



St Michael's Catholic Primary School

Food and Nutrition Policy

Date policy last reviewed: October 2026

Signed by:

J. Gordon

13/10/2026

Headteacher

Date:

J. Cave

13/10/2026

Chair of governors

Date:

Mission Statement

At St Michael's we are committed to providing a welcoming, safe and happy learning environment for all pupils. We aspire to ensure our children thrive, do their best and acquire the necessary skills to become lifelong learners. We have the highest of aspirations for all our pupils and provide them with a very wide range of learning opportunities to be very successful.

Our Whole School Food and Nutrition Policy is crucial to improving the health and well-being of our pupils.

Our Food Policy conveys our school's shared vision, ethos and values of our pupils, staff, parents and visitors and ensures that we all understand the important role food plays within our school. It is also a key factor in developing healthy eating and drinking activities in our school which will benefit the whole school community.

Background information to the school

At St Michael's Catholic Primary School, we have an excellent team of staff who are all totally committed to ensuring every child in our care receives the best possible education in an exciting, happy, safe and secure environment.

St Michael's Catholic Primary School currently has 420 pupils on roll aged 3-11. Our school is situated in a deprived area of Liverpool. Over 50% of our children are pupil premium and rely on free school meals.

Our school food provider is Food for Thought, a non-profit, social enterprise which is owned by the schools it serves. At St Michael's Catholic Primary School, we employ our own catering staff.

Children are not allowed to leave school premises at lunchtime without parents/carers.

Policy Formation and Consultation

This policy is formed in line with Liverpool Healthy Schools Review which is a 3-year accreditation that demonstrates an ethos of health and well-being of pupils at St Michael's Catholic Primary School. This policy will be presented to the governing body in the Autumn Term 2026 and shared on the school website.

Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the following legislation:

- Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework
- The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014
- Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019

It is also based on the following Department for Education (DfE) guidance:

- Early years foundation stage (EYFS) nutrition guidance
- School Food Standards practical guidance
- Allergy guidance for schools

This policy also follows guidance provided by our local authority.

Rationale

- We believe that every adult at our school can play a part in making sure that the children develop positive attitudes to food, make informed choices and enjoy eating healthily.
- We want the children to understand that good, nutritious food is essential to their ability to learn as well as to their long-term health and development.
- We want the children to apply their knowledge about food and make healthy choices both in and out of school.
- We want children to enjoy cooking and learn certain core skills by the time they leave the school.

We believe that food has a place across the curriculum and has a role in developing young people's social skills

Aims

- The school recognises the important connection between a healthy diet and a pupil's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school. The school also recognises the role the school can play, as part of the wider community, to promote family health.
- The school aims to:
- To ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in school promote the health and well-being of pupils
- To provide a consistent planned curriculum of food education to equip all pupils with knowledge and skills to make healthy life choices
- To make pupils aware of the consequences of food choices made now and in later life.
- Present consistent, informed messages about healthy eating within school through all school practices.
- To ensure provision and consumption of food is an enjoyable experience
- Ensure high standards in relation to hygienic food preparation and storage methods.
- Ensure that food provision in the school reflects the medical and ethical requirements of pupils and staff, for example medical allergenic, religious, ethnic and vegetarian needs.
- To involve the whole school community in improving eating habits and knowledge and skills surrounding healthy eating
- To provide clarity about school's policy on food brought into school e.g., packed lunches
- To increase the take up of hot school meals and free school meals

- To ensure that school food providers meet the needs of the school and comply with the government regulations and recommendations

Objectives

- To educate children about healthy eating and drinking.
- To include the whole school community in the promotion of healthier lifestyles
- To regularly review food and drink served during the school day
- To create a pleasant eating environment that encourages social interaction
- To deliver a curriculum that delivers a consistent message of food, drink, nutrition and healthy lifestyles
- To ensure catering staff and supervisory assistants are involved in the school community
- To ensure that they are well trained and understand why they are serving healthy food
- To ensure classroom staff are trained to deliver a healthy eating message
- To involve the wider community, including parents, in activities which promote balanced eating and enjoyment of food
- To encourage parents and learners to support our work by bringing healthy lunches and snacks when they provide their own food.
- To contribute to improved and sustained pupil behaviour and health, helping them to achieve their learning potential
- To provide easy access to free, fresh drinking water across the whole school day
- To ensure that school food/drink provided across the school day reflects the government food and nutrient based standards and recommendations

Food Throughout the School Day

Breakfasts Club Provision

Our highly attended Breakfast Club is run in-house by school staff and is free to all pupils as part of the Department for Education's (DfE) Free Breakfast Club programme. We are committed to providing a nutritious start to the day, offering non-sugary cereals with fresh semi-skimmed milk, multi-grain or wholemeal toast or healthy alternatives such as bagels as well as fresh drinking water every morning.

After School Club Provision (Sparkles)

Our after-school club, Sparkles, is also run in-house by school staff. In line with our commitment to encouraging healthy choices, all pupils attending are provided with a nutritious, healthy snack during their session.

School Meal Provision

Our meals meet the food standards and evidence is provided by Food for Thought, our food providers. Our school food standards and compliance with regulations and government advice are monitored by Food for Thought.

St Michael's Catholic Primary School recognises the value a good school lunch can have on our children's development. Our team is led by our experienced and long-serving Cook. The whole catering team know the children well and encourage the children to eat well at lunchtime. We have regular meetings with our catering provider where discussion on food quality and the content of the menu takes place; we encourage the children to participate with the school council so their feedback is gauged and valued.

Our children are encouraged to make healthy choices by staff and catering supervisors. Pupils' choices are monitored and the pupils are encouraged to try alternatives at times. We ensure that the pupils choose enough food to make them feel content. Menus are made available to pupils/ parents and teachers in advance through a link on our website. Our school meal provider, Food for Thought, contributes to the promotion of healthy eating.

