



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School **Food and Nutrition Policy**

Background Information to the school

- 236 children on roll at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School from Nursery to Year 6 (January 2026).
- Within our school 50% of our pupils are eligible for FSM
- Currently we have 175 children accessing school dinners and 61 pupils accessing packed lunches (26 nursery pupils) (Jan 26)
- Nursery pupils are to bring a packed lunch from home and must follow our packed lunch guidance.
- Our designated catering contractor is Food for Thought [Food for Thought](#)
- Our school has a 5-star rating.

Aims and Objectives

Our school is committed to promoting healthy eating and ensuring that all pupils and staff have access to nutritious, safe, and enjoyable food throughout the day. The aims of this policy are:

- **Promote Health and Awareness**
Support the health of pupils and staff by encouraging positive eating habits and increasing knowledge and understanding of food and nutrition.
- **Provide Nutritious Options**
Ensure that pupils and staff have access to tasty, balanced meals at break and lunch, along with a safe and easily accessible water supply during the school day.
- **Consistent Healthy Messages**
Present clear and consistent messages about healthy eating across all aspects of school life.
- **Respect Individual Needs**
Ensure that food provision reflects the medical, allergenic, religious, cultural, and ethical requirements of pupils and staff, including vegetarian and other dietary needs.
- **Enjoyable and Safe Experience**
Make sure that eating and drinking in school is a positive, safe, and enjoyable experience for everyone.
- **Breakfast Support**
Provide food for pupils who arrive at school without having eaten breakfast, ensuring no child starts the day hungry.
- **Work in Partnership with Parents**
Collaborate with parents to promote healthy eating habits at home and support access to healthy choices.
- **Meet Government Standards**
Ensure that all food served in school complies with current government guidelines and standards.
- **Access to Fresh Drinking Water**
Guarantee that all pupils have free access to fresh drinking water throughout the school day.

Food throughout the day

Breakfast Club

We are proud to offer a **free Breakfast Club** for all pupils from **Reception to Year 6**. This provides children with a healthy start to the day and supports their readiness for learning.

What's included?

Children are offered a nutritious breakfast, which may include options such as wholegrain cereals, toast, fruit, and milk.

Timings:

Breakfast Club opens at **8:00am**, and children must arrive by **8:15am** to ensure they have time to eat and enjoy the activities.

Activities:

Alongside sharing food with their peers, children can play indoors or take part in a **fitness activity**, promoting both social interaction and physical wellbeing.

Break times and snack

Children do **not** need to bring snacks into school. As part of our commitment to healthy eating, all pupils are offered a piece of fruit or a vegetable each day. This is provided through the **School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme**, which supports children in developing healthy eating habits.

In addition, children in **EYFS and Key Stage 1** are also offered milk daily, in line with the **UK Healthy Schools guidance** and the **Nursery Milk Scheme**.

Providing these snacks ensures that every child has access to a nutritious option during the school day, reducing the need for additional items from home and promoting consistency in healthy choices.

School Lunches

Our school meals are provided by Food for Thought Services and fully comply with current government standards. Each meal includes fresh fruit and vegetables daily, offering children a variety of healthy choices. Both hot and cold options are available, each designed to ensure nutritional balance. All pupils, regardless of their lunch slot or position in the queue, have access to a nutritionally balanced meal, although specific choices may vary. Menus are reviewed at least twice a year, displayed for pupils and staff, and shared with parents on the school website [St Patrick's School Menu](#)

We recognise that not all families take up their entitlement to Free School Meals (FSM), and we continue to encourage participation. To promote hot meal uptake, we run initiatives such as themed lunch days. Our aim is to provide a positive dining experience for every child, balancing time and space to create a welcoming environment.

Packed Lunches

Many children bring a packed lunch to school. We also share reminders and tips in our school newsletter to help families make informed choices. Through school initiatives, we encourage parents and pupils to think carefully about what to include.

Our expectations:

- Sweets, chocolate bars, and fizzy or sugary drinks are not permitted. Water is provided for all pupils.
- A healthy lunchbox should include:
 - At least one portion of fruit and/or vegetables (e.g., salad, carrot sticks, apple slices).
 - A starchy food such as bread, rice, pasta, or potatoes.
 - A source of protein such as meat, fish, eggs, beans, or pulses.
 - A dairy item such as cheese or yoghurt.
 - Water as the best drink option.

We recommend parents include a cool pack in lunchboxes, especially during warmer months, to keep food fresh and safe.

While we respect parental choice, if a lunchbox is repeatedly found to contain unsuitable or unhealthy items, parents may be invited to meet with the Head Teacher to discuss this matter.

For guidance on healthy packed lunches, please refer to:

- [School Food Standards – Practical Guide \(GOV.UK\)](#)
- [NHS Change4Life – Healthy Lunchbox Ideas](#)
- [NHS – Healthy Eating for Children](#)
- [Food a Fact of Life – Packed Lunch Guidance](#)

Nursery Pupils - In line with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** framework and **School Food Standards**, we aim to promote healthy eating habits from the earliest years. If your child brings a packed lunch to nursery, please follow the above healthy eating guidelines however please take note of the below choking guidance.

