St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School
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Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy

July 2026

Policy:	Healthy Eating

Approved by:	Headteacher/SLT
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VERSION CONTROL			
VERSION	**DATE**	**AUTHOR**	**CHANGES**
2024	16.07.24	B Enever	Values added Changes to legal framework Updated Healthy Eating Statement
2025	07.07.25	Susan Wilson	No changes – check school bus before publishing no updates since 20.02.24
2026	27.07.26	E Dallison	Updated Headteacher's names Updated 7. Lunch section Removal of Treats and Prizes section – merged with Exemptions section

This policy has been created in line with our School Values:

Courage

We are called to create an environment where both children and staff aspire to be, and give, their best. Everyone is emboldened to take risks, overcome challenges and be courageous in their efforts to achieve their potential. Leaders challenge poor school attendance in order that children can access learning and:

- gain knowledge, skills and experiences to navigate life in an evolving world; and
- develop characteristics such as self-belief, ambition, and resilience to overcome life's challenges.

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you." (Joshua 1:9)

Love

Jesus embodies the love and compassion of God for each person, and Christians are called to follow him in this. In our family, love impels us to:

- put others' needs above our own;
- act with humility and without entitlement;
- empower all our community to flourish and succeed;
- provide a haven of compassion and safety, where children and adults know that they are cherished; and
- support those who are struggling to attend school because they are experiencing suffering and sadness.

"Let all that you do be done in love." (1 Corinthians 16:14)

Respect

We seek to model to children an ethos of living well together. The flourishing of pupils goes hand in hand with the flourishing of the wider school community: staff, families, governors and friends of the school. Just as Jesus respected people by taking the time to care for them, we endeavor to:

- celebrate the Christian faith;
- foster deep respect for other cultures, faiths and traditions;
- provide an inclusive environment where special provision is afforded to those with disabilities or special educational needs; and
- challenge inequality.

"Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them." (Matthew 7:12)

Forgiveness

Faults, flaws, and mistakes are an unavoidable part of human life. Though Jesus preached the importance of repentance, even in moments of great personal torture, he prayed for forgiveness for his tormentors. Therefore, in our family, we seek to:

- hold ourselves and others accountable for our/their actions, including school attendance;
- have a robust approach to dealing with persistent absenteeism;
- repent when we fall short of our own and others' expectations; and
- forgive others for their indiscretions.

"If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him." (Luke 17:3)

Honesty

An honest person makes a habit of making accurate, trustworthy statements about life, self, others, and God; they represent themself just as they are and tell others the truth about themselves. That said, the Bible tells us that honesty should always be accompanied by gentleness (Colossians 4:6). With this in mind, we strive to build kind and trusting relationships by:

- speaking and acting with integrity;
- ensuring that children have a strong voice in relation to their attendance at school, and acting on this; and
- working openly and compassionately with families in relation to pupils' attendance, even when messages might be difficult to give or receive.

"And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32)

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Statement of intent

At St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School, it's important to us that pupils eat healthily and keep hydrated while in school. We also aim to teach pupils to make healthy food and drink choices using the curriculum and to reflect these principles in the school's food menu and cooking provisions.

We acknowledge the important connection between a healthy diet and a pupil's ability to learn, concentrate, and achieve high standards in school. We are, therefore, committed to promoting a lasting healthy lifestyle for everyone.

As part of our healthy eating and living campaign, our catering will uphold the highest standards of quality, nutrition and cleanliness, adhering, without exception, to food standards and legal obligations. As such, this policy has been implemented to help staff and parents deliver consistent messages to pupils, enabling them to develop a positive and independent approach to a healthy lifestyle.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014
- The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019 (Natasha's Law)
- Food Safety Act 1990
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following non-statutory guidance:

- DfE (2023 'School food in England'
- DfE (2023) 'School food standards practical guide'
- The School Plan (2015) 'School Food Standards: A practical guide for schools, their cooks and caterers'

1.3. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Allergen and Anaphylaxis Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the school promotes healthy eating and drinking habits to pupils.
- Ensuring the school meets the requirements of the School Food Standards.
- Ensuring the school makes reasonable adjustments where necessary for pupils with particular requirements, e.g. to reflect medical, dietary or cultural needs.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Managing, or appointing a member of staff to manage, the school's approach to healthy eating and drinking.
- Putting measures in place to ensure the school meets the requirements of the School Food Standards and other related legislation, such as Natasha's Law.

