



St. James CofE Primary School

Whole School Food Policy



*Creating and promoting a healthy
school food environment for all*

**FOOD
ACTIVE • HEG** Health
Equalities
Group



Checklist:

- ☐ 1. Equal opportunities
- ☐ 2. Curriculum
- ☐ 3. Food & Drink Provision throughout the School Day
- ☐ 4. Healthier Snacks
- ☐ 5. Rewards & Occasions
- ☐ 6. Food Waste & Sustainability
- ☐ 7. The Food & Dining Environment & Role modelling
- ☐ 8. Special Dietary Requirements
- ☐ 9. Engagement with Parents
- ☐ 10. Food Safety
- ☐ 11. Monitoring & Evaluation

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Introduction

St. James CofE Primary School is committed to fostering a learning environment that encourages healthier eating and supports pupils, staff and the wider school community in making informed food and drink choices. This goal will be achieved through a comprehensive, school-wide approach to food and nutrition, outlined in this Whole School Food Policy.

The nutritional principles of this policy are based on the latest findings of the [National Diet and Nutrition Survey \(NDNS\) rolling programme 2019-2023](#), the [School Food Standards](#) and the [Government's Eatwell Guide](#). A whole-school approach to food ensures that leadership, teaching, food provision and the wider school environment all work together to help pupils understand how to keep themselves healthy and make informed choices about eating and wellbeing. This approach also helps support Ofsted's latest expectations for personal development, behaviour and welfare by embedding consistent, positive messages about healthy eating throughout the school day.

Food Policy lead

This whole school food policy and healthier eating strategy is co-ordinated by:
Mrs Tina Briers - Head of School

Aims

The main aims of our school food policy are:

- ✓ To provide healthy food and drink choices throughout the school day, aligning with the mandatory [School Food Standards](#), and to ensure food and drink brought into school meet the School Food Standards.
- ✓ To enable pupils to make healthier food and drink choices through the provision of information and the development of appropriate food skills, behaviours and attitudes.
- ✓ To ensure a consistent and engaged approach to nutritious and sustainable food that promotes wellbeing across the school community, including pupils, staff and parents/carers and considering SEND children and children with complex health needs such i.e. coeliac disease or severe allergies.
- ✓ To ensure pupils with special dietary requirements are catered for, including allergies, intolerances, ethical, religious and/or cultural needs.

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These aims will be addressed through the following areas:



1. Equal Opportunities:

We value every individual and are committed to providing equal access to food and drink across the school. This includes ensuring fair access to school meals, encouraging full uptake, and supporting vulnerable families with food provision during term breaks and holidays.

2. Curriculum:

The school consistently promotes the government's [Eatwell Guide](#) across all subjects, using effective teaching methods, staff training, and positive role-modelling. Parents and carers are supported through take-home resources to reinforce healthy eating at home. Extra-curricular activities further develop the skills, behaviours and attitudes that encourage healthier eating and engage both children and families.

3. Food & Drink Provision Throughout the School Day:

The School Food Standards apply to all food served during the school day - including breakfast, mid-morning break and after-school clubs until 6pm. We also expect food brought into school by pupils, parents, or staff to align with these standards.

✓ **Breakfast**

The school runs a breakfast club offering a nutritious start to the day from 8:20am.

The menu includes: Toast, cereals and fruit.

The menu is available on the school website.

The club is free to all pupils, funded through government funding.

✓ **School Lunches**

Lunches are provided by St. Helens Council and served between 12:20pm – 1:05pm in the dining hall. All meals meet the School Food Standards and follow a menu cycle available on the school website.

✓ **Packed Lunches**

Parents and carers are encouraged to provide balanced lunches that support pupils' wellbeing.

* We work with families to address any concerns, understand children's food preferences, consider affordability, and support positive changes - for example, by recommending school meals or involving pupils in cooking and food-growing activities.

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✓ Drinks

The school operates a Milk or Water Only policy. Milk and water are the healthiest options for hydration, oral health and reducing obesity risk.

Fresh drinking water is always available, and children under 5 are eligible for 250ml of subsidised milk each school day.

The School Food Standards also allow a limited range of additional drinks, such as:

- ✓ **lower-fat milk**
- ✓ **small portions of fruit or vegetable juice (up to 150ml),**
- ✓ **calcium-enriched plant-based drinks,**
- ✓ **plain fermented milk (e.g. yoghurt) drinks**
- ✓ **certain low-sugar combinations, all with less than 5% added sugars or honey; tea, coffee, hot chocolate.**

4. Healthier Snacks:

Children eligible for the [School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme](#) receive a free daily piece of fruit or vegetables. In line with the School Food Standards, snacks allowed during the school day:

- ✓ **nuts & seeds**
- ✓ **Fruit & vegetables with no added salt, sugar or fat**

Certain items may only be served alongside lunch, such as:

- ✓ **savoury crackers & breadsticks**
- ✓ **non-confectionary desserts**



These rules also apply to after-school clubs and the morning break menu includes fruit and milk. Caffeinated drinks, sugary drinks, zero-sugar drinks, energy drinks, cordial and milkshakes are not permitted.