Choking Risk Guidance

Young children are at higher risk of choking, so please prepare food safely:

- **Cut grapes, cherry tomatoes, and similar round foods lengthways into quarters.**
- **Remove stones and pits** from fruit.
- Avoid hard foods such as **whole nuts, raw carrot sticks (unless thinly sliced), and hard-boiled sweets.**
- Cut meat and cheese into **small, manageable pieces.**
- Avoid sticky foods like **peanut butter or chewy sweets**, which can block airways.
- Ensure any food sent in is **age-appropriate and easy to chew.**

Special diets (to include religious and ethical dietary requirements) and allergies

To keep all members of our school community safe, **no nuts are permitted in school.** This includes all food items brought from home. We also do not allow birthday cakes or similar treats, as these can sometimes contain traces of nuts. Our school provides several **Halal meal options, vegetarian and vegan** to ensure inclusivity for all pupils. If your child has a food allergy or specific dietary requirement, please inform the school as soon as possible. We will work with you to make any necessary adjustments and ask that you provide relevant **medical documentation.** This helps us ensure that every child is safe and supported during mealtimes. Our school catering team will be made aware of any adjustments that need to be made.

Water for all

Fresh cooled water is freely available throughout the school day to all members of the school community. Regular water and brain breaks are built into the school day and curriculum by class teachers. Please ensure that your child has a named water bottle.

Food across the Curriculum

Throughout **EYFS, KS1, and KS2**, pupils have multiple opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of health, healthy eating patterns, and practical skills such as shopping, preparing, and cooking food. These experiences are embedded across the curriculum:

- **Literacy:** Pupils explore poetry, persuasive writing, arguments, and narratives using food-related themes as a stimulus.

- **Mathematics:** Opportunities include interpreting nutrition labels, calculating recipe quantities, and weighing and measuring ingredients.
- **Science:** Children learn about food types, nutritional composition, digestion, the role of nutrients in health, and how the body responds to exercise.
- **Religious Education (RE):** Pupils discuss the role of food in major world religions and experience foods linked to religious festivals.
- **ICT:** Pupils research food issues online and design packaging or adverts promoting healthy choices.
- **Design & Technology (Food Technology):** Practical work focuses on where food comes from and applying healthy eating messages through preparation and cooking.
- **PSHE:** Encourages responsibility for health and wellbeing, promotes healthy lifestyles, and addresses topics such as body image, advertising, and sustainability.
- **Music:** Pupils explore the properties of foods like pulses and grains when used in percussion instruments.
- **Geography:** Examines the impact of consumer choices on global communities and food production.
- **History:** Investigates changes in diet and food over time.
- **Physical Education:** Develops physical skills and understanding of the benefits of exercise and activity.
- **Gardening:** Provides hands-on experience in growing, harvesting, and even selling produce.
- **School Visits & Extra-Curricular Activities:** Include residential trips, gardening clubs, and extensive PE opportunities.
- **Theme Days** focus on teaching essential skills such as food technology, safe preparation, healthy choices, and sustainability. These events also highlight the importance of reducing food waste and promoting recycling and composting. We are proud of the variety of food-related events we host throughout the year, where families are invited to come together, share food, and enjoy time as a community

Partnership with parents and carers

Parents and carers are regularly updated on our food policies through school newsletters and website. We ask parents to provide healthy packed lunches and hold information evenings to discuss hidden sugars in our foods.

Role of the Governors

Governors play an essential role in agreeing and ratifying the policy. They will then monitor and check that the policy is upheld throughout the school. They can also offer guidance. Governors meet with the school council who discuss the meals and feedback the meetings they have held with the cook.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The breakfast club serve foods in accordance with this policy. Teachers and Coordinators are responsible for the curriculum development of the food policy. The head teacher and PSHE or Healthy Schools Coordinator are responsible for supporting colleagues in the delivery of the food policy. The LA is responsible for ensuring food offered adheres to government standards and will periodically undertake unannounced audits at the school to ensure these standards are being met.

This policy will be reviewed in three years to take account of new developments and to ensure the school is as healthy as possible.

Healthy eating for staff

As an employer, we will encourage staff members to engage in a healthy lifestyle. We will encourage employees to make healthy eating choices through the use of promotional and motivational resources, e.g., encouraging employees to make healthy choices from the canteen menu. They will also have access to water in all meeting and training rooms. We will also work to educate staff about the positive impact of exercise and encourage them to participate in different initiatives (Eg; Kick off Kilometer, Staff yoga).

Dissemination of the policy

All staff and governors will receive a copy of this policy. Electronic copies will be kept alongside all other school policies. Copies will be available in school for parents and visitors on the website.

Policy written by: J Lewis

Date of policy: December 2025

Review date: July 2027

Ratified by Governors: 6th July 2027

Food For Thoughts at St Patricks Catholic Primary School,

St Patricks Catholic Primary School Upper Hill Street
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