole School - Healthy Eating Week – Collective Worship & Themed Activities							
Nursery	**Reception**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Year 6**
Understanding the world RE / Festivals Keeping Healthy – Diet and Exercise **PSCHE – Healthy Me** Healthy food **PSCHE – Changing Me - Bodies** Respecting my body	**Managing Self / Self-Regulation** Healthy me **PSCHE** Healthy food **Gross Motor** Use picture books and other resources to explain the importance of the different aspects of a healthy lifestyle **PSCHE** Respecting my body	**Science** The Human Body – How to keep our body healthy **PSCHE** Keeping myself healthy **Design & Technology** Fruit Salad **PE** Health & Fitness	**Geography** Where does our food come from? **PSCHE** Healthy eating & nutrition **Science** Animals and their needs including humans **Design & Technology** Sensational Salad **PE** Health & Fitness	**PSCHE** Healthy and safe choices **Design & Technology** Healthy Rap! **PE** Health & Fitness	**Science** The Human Body **Design & Technology** The Great British Bread Bake Off **Art** Have you had your 5-a-day? **PE** Health & Fitness	**MFL** That's Tasty **PSCHE** Relationships with food Healthy choices **PE** Health & Fitness	**Science** The Human Body: Systems **PE** Health & Fitness **DT** Global Foods – Celebrating seasonality

Packed lunches
The benefits of a healthy packed lunch:

✓ It will help your child to consume a healthier diet & encourage life-long good eating habits
✓ They will have better levels of concentration & energy throughout the day
✓ It will support your child to have better oral health & to maintain a healthy weight
✓ A healthy packed lunch can be a great opportunity to contribute to your child's 5-a-day
✓ You know exactly what is included in their lunch so can see what is eaten, as well as control portion sizes
✓It can reduce food waste – eg. leftovers from home can be used to make a healthy lunch
✓ If children come to school with a healthy, varied lunchbox it can help to encourage others to try new foods (great if your child is a little picky!)

In line with the School Food Standards for England, we ask parents to support us in meeting the guidelines by ensuring that packed lunches adhere to the following principles:

Make sure your packed lunch contains:
1) A portion of bread (or similar), rice, potatoes or pasta
2) Plenty of fruit and vegetables
3) A portion of dairy or a calcium rich alternative
4) Some protein in the form of beans, pulses, fish, egg, meat
5) A healthy drink

- ✓ Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta: These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Good choices include rolls, bread, wraps, chapatti, pitta bread, pasta or rice salad. Wholemeal varieties are good options as they contain more fibre than white varieties.
- ✓ Fruit & Vegetables: Fruit and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals and fibre. Eating these foods keep children healthy and reduces the risk of disease in later life. Lunches should include at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables.
- ✓ Dairy & Alternatives: These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Include one portion at lunch, for example a drink of semi-skimmed or skimmed milk or unsweetened (fortified) soya milk, an individual cheese portion or pot of plain or low sugar yoghurt, or dairy free alternative.
- ✓ Beans, Pulses, Fish, Eggs, Meat: These foods provide protein for growth. Packed lunches should include one portion of these foods each day. Suggestions include boiled egg, ham, chicken, soya, Quorn, tuna, mackerel, salmon, hummus, chickpeas, lentils or beans.
- ✓ Drinks: It is important to stay hydrated. The best drinks options are always plain water or milk (semi-skimmed, skimmed or unsweetened (fortified) alternative)). Try to avoid fruit juices and fizzy drinks – if necessary, switch to no-added sugar cordial instead or add a slice of orange or lime to add flavour to plain water. Lunchtime drinks must be separate from water bottles which children consume during the day.

The following items will be sent home if packed in a lunch box:

- **chocolate bars**
- **sweets**
- **fizzy drinks**

Please note: We are a nut free site, due to some students having severe nut allergies – therefore we are not able to allow in school consumption of items containing nuts.

Morning Break Snacks
Children in Reception-Year 2 receive a free piece of fruit every day on the government's free fruit scheme. Toast (on brown bread) is available every morning free of charge to all children in Key Stage Two (Years 3-6.)

Alternatively, children may bring in any of the following:

- seeds
- vegetables or fruit
- Savoury crackers or breadsticks

These should be brought in a separate container (separate to lunchbox food)

Breakfast/After School Club Care (Trinity)

Trinity also works within the school food guidelines. Please see Trinity Policy for additional information.

Drinks in School

Water is freely available all day. Children may bring in a clear water bottle to drink throughout the day. Milk or water is provided as part of school meals. Children on packed lunches should bring a separate drink for packed lunches. (This is due to lunchtime transition arrangements)

The Role of Parents

Pupils are normally expected to eat the lunch provided by the school. However, parents of pupils wishing to have packed lunches for a particular reason are expected to provide their children with packed lunches which conform to the packed lunch policy.

The Role of Governors

The governing body supports the headteacher in implementing the school food and drink policy. It considers all representations from parents regarding this policy and liaises with the headteacher to ensure that it is implemented fairly and with sensitivity.

Appendix 1

For a balanced packed lunch select these healthier foods and drinks:

	Fruit and Vegetables	Include at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad every day.	✔
	Meat and Alternatives	Meat, fish or another source of non-dairy protein should be included every day. Non-dairy sources of protein include lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus, peanut butter† and falafel.	✔
	Oily Fish	Including oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks.	✔
	Starchy Food	A starchy food such as any type of bread or pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other cereals, should be included every day.	✔
	Milk and Dairy Food	Include a dairy food such as semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day.	✔
	Drinking Water	Free, fresh drinking water should be available at all times.	✔
	Healthier Drinks	Including only water, still or sparkling, fruit juice, semi-skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies.	✔

Avoid including these foods in packed lunches:

	Snacks	Snacks such as crisps should not be included. Instead, include nuts†, seeds, vegetables and fruit (with no added salt, sugar or fat). Savoury crackers or breadsticks served with fruit, vegetables or dairy food are also a good choice.	✖
	Confectionery	Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits and sweets should not be included. Cakes and biscuits are allowed but encourage your child to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.	✖
	Meat Products	Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies corned meat and sausages/chipolatas should be included only occasionally.	✖

†Be aware of nut allergies. Refer to the school policy on nuts or visit **www.allergyinschools.co.uk** for more information

Appendix 2

The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.

FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY
food.gov.uk

Fruit and vegetables
Any fruit and vegetables can be included, try to include at least one portion a day.

Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta
All varieties of starchy foods are acceptable, try to include wholegrain when possible.

Milk and dairy foods
Try to include dairy food every day.

Meat, fish, eggs, beans
Either meat, fish, eggs or another source of non-dairy protein should be included every day.

Foods high in fat and/or sugar
Small amounts of food high in fat and/or sugar can be eaten in a balanced diet, but should not be included in packed lunches. We ask that they are eaten outside school.

Drinks high in fat and/or sugar
Schools may choose to implement a 'water only' policy. To meet standards fresh drinking water should be available at all times and all fizzy drinks including sugar-free and diet should be barred.

Appendix 3

Lunchbox styles

We have limited space in school, and therefore we ask that the following style of lunchboxes are brought into school.

Water bottle styles – maximum 500ml