



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Love God... Love Others... Love Ourselves...

Food Statement

Statement Owner	Headteacher
Approved By	Governing Body
Review cycle: Annual (or earlier if guidance changes)	

Contents

1) Our Catholic vision for food, community and creation	3
2) Statutory compliance and scope.....	3
3) Roles and responsibilities	3
4) Creating a culture and ethos of healthy eating.....	3
5) Curriculum, skills and food education	3
6) Food provision standards (summary)	4
7) Packed lunches (when chosen by families)	4
8) Allergies, medical diets and inclusivity	4
9) Celebrations, rewards and fundraising	4
10) Eating environment, dignity and access.....	5
11) Communication with families	5
12) Staff training and induction	5
13) Monitoring, evaluation and improvement	5
14) Reference to the following guidance:	5

1) Our Catholic vision for food, community and creation

At St Marys, we believe sharing food is an act of community, dignity and hospitality. Our approach to food education and mealtimes reflects Catholic Social Teaching—especially the dignity of the person, the common good, and stewardship of creation. We aim to:

- form lifelong healthy habits that help each child flourish;
- show care for creation through responsible procurement and reduction of waste;
- ensure our table is welcoming, inclusive and joyful.

2) Statutory compliance and scope

All food and drink provided during the school day (mid-morning snack, lunch, curriculum cooking, celebrations and events on site) must comply with the School Food Standards.

Compliance is a condition of any catering contract/SLA and the caterer must supply evidence of compliance termly to the governing body. School-provided food is also checked internally each term using the School Food Standards practical guide checklist.

We use the government Eatwell Guide to underpin menu planning, food education and communications with families.

3) Roles and responsibilities

- **Governing Body:** approves the statement; monitors compliance reports (including allergy/special diet provision) and pupil voice feedback; considers the Healthy Schools Rating Scheme annually.
- **Headteacher:** overall leadership of a whole-school approach to healthy eating and wellbeing; ensures staff training and safe systems.
- **Waltham Forest Catering** delivers compliant menus; provides allergens/special diet provision; trains staff; supports food education.
- **Curriculum Leads (Science/DT/PSHE/RHE/RE):** integrate food education across the curriculum with a focus on healthy choices, food origins, sustainability and gratitude.
- **Allergy/SEND Lead & Welfare Staff:** maintain medical diet registers and Individual Healthcare Plans; ensure risk assessments and emergency procedures are in place
- **All staff:** model healthy choices; uphold this statement across the school day.

4) Creating a culture and ethos of healthy eating

1. **Prayerful gratitude and community:** We say grace before meals and encourage calm, sociable dining where pupils and adults eat together.
2. **Dining environment:** We minimise queues, use child-friendly presentation, display menu information clearly (including allergens), and promote fruit, vegetables and salad attractively.
3. **Pupil voice:** we have twice yearly reviews on menus, the dining experience and waste; feedback informs menu tweaks with the caterer.
4. **Staff role-modelling:** Staff avoid energy/fizzy drinks and confectionery in front of pupils and model balanced choices.
5. **Catholic tradition:** Meat-free and fish options is offered every Friday; feast/saint days may include culturally appropriate dishes within standards.
6. **Wellbeing integration:** Healthy eating is part of our whole-school approach to physical and mental wellbeing (leadership, staff development, targeted support, work with parents/carers).

5) Curriculum, skills and food education

- **DT (Cooking & Nutrition) and Science:** progressive practical cooking, food hygiene, food groups and seasonal/sustainable choices mapped across KS1–2, using the Eatwell Guide as a common reference.
- **PSHE/RHE:** informed, age-appropriate learning on healthy choices, body image, budgeting and media literacy around food.
- **Gardening & stewardship:** pupils help grow herbs/veg and learn about composting and food waste.
- **Visitors & theme days:** chef demos, farm-to-fork links and cultural celebrations that meet standards.

