



St Thomas More Catholic Primary School,  
Saffron Walden

## HEALTHY FOOD AND CATERING POLICY

Policy No. STM-060

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| Unique Policy Reference No | <b>STM-060</b>        |
| Approved by (inc date)     | <i>Governing Body</i> |
| Date Version Approved      | <i>October 2026</i>   |
| Date next due for review   | <i>October 2027</i>   |
| Author (Document Owner)    | <i>Headteacher</i>    |

## **1. Policy Statement**

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School recognises that healthy eating is fundamental to pupils' health, wellbeing, development, behaviour and ability to learn effectively. The catering service is an integral part of school life and contributes to the school's commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment.

The school is committed to providing high-quality, nutritious and enjoyable food, and cooking or eating opportunities, that complies with the statutory School Food Standards and supports the development of healthy eating habits for life. Meals will be prepared and served in a welcoming environment that encourages positive social interaction and promotes healthy choices.

The school also recognises the importance of hospitality and will ensure that visitors, staff and members of the wider school community receive a warm welcome through a professional and well-managed catering service.

## **2. Aims**

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide healthy, balanced and nutritious meals that comply with the School Food Standards.
- Promote healthy eating and positive attitudes towards food.
- Encourage pupils to develop confidence in trying a wide range of foods.
- Support children's physical health, emotional wellbeing and readiness to learn.
- Ensure food provision is inclusive and responsive to medical, cultural, religious and ethical dietary requirements.
- Maintain the highest standards of food hygiene, food safety and allergen management.
- Provide a safe, welcoming and enjoyable dining experience.
- Ensure effective and sustainable use of school resources.
- Promote environmentally responsible procurement and waste reduction where practicable.

## **3. Legal and Regulatory Framework**

The school will comply with:

- School Food Standards.
- Food Safety Act 1990.
- Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations.
- Food Information Regulations relating to allergens.
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Department for Education School Food Standards Practical Guide.
- Relevant local authority and Environmental Health requirements.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **4.1 Headteacher**

**The Headteacher will:**

- Ensure effective implementation of this policy.
- Monitor compliance with School Food Standards.
- Support continuous improvement of catering provision.
- Monitor catering performance and budget management.
- Ensure appropriate staffing, training and resources.

#### **4.2 Governing Body**

The Governing Body will:

- Approve and review this policy.
- Monitor compliance through appropriate reports and reviews.
- Ensure catering contributes to school improvement priorities.

#### **4.3 Catering Manager**

The Catering Manager is responsible for:

- Day-to-day management of the catering service.
- Menu planning.
- Budget management.
- Food purchasing and stock control.
- Food hygiene and safety compliance.
- Allergen management procedures.
- Staff supervision and training.
- Risk assessments relating to catering operations.
- Liaison with suppliers and school leadership.

#### **4.4 Catering Staff**

Catering staff are responsible for:

- Preparing and serving food safely.
- Following food hygiene and allergen procedures.
- Maintaining cleanliness and safety standards.
- Recording required food safety checks.
- Promoting positive interactions with pupils.

### **5. Healthy Eating and Nutritional Standards**

The school will ensure that all food provision complies with the School Food Standards and promotes a healthy, balanced diet.

A healthy diet will include:

- Plenty of fruit and vegetables.
- Wholegrain and unrefined starchy foods.
- Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein.
- Milk and dairy products.

- Limited amounts of foods high in fat, sugar and salt.

The school will encourage pupils to:

- Try unfamiliar foods.
- Make healthy choices.
- Develop independence when selecting meals.
- Understand the importance of balanced nutrition.

## **6. School Lunch Provision**

### **6.1 Main Meals**

School lunches will meet the requirements of the School Food Standards. The school will ensure that:  
Fruit and Vegetables

- At least one portion of fruit is available every day.
- At least one portion of vegetables or salad is available every day.
- At least three different fruits and three different vegetables are provided each week.
- Desserts containing at least 50% fruit are available at least twice per week.

Starchy Foods

- Starchy foods are available every day.
- At least three different starchy foods are offered each week.
- Wholegrain varieties are offered regularly.
- Bread with no added fat or oil is available daily.

Dairy Foods

- A dairy food is available daily.
- Lower-fat milk is available during the school day.

Protein Sources

- A protein source is available daily.
- Meat or poultry is available on at least three days each week.
- Oily fish is served at least once every three weeks.
- A vegetarian option is available daily.

