



St. Thomas' CE

Primary School

Healthy Eating Policy

Written by Paul Sanchez September 2024

Approved by Governors 7th October 2024

Review Date **September 2027**

Introduction

What children eat at school is important and school lunches have to meet strict standards to provide a third of a child's nutritional requirements. Research from the Food Standards Agency and later research by the School Food Trust has shown that the majority of lunchboxes surveyed were high in fat, sugar and salt.

Aims and Objectives

- We aim to improve the nutritional quality of packed lunches and other foods taken into school.
- To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the children with healthy food that is similar in its nutritional value to food served in school.
- We aim to make a positive contribution to the pupils' health by encouraging healthy eating habits in childhood setting a trend for lifelong changes.

This packed lunch policy fits within a wider context of promoting a whole school approach to food and healthy eating.

The Policy

We will ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.

Glass bottles and cans are not permitted due to safety issues that could arise. We will ensure that packed lunch pupils and school dinner pupils will be given the opportunity to sit and eat in the same environment.

We will work with the pupils to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements. We will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.

Break Time

Break time snacks include both those brought from home, bought on the way to school or provided by school. Children in Key Stage One benefit from the National School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme which entitles them to one free piece of fruit or vegetable a day. As many children & young people consume large quantities of snacks every day, providing an environment to making healthier choices easier choices could have a huge impact on health. Working with parents will help to reinforce healthy eating messages, support the whole school approach to food and ensure food meets the standards.

Children are asked to bring in fruit (fresh or dried) or vegetables for break time. Only healthy snacks are allowed at break time. Fizzy drinks, sweets, crisps and chocolate biscuits are not allowed in school or on school trips.

Food contained in a packed lunch

Packed lunches should be based on the "Eat Well" plate model and should include the following every day:

- ✓ Fruit and Vegetables - at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad.
- ✓ Non-dairy source of protein - meat, fish, egg, beans or pulses such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel.
- ✓ A starch food - like bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other types of cereals.
- ✓ Dairy foods - such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais.
- ✓ Drinks - the schools provides water and milk is available at a small cost but other healthier drinks include yoghurts or milk drinks and smoothies.
- ✓ Oily fish - such as salmon, should be included at least once every three weeks.

To keep our packed lunches in line with the food based standards for school meals, packed lunches should not include:

- High fat, high salt, high sugar snacks such as crisps, sweet popcorn or other high fat/salt packet savoury snacks.
- Confectionary such as chocolate bars and sweets
- Chocolate spread, honey, jam or marmalade as a sandwich filling.
- Fizzy/sugary drinks.

Note: Meat products such as sausage rolls, fried foods and sausages should only be included occasionally due to their high fat and salt content and children should be encouraged to eat these only as part of a balanced diet.

Special diets and allergies

We recognise that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible.

Health and safety

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to provide an appropriate packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until lunchtime. Food products prepared and stored in ambient temperatures after a period of time can have increased levels of bacteria in them.

Storage of packed lunches

We will provide facilities for storing packed lunch boxes, in the most convenient and appropriate place possible. However, we cannot provide cooled storage areas and therefore cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

Assessment, evaluation and review

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by teaching staff and lunchtime supervisors. Healthy lunches will be rewarded by positive comments and reward stickers. Pupils with special diet or food allergies will be given due consideration. This policy will be reviewed annually alongside the food policy. Any major legislative or governmental changes regarding school food may lead to this policy being amended.