3. Our aims

3.1. To integrate a whole-school ethos towards healthy eating; therefore, helping both staff and pupils to perform well, concentrate better and improve general wellbeing.

3.2. To ensure all pupils to be well nourished and hydrated, and to ensure they have access to nutritious food and safe drinking water during the school day.

3.3. To encourage pupils to make informed food and drink choices in school and at home, contributing to life-long healthy eating habits.

3.4. To use the curriculum to teach pupils safe, hygienic methods of preparing, handling and storing food, and to inform them about the benefits of choosing healthy options.

3.5. To ensure there are consistent messages about healthy eating throughout the school.

3.6. To keep food, health, and nutrition aspects of the curriculum up to date.

3.7. To ensure the school reflects the ethical, medical, and religious dietary requirements of staff and pupils, and that suitable provisions are available.

3.8. To celebrate diversity with cuisines from different cultures and other individual choices (e.g. vegetarianism); therefore, encouraging pupils to learn about and try new foods.

3.9. To encourage fluid intake and help pupils keep hydrated, maintain concentration, reduce lethargy, and learn effectively.

3.10. To inform staff and parents which provisions are permitted in school and to ensure they can effectively monitor what pupils are eating.

3.11. To encourage staff to participate in our healthy eating ethos and act as role models to pupils.

4. Healthy eating statement

4.1. The school uses healthier cooking methods to contribute to healthy eating, such as the following:

- Using less fat in cooking
- Baking foods rather than frying them
- Where fats are used, increasing the use of healthier varieties
- Reducing the use of sugar in recipes
- Avoiding using additional salt in cooking processes
- Increasing the use of food items containing high amounts of fibre

4.2. All menus are developed in accordance with the nutritional standards set by The School Food Plan 2015 in 'School Food Standards: A practical guide for schools, their cooks and caterers'

4.3. The school encourages pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles, both through a nutritional diet and regular exercise, and during assemblies, PE lessons and RSE.

4.4. The school adopts a healthy eating strategy and embeds its principles throughout the curriculum.

5. Drinks

5.1. The school teaches pupils the importance of drinking plenty of fluids and how hydration helps contribute to effective learning, good health and improved physical performance.

5.2. The school provides safe drinking water throughout the school day. This is available via school sinks, in water jugs placed on dining hall tables, and from taps labelled 'drinking water'. Staff have access to drinking water in the staff room.

5.3. The school encourages pupils to consume extra fluids on hot days and during and after physical activity, e.g. PE and sports days.

5.4. Pupils are encouraged to have a water bottle with them to school. This can be consumed in the classroom and pupils are encouraged to take these home daily to be washed. The school takes no responsibility for cleaning these.

5.5. Pupils are permitted to refill water bottles via the school sinks during the school day.

5.6. Drinks with added sugar are not available with school meals.

5.7. The school does not permit fizzy drinks in bottles or cans on the premises at any time. These items will be retained by staff and returned to the pupil at the end of the school day.

5.8. The school understands the importance of healthy development for pupils under the age of five in an early year setting. In line with the Nursery Milk Scheme set by the Department of Health, one third of a pint of milk will be offered free of charge, once per day, for all pupils.

6. Breaktime snacks

6.1. The school encourages pupils to eat a snack at breaktime. As part of our healthy eating ethos, this will be either a piece of fruit or vegetable without added sugar, fat or salt. This is provided by the school.

6.2. The school does not permit any other snacks to be eaten at breaktime.

6.3. In line with the government's 'School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme', a piece of fresh fruit or vegetable is available to pupils aged four to six at morning breaktime.

7. Lunch

7.1. All school meals meet the national guidelines for nutritional standards and food safety regulations. Our meals are supplied in conjunction with Eatwell and prepared by fully trained catering staff.

7.2. School meals include two portions of fruit, vegetables or salad per meal.

7.3. Portion sizes are in line with the School Food Standards to help provide pupils with a nutritionally balanced meal and prevent excessive calorie intake.

7.4. School meals include foods that are naturally rich in vitamins and minerals to support pupils' health and physical development.

7.5. The school provides pupils with drinking water with their meal. Additional water is available from jugs on dining hall tables.

7.6. Dining staff monitor pupils' food intake during lunchtime by allowing them only to leave their table once they are finished eating. Pupils will put their litter in their lunchboxes and return them to the lunch trolley. If staff feel that a pupil is not eating well, we will notify their parents.