### **6.2 Double Club Tea**

Pupils at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School are also able to have a Double Club tea as part of our wrap around care provision. These meals are prepared in the school kitchen during the day and include a cold option that adheres to the food requirements found elsewhere in this policy. Food at tea time is served by Double Club staff with the relevant training in food hygiene standards.

## **7. Foods High in Fat, Sugar and Salt**

To support healthy eating, the school will ensure that:

- Deep-fried, batter-coated or breadcrumb-coated foods are served no more than twice per week.
- Foods containing pastry are served no more than twice per week.
- Confectionery, chocolate and chocolate-coated products are not provided during the school day.
- Salt is not available for pupils to add to meals.
- Condiments are provided only in controlled portions.
- Snacks provided during the school day comply with School Food Standards. [[gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)]

## **8. Drinks Provision**

Fresh drinking water will be available to pupils free of charge at all times throughout the school day. Permitted drinks will comply with School Food Standards and may include:

- Plain water.
- Lower-fat milk.
- Approved fruit and vegetable juices.
- Approved dairy-based drinks.
- Approved plant-based drinks enriched with calcium.

Sugar-sweetened drinks will not be provided. Children are also always encouraged to bring in their own water bottles from home with water inside them. Juices etc inside water bottles are not permitted – only water. Water will be promoted as the default drink choice throughout the school day.

## **9. Allergies, Intolerances and Special Diets**

The school is committed to meeting the dietary needs of pupils wherever reasonably practicable. The Catering Manager will ensure:

- Accurate records are maintained for pupils with allergies, intolerances or medical dietary requirements.
- Allergen information is available and communicated appropriately.
- Procedures are in place to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.
- Catering staff receive allergen awareness training.
- Appropriate liaison takes place with parents, healthcare professionals and school staff when required.

Dietary requirements relating to religion, culture, ethical beliefs and medical needs will be accommodated wherever practicable.

*For more information, see associated Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy.*

## **10. Dining Environment**

The dining hall will provide a safe, welcoming and pleasant environment in which pupils can enjoy their meals.

The school will:

- Provide suitable tables and seating.
- Promote positive behaviour during mealtimes.
- Encourage social interaction.
- Support pupils in making healthy choices.
- Ensure pupils have sufficient time to eat their meals comfortably.
- provide suitable handwashing facilities and encourage pupils to wash their hands before eating.

Lunchtime will be used as an opportunity to promote:

- good manners;
- respectful behaviour;
- independence;
- conversation and social interaction especially as part of our commitment to oracy;
- responsibility for clearing tables and disposing of waste appropriately.

Any concerns regarding a pupil's eating habits or behaviour will be referred to the Class Teacher and, where appropriate, a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

## **11. Food Safety and Hygiene**

The school will operate a documented Food Safety Management System based on HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) principles.

The catering team will:

- Maintain appropriate food safety records.
- Monitor food temperatures.
- Ensure safe storage of food.
- Observe stock rotation procedures.
- Dispose of expired food appropriately.
- Maintain high standards of personal hygiene.
- Comply with Environmental Health requirements.

Daily, weekly, monthly and annual cleaning schedules will be implemented and monitored.

## **12. Kitchen Safety**

The catering kitchen is a designated professional working environment.

Only authorised personnel may enter food preparation areas.

The school will ensure:

- Equipment is maintained and serviced appropriately.
- Risk assessments are completed and reviewed regularly.
- Staff receive appropriate safety training.
- Defects and maintenance concerns are reported promptly.

### 13. Procurement and Stock Control

The Catering Manager will ensure that procurement achieves value for money while maintaining quality and compliance.

The school will:

- Use approved suppliers.
- Monitor supplier performance.
- Maintain delivery records.
- Undertake regular stock checks.
- Investigate significant stock variances.
- Seek opportunities for efficient purchasing and cost control.

All deliveries will be checked on arrival and recorded appropriately.

### 14. Sustainability and Food Waste

The school is committed to reducing food waste and promoting sustainable practices where reasonably practicable.

The school will:

- Consider seasonal and locally sourced produce where possible.
- Minimise unnecessary packaging.
- Monitor food waste levels.
- Encourage responsible portion selection.
- Promote environmental awareness through food education.

### 15. Pupil Voice and Community Engagement

The school values feedback from pupils, parents and staff.

Feedback may be gathered through:

- School Council meetings.
- Pupil surveys.
- Parent feedback.
- Menu consultations.
- Tasting events.

Feedback will be considered during menu reviews and service development.