Pupils must not bring the following for break-time or after-school snacks:

- ✓ **chocolate or chocolate-coated items**
- ✓ **sweets & confectionary**
- ✓ **Crisps & fried snacks**
- ✓ **Desserts containing confectionary**
- ✓ **Fizzy, sugary, energy or caffeinated drinks**

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Approved snack options:

- ✓ **fresh fruit & vegetables (e.g. berries, carrot sticks, apple slices)**
- ✓ **wholegrain items (e.g. rice cakes, oat bars, plain popcorn)**
- ✓ **low-fat dairy (e.g. plain yogurt, cheese cubes)**
- ✓ **water or milk**

We promote healthy choices through **PSHE** lessons, family support such as newsletters and recipe ideas, and peer-led initiatives like the student council and healthy snack ambassadors. Staff model positive behaviours, and periodic snack audits help us monitor progress and guide future actions.



5. Rewards & Special Occasions:

The school does not use food as a reward, as this can negatively affect children's attitudes toward healthy eating. Staff instead use non-food rewards such as praise, postcards, stickers, certificates, trips or gift vouchers. Parents may share healthier cultural foods for celebrations, while sweets and cakes are discouraged. Fund-raising events may occasionally include confectionery, but healthier options are encouraged, and any sweets brought into school are returned to parents.

6. Food Waste & Sustainability:

The school is committed to reducing avoidable food waste through regular audits and initiatives such as using leftovers in cooking sessions, with additional methods added where appropriate. We also aim to minimise environmental impact by using locally sourced, fresh and seasonal ingredients wherever possible which are locally sourced. Children are encouraged to bring reusable water bottles and to drink water regularly to stay hydrated. The school further supports sustainability through 'meat-free options' and by incorporating plant-based proteins into meals.

7. The Food and Dining Environment & Role modelling:

Our school is committed to creating a positive food environment that supports healthy eating habits, positive social interaction, inclusivity, sustainability and respectful behaviour.

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Whole School Dining Experience

St. James' Primary School works to improve the dining experience by making the space welcoming, promoting healthy eating through food choices and displays, and involving pupils in menu design. The school promotes an inclusive environment where all children eat together and on occasion teaching staff join pupils in the dining hall.

Role Modelling

Staff play a key role in modelling positive behaviours. The school ensures:

- ✓ **clean & safe dining spaces**
- ✓ **supervised & calm mealtimes**
- ✓ **inclusive seating & unhurried eating**
- ✓ **positive communication**
- ✓ **clear promotion of healthy choices**

To reduce stigma around free school meals, the school uses an anonymous online ordering system called 'School Grid', where parents can order their meals at home. Marketing of less healthy products is restricted, and instead the school promotes healthier habits through supportive messaging. The PSHE curriculum also teaches pupils about junk-food marketing and the factors that influence food choices.

8. Special Dietary Requirements:

The school supports all pupils with special dietary needs, including allergies, intolerances and cultural or ethical requirements. Individual allergy care plans are created by our senior first aiders and reviewed annually, and caterers are informed of all dietary needs through the school's agreed procedures. The school also works closely with parents and carers to ensure any child requiring a special diet, including for SEND reasons, is appropriately catered for.

9. Engagement with Parents:

St. James' Primary School clearly communicates with parents and families about how updates/resources will be shared, for example, via newsletters/ online systems/school websites/coffee mornings.

10. Food Safety:

All staff involved in serving food are trained in food safety and hygiene, and the school follows appropriate procedures for safe storage, preparation and handling. Food safety risks are

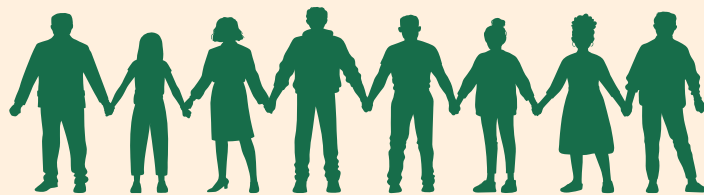
monitored in consultation with the local Environmental Health Department. Mobile caterers must also meet required hygiene standards and offer healthy options.

11. Monitoring & Evaluation:

Stakeholders are invited to an annual review of the Whole School Food Policy and to contribute to a healthy eating approach where appropriate.

Additionally:

- ✓ Complete regular audits of school food to ensure the school food standards are being met
- ✓ Regular consultation with pupils and families about what is working well, what food is brought into schools, barriers to school meal uptake and how to improve
- ✓ Track free school meal and school meal uptake



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Date of policy implementation:

May 2026

Proposed review date:

May 2028

Recommended review every 2 years.

