

# Food Policy

*Revised November 2013*

## **Introduction**

At Stella Maris, we are committed to giving all our pupils consistent messages about all aspects of health and helping them to understand the impact of particular behaviours and encouraging them to take responsibility for the choices they make. This policy supports other whole school and curriculum policies. Our school supports the '5 a day' campaign to encourage everyone to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. This initiative has been shown to reduce the onset of certain life threatening conditions as well as being helpful in tackling and preventing childhood obesity.

## **Rationale**

Stella Maris is a healthy school. It is important that we consider all elements of our learning to promote health awareness in all members of the school community and healthy eating is a crucial part of that.

Through effective leadership, the school ethos and the curriculum, all staff can bring together the elements of the school day to create an environment which supports a healthy lifestyle. This in turn can impact on pupil achievement, through higher levels of attention and concentration.

## **Aims and Objectives**

- To ensure that we give consistent messages about food and health
- To encourage positive role models, both adults and children, in the positive benefits of making healthy choices.
- To give children the information they need to make healthy choices
- To promote health awareness
- To encourage all members of the community to participate in the '5 a day' campaign

## **Food and Drink in School**

### ▪ Morning Break

All pupils in our Reception class under the age of 5 are entitled to, and encouraged to, drink a carton of milk just before their morning break. All other pupils may have a carton of milk if paid for by parents. This is kept in a designated refrigerator in the main school corridor. As members of the National Free Fruit and Vegetable Scheme, all Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils receive a piece of fruit/vegetables each day. Key Stage 2 pupils are encouraged to bring a similar snack for morning break. Only fruit or vegetables are permitted at this time. Processed 'fruit' products are not permitted.

### ▪ School Lunches and Packed Lunches

We provide facilities for all pupils to have access to fresh drinking water at all times.

We work with pupils to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements, where pupils having packed lunches and those having a school lunch sit and eat together.

We work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards set out below as much as possible.

As refrigerator space is not available in school, parents are advised to send packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks when the weather is warm to keep food as fresh as possible.

Our School lunches are provided by our own catering staff. Their meals adhere to Government legislation and provide a nutritionally balanced meal and healthy options, by following menu and recipe outlines provided by Kent Local Authority. This includes the use of fresh fruit and vegetables each day

as a choice for pupils. There is always a vegetarian option and choice within the menu. There is water available to drink with a school lunch. Some pupils prefer to bring a packed lunch to school. We regularly remind parents in the school newsletter about the contents of these lunches, and we do not allow fizzy drinks, chocolate bars, or packets of sweets in packed lunches. Healthy packed lunches are rewarded from time to time with a sticker. The constituents of a healthy packed lunch (taken from the Schools Food Trust Guidance) are as follows:-

- a portion of starchy food (wholegrain bread, pasta or rice salad, pitta)
- a portion of fruit and vegetables (apple, cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, box of raisins)
- a portion of dairy food (cheese portion yogurt)
- a portion of lean meat or fish or alternative (ham, chicken, tuna, egg)
- a drink (fruit juice, water or milk)

When choosing products for healthier lunch boxes, consideration should be given to the levels of fat, salt and sugar as well as additives in processed and convenience foods.

Packed lunches should not include:

- snacks such as crisps: instead include breadsticks or savoury crackers served with fruit, vegetables or dairy food.
- confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate coated biscuits or sweets.
- cakes and biscuits are acceptable but should be encouraged only as part of a balanced diet. (Sugar based products induce a quick energy rush then fatigue, so impairs learning in the afternoon session)
- meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, etc. should only be included occasionally.

We appreciate that there are some pupils who require a specialist diet due to particular medical conditions and the Midday Supervisors and other staff are made aware of these pupils when the need arises. Pupils should not swap or share packed lunch items for health and safety reasons.

- **Breakfast Club**

We believe that, for some children, this provides a happy and settled start to the school day, helping them to be ready for learning. Breakfast consists of cereal, toast or crackers, and a glass of milk or fruit juice. Pupils who attract Pupil Premium funding are offered this service free of charge.

Free school meals are offered to children of qualifying parents, according to government and local authority regulations.

### **Water for All**

Water is freely available to all members of the school community throughout the day. There are two water fountains and access to fresh cold water in the hall but pupils are also encouraged to bring a water bottle to school every day. Bottles should be cleaned thoroughly every day to ensure bacteria does not contaminate the bottle or its contents. Pupils are encouraged to drink water regularly at convenient times throughout the day and staff have routines and systems in place so that this is facilitated. There are particular times (eg after a PE lesson and in the summer months) when more reminders may be necessary and younger pupils are supported in this.

### **Food Across the Curriculum**

In our curriculum there are a variety of opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of health, including healthy eating patterns and an appreciation of where food comes from, together with the practical skills that are needed for activities such as shopping, preparing and cooking food.

- **English:** There are opportunities to explore persuasive texts, such as advertisements, argument and narrative work using food related issues as a stimulus, for example, being a vegetarian, the use of GM crops etc.

- Numeracy can offer contextual learning when weighing and measuring ingredients, reading recipes and understanding nutritional labelling.
- Science: The Science curriculum includes learning about food groups, their nutritional composition, digestion and the function of different foods in contributing to health. Pupils also have the opportunity to use the school grounds to grow fruit and vegetables which supports the life processes element of the Science curriculum.
- Religious Education; Pupils learn about the significance of particular foods to the belief systems of world religions. They have the opportunity to experience some foods that are associated with particular religious festivals during their studies. They also learn to be thankful for the food they have and to pray for those who have to go hungry. For Harvest Festival they are encouraged to take positive action to relieve the hunger of less fortunate people through donating food from home.
- Food Technology, as part of the Design Technology curriculum, explores the origins of food, and pupils prepare and cook food, applying healthy eating principles.
- Personal, Social and Health Education encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own health and well being. They learn about what is meant by a healthy lifestyle in its broadest sense.
- Geography provides a focus on the natural world and changing environment, offering opportunities to consider the impact of our consumer choices on different parts of the world where food is grown. During their studies of specific countries, pupils learn about traditional foods.
- Physical Education is crucial in developing a sense of well being and helps pupils identify the link between health and exercise.

### **Partnership with Parents/Carers**

The partnership between home and school is crucial in developing children's attitude and approach to food. As well as promoting healthy eating at home, parental support is needed to reinforce these principles at school by providing appropriate packed lunches, sending fresh water bottles in every day and thinking carefully about any snacks they bring for their children at the end of the school day. We appreciate that some parents wish to send in treats for classmates to celebrate birthdays and we would not want to stop this as we consider celebrations and sharing is an important element of school life. In addition, parents often bring a snack for children at the end of school and we would ask that this is not sweets or chocolate bars in line with the packed lunch guidelines. We ask that parents work with us to educate our children to understand the importance of a balanced healthy diet.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of the policy**

All staff have a role in monitoring particular elements of the policy. Subject leaders are responsible for the curriculum development of their subject. School catering staff working with the Headteacher will monitor the quality and provision of the school meals service. The Headteacher will also involve pupils and staff in the evaluation of the school meals service. Midday supervisors will also monitor the quality of packed lunches and reward pupils wherever possible. There are designated governors who have responsibility for monitoring the meals provision as part of their role.

The policy will be reviewed annually to take account of any new developments or initiatives. It is at this time that strategies put in place can be evaluated and reviewed if necessary.

### **Associated Policies:-**

- Health and Safety
- All curriculum Policies
- Drug Awareness Policy