



SHENFIELD ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Food Policy

Ratified: Summer 2024

Review due: Summer 2027

Vision of the School:

Unlock every child's potential as a unique child of God

"May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith, that being rooted and grounded in love, you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." *Ephesians 3: 17-19*

Our aim is to ensure that every child's unique strengths are celebrated and strengthened alongside gaining an excellent academic, social, emotional and physical education.

Rationale

Through this policy, we aim to provide all of our pupils with healthy food at school, giving them the healthiest lifestyle possible to reaching their individual potential.

The school is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes healthy eating and enabling pupils to make informed choices about the food they eat. This will be achieved by the whole school approach to food and nutrition documented in this whole school food policy.

At Shenfield St Mary's we recognise the importance of a healthy lifestyle and diet, and understand that establishing a balanced diet in childhood helps establish healthy eating habits for life. We also recognise that there is a strong link between a healthy diet and effective learning.

Numerous scientific reports have outlined the case for a healthy diet that is low in fat, sugar and salt, and high in fibre, with plenty of starchy foods, fruit and vegetables. Many have emphasised the need for this to begin in childhood.

It is well established that obesity and many illness are related to poor diet or incorrectly prepared food. A healthy balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables and starchy foods can help reduce the risk of diseases such as heart disease and some cancers. Good food hygiene practices can reduce the risk of food poisoning illness such as those caused by E.coli and salmonella.

Well-nourished pupils are likely to be more receptive to teaching and will learn better.

Food knowledge and skills, including menu planning, cooking and gardening, have an important role to play in enriching our social development and in celebrating, nurturing and increasing our appreciation of cultural diversity.

Food Mission Statement

To influence and improve the health of the whole school community by providing pupils and their families with ways to establish and maintain lifelong healthy eating habits that benefit both themselves and the environment.

The will be accomplished by providing high quality food education and ensuring we deliver a consistent message with regard to food and a healthy lifestyle throughout the school day.

Aims

The main aims of our food policy are:

1. To provide healthy food choices throughout the school day.
2. Improve the health of our school community by influencing their eating habits through increasing their knowledge and awareness of a healthy diet, and how to ensure that the food is prepared hygienically, including what constitutes a healthy diet, and hygienic food preparation and storage methods.
3. To give our children, parents and staff the information they need to make healthy choices.

What do we do to support our aims?

This policy reflects the 'School food in England: advice for governing boards, March 2019' guidance and 'the Requirements for 'School Food Regulations 2014'.

- Upon induction to the school, parents/carers are given a 'Healthy Food Leaflet' which outlines what constitutes a balanced meal, including ideas for packed lunches and a snack. This is also shared in the parents'/carers' induction meeting.
- A hot school meal is available every day at school, unless a child is on a school planned visit. All EYFS of Key Stage 1 pupils are eligible for a free school meal every day.
- The school menu provides three different choices per day. These always include a vegetarian option and cold option. Some days, but not all, include meat. There is only a 'treat' desert once per week. Other days may offer a healthy treat but fruit and yoghurt is available every day.
- The menu is reviewed to ensure that each day and over a week there is a healthy balance on offer, for example, oily fish once per week.
- Children are encouraged to drink water with every school meal. Whole milk is available for pupils under five. Lower fat milk is available for infants of benefits-based free school meals pupils as part of their school meal.
- Parents/carers are given guidance (in the 'Healthy Food Leaflet') regarding the contents expected within a packed lunch provided from home. Chocolate is always discouraged and we suggest that it is a treat for home.
- Due to the high number of pupils with nut allergies, all nuts in packed lunches or snacks are discouraged.
- Pupils with allergies are catered for in partnership with their parents/carers. We ask them to liaise with the office team to identify what they can/cannot eat on the menu and we provide alternatives where practicable.
- Morning snacks are only fruit or vegetables. It is difficult to monitor whether a cereal bar would be judged to be healthy or not, therefore are treats for home only. All EYFS and Key Stage 1 pupils are eligible for a free piece of fruit or vegetable every school day outside of their school lunch.
- If a pupil is not eating their lunch, we will liaise with the parent/carer to agree how best to support the child further. This is the responsibility of the class teacher to liaise with all involved.
- Class rewards are activity based not food based (eg sweets).
- Birthday sweets are given out by pupils outside of school time, supported by parents/carers should they chose to do so. The school will not hand out birthday sweet or cakes on behalf of the parent/carer.
- If a child brings in a cake, or similar food, that she/he has made out of choice to support her/his homework, this will be shared in school.

This policy will be monitored by the school leadership team and the local board of governors. It will be reviewed every three years, or earlier if legislation changes.