



**St. Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School
and Nursery**

**Healthy Eating
Policy**

Date of Policy Issue: May 2026

Name of Responsible Person :

Role of Responsible Person :

Signature of Responsible Person :

Signature of Headteacher :

Signature of Chair of Governors

Date agreed:

Date to be reviewed : August 2027

Our vision for St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School is to be 'a school with High Expectations for All, in the Light of Christ'. All pupils will be given every opportunity to achieve their potential and encouraged to learn about and develop their hidden talents in order to reach high levels of achievement. All members of our school community will be fully equipped to meet all pupils' needs through appropriate professional development. St Ethelbert's will be an outstanding school.

'Every child at St Ethelbert's is to fulfil their academic, social, behavioural and emotional potential in the surroundings of a Catholic community, and in which each individual shares or respects the Catholic church and Christian way of Life.'

Introduction

At St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, we recognise the connection between a healthy diet and pupils' ability to concentrate, learn and achieve high standards in school. Therefore, as a health promoting school, we are committed to giving our pupils consistent messages about all aspects of health and encouraging and developing positive attitudes towards a healthy diet and lifestyle.

We regard healthy eating as a whole-school issue and believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. We are committed to helping our pupils to understand the impact of particular behaviours and encourage them to take responsibility for the choices they make.

Aims

- To improve the health of pupils, staff and their families by helping to influence their eating habits through increasing their knowledge and awareness of food issues including what constitutes a healthy diet, hygienic food preparation and food storage.
- To ensure pupils are well-nourished at school and that every pupil has access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and a safe, easily available water supply during the school day.
- To encourage all pupils to make healthy food choices.
- To ensure that food provision in school reflects the ethical and medical requirements of pupils and staff, e.g. vegetarian, religious, medical and allergenic needs.
- To contribute to the healthy physical development of all members of the school community.
- To ensure that all pupils are given consistent information regarding food to enable them to make healthy choices.
- To ensure the formal curriculum for food and nutrition in different lesson areas is consistent and up-to-date.
- Raise awareness of the variety of healthy foods through celebrating multi-cultural diversity.
- To provide opportunities for pupils and adults to share food as a way to build mixed age group friendships and to celebrate cultural diversity.
- To establish an annual food week in school to promote healthy eating and drinking messages during the Summer Term – Eat Them to Defeat Them

Objectives

- To integrate the aims of Healthy Eating into all aspects of school life, in particular food provision within the school, the curriculum, pastoral and social activities.
- To work towards ensuring that this policy is both accepted and implemented by all members of the school community.
- To use the School Council as a means of consulting with pupils about aspects of the Healthy Eating Policy.
- To ensure that all staff with responsibility for food have basic food hygiene training.

Water Provision

At St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, we actively encourage all pupils to bring a clean, freshly-filled water bottle to school each day. We allow these to be kept in classrooms and children are able to drink from them regularly. Children are encouraged to drink more after physical exercise and on hot days. Water is available on the tables at lunch time. Staff have water in class, modelling frequent drinking to the children.

We believe that such access to drinking water:

- Promotes good health and wellbeing amongst pupils, staff and other adults;
- Reduces tiredness, irritability and distraction from thirst;
- Can have a positive effect on pupils' concentration throughout the day;
- Raises awareness of the importance of adequate fluid intake as part of a healthy, active lifestyle.
- Demonstrates to parents, carers and the local community that the school values pupils' health and wellbeing.

Snacks

We encourage children to have a snack at break time to support concentration and as a way of eating 5 portions of fruit or vegetables per day. All Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day as part of the Government initiative. Key Stage 2 children are encouraged to bring fresh or dried fruit or vegetables for consumption during playtimes. No other snack is allowed during break time.

Lunchtime food provision

The school provides school meals, free school meals and facilities to eat packed lunches.

All children have their lunch hour between 12.00 p.m. and 1.00 p.m.

Foundation Stage and Year 1 children go into the dining hall first, followed by Year 2 and Key Stage 2. Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 packed lunches all eat together in the infant hall.

Dining Hall

At St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School and Nursery we try to make the dining environment as pleasant, calm and enjoyable as possible.

Midday supervisors are on hand to encourage all children – both those having school dinners and those having packed lunches – to eat their meal and to help where needed.

All children in the dining hall are encouraged to eat well; they are encouraged to "try" all foods chosen and praise is given for this.