7.7. Themed meals and meals served to celebrate festivals, holidays, or religious observances follow the same standards applied to regular school meals.

7.8. School meals do not include drinks with added sugar, chocolates or sweets.

7.9. School meals do not include more than two portions of deep fried, battered or breaded food a week.

7.10. Pupils will not be permitted to share or swap any food, including that provided from home in a packed lunch or snacks.

7.11. The school allows still drinks in cartons or plastic bottles as part of a pupil's packed lunch.

7.12. Pupils are not permitted to bring chocolate, sweets, and other confectionary as part of a packed lunch. Food items that are not in line with our Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy will be retained by dining staff and returned to the pupil at the end of the school day. Alternative food items will be provided. If a pupil brings a lunch that is completely inappropriate, the school will provide a replacement meal for which parents will be charged.

7.13. Concerns about the contents of a pupil's packed lunch will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately. The pupil's parent will be contacted via **email** to remind them of the need to follow the school's policy. If a pupil's packed lunch continues to not be appropriate, the school will contact the parents to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter further.

8. Exemptions

8.1. The school recognises the following exemptions to the Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy:

- Food, drink and treats at parties or celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions
- Provisions at fund-raising events
- Treats as rewards for achievement, good behaviour or effort
- Provisions used when teaching food preparation and cookery skills, including where the food is served to pupils as part of a school lunch
- Food and drinks provided on an occasional basis by parents or pupils (including nut free confectionary items as treats for their classmates). This could include for a birthday or from a holiday.

9. Curriculum

9.1. The school's Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy is integrated into our curriculum. This will be achieved through the following teaching areas:

- RSE
- PE
- Science
- D&T

9.2. The school communicates how to lead a healthy lifestyle and make good food choices via the following:

- School assembly
- Guest speakers
- Sending school menus home
- Staff as role models

10. Allergies and dietary requirements

10.1. The school ensures the correct food safety measures are in place, in line with the Allergen and Anaphylaxis Policy and the Health and Safety Policy, to protect pupils with known allergies, intolerances, anaphylaxis, diabetes and other medical conditions associated with diet.

10.2. Parents provide the school with a written list of any foods their child may have an adverse reaction to, as well as the necessary actions to be taken in the event of an allergic reaction, such as any medication required.

10.3. The school's Catering Team is responsible for ensuring that the school's policies are adhered to at all times, including those in relation to the preparation of food, taking into account any allergens.

10.4. Learning activities which involve the use of food, such as food technology lessons, are planned in accordance with pupils' IHP's, accounting for any known allergies of the pupils involved.

10.5. Treats for effort or good behaviour are awarded in accordance with pupils' IHP's, including known allergies.

11. Mental health and wellbeing

12.1 The school understands that some pupils may develop disordered eating. Staff will be trained to identify potential signs of disordered eating, which can include the following:

- Skipping lunchtime
- Avoiding eating around other people
- Eating very slowly
- Going to the bathroom soon after eating
- Becoming socially withdrawn and isolated
- Not participating in physical activities

Other physical signs can include the following:

- Thinning hair
- Dry skin
- Wearing baggy clothes
- Often saying they are cold
- Persistent low mood
- Irritability
- Unpredictable mood swings

12.2 If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil, they will speak to the DSL and senior mental health lead, as appropriate. Depending on the concern raised, support will be delivered in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy or Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy, or a combination of both.

12.3 The school will strive to protect pupils from developing disordered eating through a variety of methods, including the following:

- Developing pupils' social and emotional skills

- Teaching pupils about physical health
- Teaching pupils about body image

Pupils will be encouraged to speak to a trusted adult if they have concerns about their eating behaviour or relationship with food.

12. Communication with parents

12.1. The school will inform parents via phone call if concerns are raised about their child not eating well.

12.2. The school will inform parents via phone call_which foods are not permitted as part of packed lunches, and how they will be returned once retained.

12.3. The school will involve parents in the healthy eating ethos, enabling them to provide consistent messaging about healthy choices at home.

12.4. Parents will keep the school updated with any changes to their child's dietary requirements, including allergies, and any cultural, religious, or ethical food requirements.

13. Monitoring and review

13.1. This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher and governing board, or in light of any changes to relevant legislation.

13.2. The next scheduled review date for this policy is July 2027.

13.3. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to catering providers, kitchen staff, parents, and other stakeholders, where necessary.

14. Additional information

14.1. Copies of this policy and its related policies can be obtained from the school policies file in the school office.