



St. Monica's RC Primary School –Nutrition Policy (including EYFS)

Introduction

At St. Monica's RC Primary School, we recognise the vital role that nutrition plays in the growth, development, and overall wellbeing of our youngest learners. This policy outlines our approach to food and drink provision, mealtime environments, dietary needs, healthy eating education, and policy communication. Our aim is to support every child in developing a healthy relationship with food from the very start.

1. Food and Drink Provision

Healthy and Balanced Diet

We are committed to offering a variety of nutritious foods that align with the national dietary guidelines. Snacks provided to EYFS children will include:

- Starchy carbohydrates (e.g. wholemeal bread)
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Dairy products (e.g. milk, cheese, yogurt)

Lunchtime meals will include the above plus:

- Starchy carbohydrates (e.g. rice, potatoes)
- Protein sources (e.g. beans, lentils, fish, eggs, meat)

This will be encouraged in healthy lunchboxes as well as meals provided as hot dinners.

Variety and Flavour

Children will be introduced to a wide range of flavours, textures, and cultural food choices to help broaden their palates and encourage healthy eating habits. This will be done through our celebrations of other cultures (e.g. Chinese New Year, Eid).

Children are encouraged to learn about their senses and taste buds- exploring different tastes.

The hot dinner menu aims to provide a menu of different foods, tastes, textures and colours.

Limit Sugary and Salty Foods

We aim to limit the availability of sugary drinks, sweets, confectionery, and highly processed salty snacks. These will **not** be part of our daily food offering.

Children who started in St Monica's RC Primary School EYFS in 2024, were asked not to bring a snack from home. Older children in KS1 and KS2 will be asked to bring in a healthy snack (if required), i.e. fruit, veg, healthy snack bar (no chocolate or crisps). If children need to bring in extra snack for medical or cultural reasons then this will still need to align with the healthy options we offer.

Fresh Drinking Water and Milk

Children will have access to clean, fresh drinking water throughout the day. All children bring a fresh water bottle each day available in learning and play areas. Water is also provided at lunchtimes.

Milk is provided at snack time to those children who are under 5 and whose parents have signed up for it.

Breastfeeding Support

In accordance with guidance from the First Steps Nutrition Trust, we provide a welcoming and supportive environment for breastfeeding mothers. A private, comfortable space is available for mothers of children in Nursery, who wish to breastfeed or express milk.

2. Eating Environment

Snack Time

In Nursery and Reception the children sit together to enjoy snack. We use it as an opportunity to reinforce healthy eating and eating well. We also encourage manners, turn taking and good eating habits. Children are shown how to peel fruit such as tangerines and bananas.

Positive and Enjoyable Atmosphere

Mealtimes are treated as a calm and sociable experience. Staff support children in developing independence, encouraging good manners, and making mealtimes a pleasant part of the day. Some children find the school hall overwhelming. They are given the option of eating in a classroom.

Supervision

Children are supervised at all times while eating to ensure safety, reduce choking risks, and foster positive social interactions.

Seating Arrangements

Children are seated in small groups to promote conversation and peer learning during mealtimes. Staff sit and eat with children on some occasions to model healthy eating behaviours.

3. Addressing Special Needs

Individualised Needs

We recognise and accommodate individual dietary needs including allergies, intolerances, cultural preferences, and medical requirements. An Individual Health Care Plan will be developed for children with specific dietary needs.

Parent Communication

We work closely with parents and carers to ensure that dietary needs are fully understood and met. Food brought from home must meet the school's healthy eating standards and not contain allergens.

Parents are able to see the hot dinner menu and choose the meal options for their children.

We believe ongoing discussions with the parent about the child's dietary and cultural (where applicable) needs are crucial in creating a safe and inclusive environment for all the children to eat.

During the first half term of Nursery and Reception the teachers eat with the children and feedback to parents exactly what the children have eaten to help inform parents on their choices.

Celebrations

Many families like to celebrate their child's birthday and special events by bringing in sweets or cakes. We recommend to parents that food brought in from home meets our food guidelines such as fruit platters or packets or dried fruit. We encourage parents to bring in non-edible treats such as stickers or bubbles instead.

Food Safety

All food handling, storage, and preparation will follow strict food safety regulations. EYFS staff involved in food provision will receive up-to-date food hygiene and allergy awareness training. Children wash their hands before eating and all fruit and vegetables are washed and prepared accordingly.

4. Promoting Healthy Eating Habits

Learning about Food

Healthy eating is embedded into the EYFS curriculum. Children are taught about food origins, the importance of balanced diets, and making healthy choices through play, stories, and discussions.

Cooking Activities

We provide regular, age-appropriate cooking opportunities where children prepare simple recipes with adult supervision. These experiences help build skills and positive attitudes toward healthy food.

Family Engagement

Parents are encouraged to be partners in promoting healthy eating. We share tips, advice, encouragement, recipes, and resources through our newsletters and Seesaw to support healthy habits at home.

5. Policy Review and Communication

Regular Review

This nutrition policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it reflects the latest guidance, best practice, and community feedback.

Communication with Staff and Parents

All EYFS staff will be familiar with the policy and trained in its implementation. The policy will be shared with parents through the school website, induction materials, and parent meetings to ensure clarity and consistency in approach.

By fostering a healthy food culture, St. Monica's RC Primary School seeks to instill lifelong habits that promote the health, happiness, and development of every child in our care.

Date of Last Review: April 2025

Next Review Due: April 2026

Policy Lead: EYFS Coordinator