All children are permitted to choose their own place, sitting in friendship groups as space allows, regardless of whether they are eating school dinners or packed lunches.

Children will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners at lunch time and will be given plenty of time to eat. This will be achieved by:

- entering and leaving the dining hall in an orderly way, to show respect for those who are eating;
- sitting freely with their friends
- eating school dinners and packed lunches together
- midday supervisors promoting the correct use of cutlery
- older children helping younger children to cut up their food
- being encouraged to try a variety of foods at lunchtimes to develop a balanced diet
- saying please and thank you to the catering staff and lunch time supervisors
- Foundation Stage children putting up their hand to have their eating/drinking monitored before replacing boxes on the lunch trolley.
- Ensuring all children are adequately supervised at all times to minimise choking risks
- Parents or carers being advised if their child is not eating well

Whilst the dining staff strives to keep the noise level down in the dining hall and to encourage the children to finish their meals in the time allocated, the children are encouraged to enjoy talking with their friends on their table whilst eating.

School Dinners

St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School and Nursery engage the services of the catering company Caterlink who provide meals which meet the national guidelines for nutritional standards.

A menu is available and on display for both parents/carers and pupils to look at before they make their choices. Whilst being served the kitchen staff discuss their choices with children and encourage them to try new foods. All pupils must take a portion of every item in their chosen meal. A drink of water is provided with each meal and jugs of water are available on each table.

Themed meals are also an important part of school lunches and are not only fun but they teach children about different cultures, foods and traditions that they may not otherwise experience.

Packed Lunches

All children are encouraged to eat their sandwiches, wraps, pasta and other savoury foods first, then to move on to yogurts and fruit, leaving cake and biscuit items to last. Drinks in cartons, plastic bottles and flasks are allowed but fizzy drinks in cans or glass bottles are not permitted. **Children may not bring sweets, chocolate or chocolate covered items as part of their lunch.**

We are a Nut Free school. No food containing nuts may be brought into school at any time; this includes chocolate spread which may contain hazelnuts.

Water is available for pupils who may have forgotten a drink or who want more than what has been provided as part of their lunch.

Children put all their litter from their meal into their packed lunch boxes in order that parents can monitor which foods have been eaten.

Early Years

All Foundation Stage staff members are aware of and adhere to the new 2025 changes to the EYFS Framework.

These include making sure that:

- Details of children's food requirements, including allergies and intolerances, are gathered and shared with all relevant staff.
- Children are seated safely when eating within sight and hearing of an adult. At least one adult in the room hold a PFA (paediatric first-aid) certificate.
- Where possible, staff sit facing children to prevent incidents (including choking) and are aware of unexpected allergic reactions.

Treats, prizes, social events and special occasions

Staff will avoid confectionery items when purchasing prizes and treats for pupils. However, at Christmas and Easter, a small amount of chocolate may be given, e.g. Easter nests.

Children with special diets, e.g. anaphylactic, diabetics or those with other allergies or intolerances should always be considered. Pupils should not bring confectionery items to school for distribution to classmates when celebrating a birthday.

Staff are encouraged to eat fruit or vegetables as treats in the staff room, and especially when on duty outside.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