### 16. Financial Management

The catering budget forms part of the school's overall financial planning process.

The Catering Manager will:

- Monitor expenditure.
- Prepare budget forecasts.
- Plan for equipment replacement.
- Report budget performance to the Headteacher.

Price reviews will normally be considered annually.

## **17. Catering Staff Recruitment and Professional Development**

Recruitment of catering staff will follow the school's Safer Recruitment Policy.

All catering staff will:

- Receive appropriate induction training.
- Undertake safeguarding training.
- Complete food safety training appropriate to their role.
- Receive allergen awareness training.
- Participate in performance management processes.

Training records will be maintained and reviewed regularly.

## **18. Food Education and Curriculum**

The school recognises that food education forms an important part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Pupils will have opportunities to learn about:

- healthy eating and nutrition;
- food preparation and cooking skills;
- food hygiene and safety;
- food production and farming;
- food sustainability and environmental impact;
- food provenance and seasonality;
- food labelling and informed consumer choices;
- cultural and religious aspects of food.

Learning opportunities may be provided through:

- Science
- PSHE
- Design and Technology
- Geography
- Mathematics
- English
- Computing
- Religious Education
- Physical Education

## **19. Food Enrichment Activities**

The school will seek opportunities to enhance pupils' understanding and enjoyment of food through:

- food tasting sessions;
- cooking activities;
- school gardening projects;
- visits to farms, food producers and local businesses;
- guest speakers and food professionals;
- healthy eating events and themed weeks.

These experiences help pupils develop positive attitudes toward food and healthy lifestyles.

## **19. Packed Lunches**

The school encourages packed lunches that reflect healthy eating principles.

Parents and carers are encouraged to provide:

- sandwiches, wraps, bagels or similar starch-based foods;
- fruit and vegetables;
- dairy products such as cheese or yoghurt;
- healthy protein options;
- water.

The following should not be brought to school:

- energy drinks;
- confectionery or sweets;
- nut products under school allergy controls.

The school reserves the right to review packed lunch arrangements where food presents a health or safety concern.

## **20. Breaktime Provision**

The school promotes healthy snacks during breaktimes.

Suitable snacks may include:

- fruit;
- vegetables;
- bread products;
- cheese;

Snacks provided by the school will comply with School Food Standards.

## **21. Working with Parents and the Community**

The school recognises that healthy eating habits are most effective when supported both at school and at home.

The school will:

- provide information about healthy eating;
- share menus with families;
- offer guidance on packed lunches;
- involve parents in food-related initiatives where appropriate;
- engage with local community organisations and food producers.

## **22. School Meal Uptake**

The school will actively promote school meal uptake through:

- positive communication with families;
- menu promotion;
- pupil engagement;
- ensuring free school meal entitlement is administered confidentially and without stigma.

## **23. Celebrations and Rewards**

The school encourages celebrations that support healthy lifestyles.

Food used for celebrations should:

- take account of allergies and dietary requirements;
- avoid nut-containing products;
- comply with school safeguarding and food safety procedures.

Staff should avoid routinely using confectionery or sugary products as a reward.

## **24. Nut Awareness**

Due to the presence of pupils and staff with severe allergies, families are requested not to send nuts or products containing nuts into school.

Whilst the school cannot guarantee a completely nut-free environment, it will take reasonable steps to minimise the risk of exposure.

## **25. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Headteacher and Catering Manager will monitor:

- Compliance with School Food Standards.
- Food quality.
- Food safety procedures.

- Kitchen hygiene standards.
- Allergen management.
- Budget performance.
- School meal uptake.
- Pupil and parent feedback.
- Food waste and sustainability measures.
- Staff training compliance.

Appropriate records will be maintained and reviewed regularly.

## **26. Health and Safety**

Health and safety arrangements relating to catering operations will be implemented in accordance with the school's Health and Safety Policy.

Risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and updated whenever significant changes occur.

## **27. Waste Disposal**

Kitchen or food waste will be stored and disposed of in accordance with statutory requirements and school procedures.

The Catering Manager will work with the Premises Manager to ensure appropriate waste management arrangements are maintained.

## **21. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Governing Body, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or operational requirements.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated through monitoring activities, compliance checks and stakeholder feedback.

**Review Cycle:** Annual

**Responsible Officer:** Headteacher

**Linked Policies:** Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Accessibility Policy, Allergy Management Procedures, First Aid Policy, Financial Regulations Handbook.