6) Food provision standards (summary)

- **School lunches:** compliant menus on a published 3 week cycle; daily veg/salad; fruit daily; oily fish at least once every 3 weeks; bread available daily (preferably wholegrain); limited deep-fried items; no drinks with added sugars.
- **Drinks all day:** free, clean drinking water widely available; only water or lower-fat milk are provided
- **Procurement & recipe reformulation:** caterer follows Government Buying **Standards for Food and Catering Services** to reduce salt, sat fat and sugar and to support sustainability (seasonality, fish sustainability, veg-forward choices).

7) Packed lunches (when chosen by families)

We actively promote packed lunches that reflect the Eatwell Guide. Expectations (shared each term) include:

- Include: a starchy base (prefer wholegrain), at least one portion of veg and one portion of fruit, a source of protein, and dairy/dairy alternative.
- Drinks: water (preferred) or lower-fat milk.
- Limit/avoid: confectionery, crisps and sweetened drinks; cakes/biscuits only occasionally and in small portions. Practical ideas and budget-friendly recipes are shared with parents/carers through termly newsletters and websites.

8) Allergies, medical diets and inclusivity

- We welcome all pupils at our table. The school and caterer maintain up-to-date medical diets register; pupils with allergies or medical conditions have an Individual Healthcare Plan.
- The caterer provides accurate allergen information and safe production/serving procedures; staff receive annual training on allergen management and emergency response (including use of spare AAls where held).
- Menu substitutions (e.g., supply issues or faith/cultural reasons) are risk-assessed to maintain both standards and medical diet safety.

9) Celebrations, rewards and fundraising

- We celebrate well—prioritising non-food rewards (stickers, privileges, extra story time) and food-positive activities (fruit kebabs, tasting new veg).
- Birthday treats brought from home are discouraged; if families do send items, they must be nut-aware, portion-controlled and only served with staff oversight, with ingredient labels present. Curriculum time is never used for distributing sweets.
- PTA/events: food and drink offered at fairs and discos should mostly align to healthy choices (fruit/veg platters, water refill points), with any occasional treats clearly portion-controlled and balanced with active play.

10) Eating environment, dignity and access

- **Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)** and **Free School Meals** are promoted to eligible families; we protect anonymity at the point of sale.
- We support adequate time to eat (minimum ~30 minutes seated for lunch where timetabling allows) and ensure tableware and portioning are age-appropriate.
- Lunchtime supervisors are trained to encourage tasting, not to pressure eating, and to recognise hunger/fullness cues. (Linked to our whole-school wellbeing approach.)

11) Communication with families

- Termly menu and allergen matrix published on the website and noticeboards; half-termly healthy-eating tips aligned with the Eatwell Guide

12) Staff training and induction

- Annual training for all staff on this statement, School Food Standards basics, allergy awareness and emergency procedures; catering staff receive role-specific allergen/HACCP refreshers.

13) Monitoring, evaluation and improvement

- **Termly:** compliance audit (menus/server), food waste review, mealtime observation, pupil/parent feedback summary to governors.
- **Annually:** self-assessment via the Healthy Schools Rating Scheme; action plan targets set and published to the school community.
- This statement is reviewed each year, or sooner if there are updates to the School Food Standards/DfE guidance.

14) Reference to the following guidance:

- **School Food Standards: resources & practical guide** (DfE, regularly updated; practical guide updated **13 Feb 2025**).
- **Standards for school food in England** (statutory standards and scope).
- **Eatwell Guide** (Office for Health Improvement & Disparities / NHS) for healthy eating education and communications.
- **Healthy Schools Rating Scheme** (DfE) for annual self-assessment.
- **Allergy guidance for schools** (DfE) and **FSA allergen guidance for institutional caterers** for medical diets and allergen safety.
- **School Food Standards note on Government Buying Standards** to support healthier procurement.
- **Whole-school wellbeing guidance** (DfE) to embed ethos and staff development.