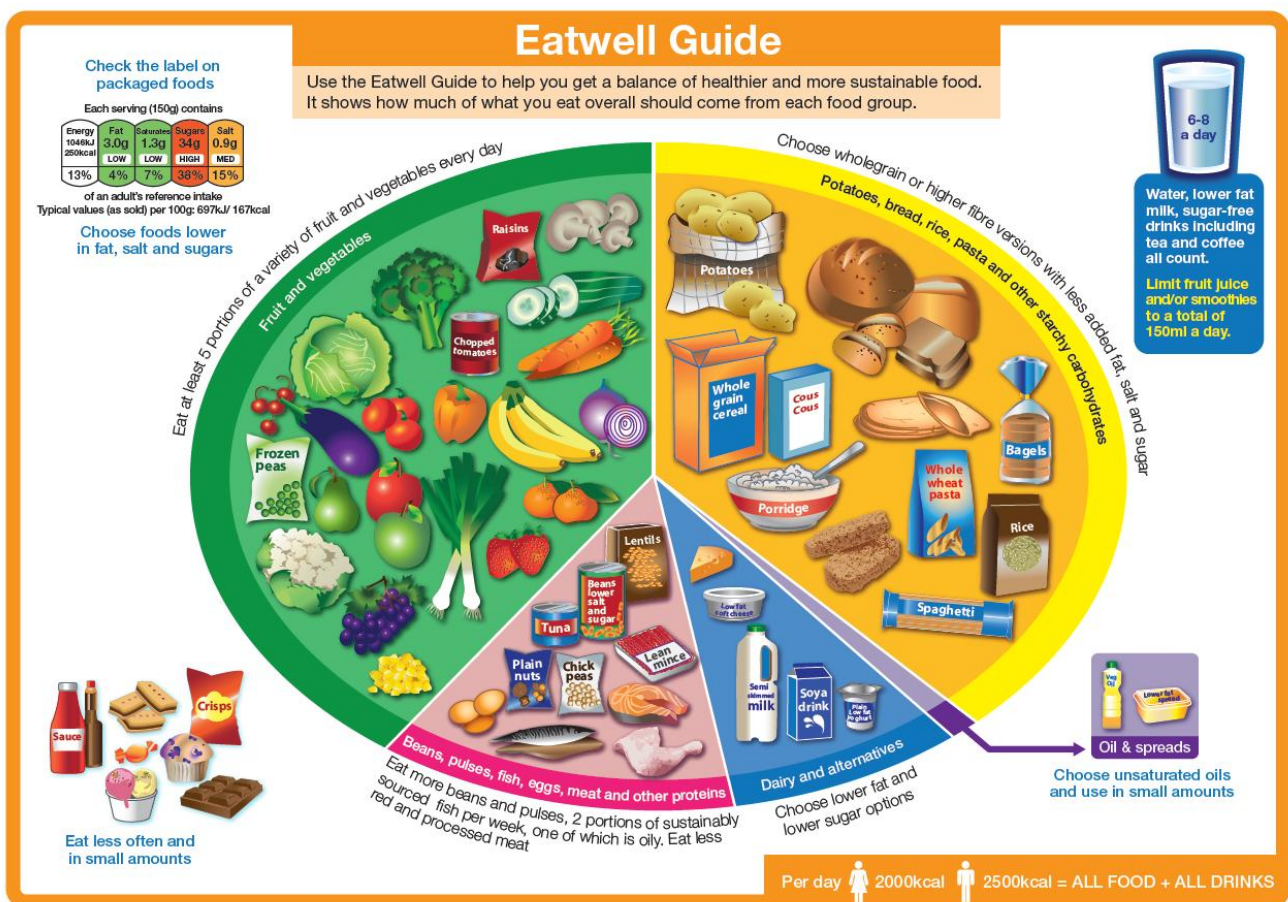
The school is aware that the primary role in children's healthy eating education lies with parents and carers. However, the school has a very important role to play and should lead by example. We will:

- Keep parents informed about healthy eating policy and practice through our newsletter.
- Take seriously and respond to any issue which parents/carers raise with teachers, head or governors about this policy and practice in school.
- Share with parents/carers information about the best practice known with regard to healthy eating so that they can support the key messages being given to children at school.
- Encourage parents/carers to consider the Healthy Eating Policy in the range of refreshments offered to the children during out of school events, e.g. school discos.
- Remind parents regularly about the desirability of their child/ren having a bottle of fresh water every day and those children in Key Stage 2 having a healthy snack of fresh/dried fruit or vegetables. Any healthy snacks sent in from home are cut into bite size pieces to minimise choking hazards and support safe eating habits. Children will be encouraged to sit and eat before playing, helping them enjoy their snacks calmly and safely.
- Ask parents or carers of children who are on special diets for medical or religious reasons, or children with allergies, to provide as much information as possible about suitable foods.

Monitoring this policy

The headteacher and PSHE co-ordinator are responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and its review in light of the outcomes of the monitoring process. This policy will be monitored through the following:

- Consultation with pupils such as questionnaires, interviews, school council
- The contents of pupils' lunchboxes will be monitored through a lunch box survey by Children's Leadership Council
- Seeking the views of parents and governors
- Discussions with staff, including midday supervisors and catering staff
- Observations of the dining hall at lunchtime
- Observations of break time eating habits
- Scrutiny of teachers' PSHE lesson plans
- **Discussion with the catering contractor about the food offered**



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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Healthy lunchbox ideas



Useful websites

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/better-health-families/healthier-lunchboxes-and-picnics>