Lunch Break in our school is staggered and runs from 11.30am- 1:30pm. Foundation Stage children eat together first followed by Key Stage 1 classes. KS2 year groups are rotated at lunch times.

Pupils are encouraged to have a school meal or packed lunch consistently for each half term; however, they are able to switch over if parents give permission. The vast majority of EYFS/ KS1 children have a school meal. School meals are always encouraged in KS2 at a cost of £2.00 per day. Pupils are not permitted to go home for lunch.

Children are provided with a hot meal and a dessert each day and in addition, they can also have a piece of fruit if they wish.

Children are encouraged to try new foods but there is a wide range of choice in addition to the main meal including jacket potatoes, salad and a vegetarian option. Sandwiches are offered but we aim to keep this to a minimum.

All children are given vegetables or salad on their plate every day- there is no 'opt out'.

Children are actively encouraged by lunchtime organisers to taste new foods but are never forced to finish.

Children cannot be provided with one specific type of food e.g., jacket potato every day or have food specially prepared for them with the exception of those children with specific dietary or medical needs.

Children are permitted to have more food if they are still hungry e.g. an extra piece of fruit but our catering staff are responsible for preventing children from over-eating e.g. they are not allowed to have puddings or two helpings of chips.

Fried and processed foods are kept to a minimum.

Arrangement with Catering Provider

Our catering staff are employed by the school. Catering support is provided by Food for Thought. The catering support contract is regularly reviewed. Verbal and written feedback systems are in place to ensure quality of catering. Our catering staff are valued members of our school and are fully supported. Our cook is a highly-skilled and experienced member of our school team and catering staff have received appropriate training.

Free School Meals

Currently all children in Reception and KS1 can have a meal free of charge in line with the governments Universal Infant Free school meal scheme. We still encourage parents to register for free school meals (FSM) if their social economic circumstances allow in increase Pupil Premium funding for the school. We strongly believe that having a school lunch provides children with the opportunity to taste new foods and have a greater chance of adopting a balanced and healthy diet in the future.

The school promotes application for Free School Meals for those families that may be entitled to this benefit. This message is reinforced at parent's inductions and events. The Finance Officer helps parents make applications where needed. The uptake of Free School Meals is monitored regularly.

Packed Lunches

We have a clear healthy packed lunch policy which is communicated regularly to our parents and children. Positive messages are also communicated in assemblies and school council meetings. We occasionally inform parents of the need to think about alternative healthy choices if we think there is an ongoing issue.

We aim to support parents in making healthy choices when preparing packed lunches.

Our school council group regularly talk about healthier packed lunches.

Children who eat packed lunches eat in the dining hall.

Staff monitor the contents of the packed lunches; if any member of staff is concerned that any of our pupils are not eating healthily, they feedback to the HT/ DHT

Parents are encouraged to report any concerns with their class teacher and likewise teachers may discuss any concerns or issues with parents

Guidance for Parents

If you do provide your child with a packed lunch, it must adhere to our school policy which takes healthy schools' guidance into account. We never confiscate unsuitable food items but reserve the right to substitute them with a healthy alternative and then send the item home for your child to have later in the day.

Please note that you do not need to send a drink as we provide fresh water = each day at lunchtime free of charge. Fruit or salad is made available to children free of charge at lunchtime and offered as a substitute for items that are not part of a healthy packed lunch.

St Michael's Catholic Primary School Packed Lunch Policy

Please include:

- Starchy food such as a sandwich or pasta salad etc.
- A piece of fruit and or vegetables e.g., carrots
- No more than one 'sweet treat' i.e., only 1 biscuit bar or a cake No 'sweets or confectionary
- No crisps of any type
- No nuts or nut-based products (some of our children have allergies)
- Only plain water or pure fruit juice is allowed
- Only limited amounts of highly processed foods such as sausage rolls/ lunchables/ dippers/ fridge raiders etc.

IMPORTANT:

To avoid harm to allergy-sufferers, nuts or foods containing nuts (muesli bars, peanut butter) are not allowed in school.

Packed lunch boxes are stored in designated areas around our school. If parents send in packed lunches which do not meet the school standards regularly, we offer them advice, guidance and support and encourage them to make links with our healthy school co-ordinator.

Y6 pupils are involved in the National Child Measurement program where height and weight are monitored and recorded.

Food Hygiene

All catering staff have completed Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety for Catering training.

The kitchen premises are regularly inspected by the Local Authority's Environmental Health Officer and graded according to the national score system. Our most recent score was 5.

The kitchen in which school meals are prepared and cooked in are inspected at regular intervals throughout the year to ensure that it meets national hygiene food storage and preparation standards.

Our school has a policy that any member of staff working in the kitchen must have food hygiene training (CIEH) as soon as possible after starting.

The preparation area/kitchens in the EYFS are the responsibility of the EYFS Lead. Health and safety walks/checks are regularly, which is when the kitchen is assessed in terms of safety for food preparation and cooking. No food is stored for any length of time within these areas.

Children in EYFS are provided with a good range of different foods including cheese, crackers, breadsticks, hummus, salad vegetables, fresh fruit and toast.

Before any food related activity is carried out with the children the following procedures must take place:

- 1) All surfaces are cleaned with disinfectant spray
- 2) All cooking utensils are cleaned thoroughly
- 3) Children wash their hands with soap, roll their sleeves up and wear an apron
- 4) Any food used during the activity must have been stored in the correct place i.e. fridge, freezer and also be in date. Defrosted food must not be used.
- 5) Food allergies must be checked at the school office and any child with an allergy must not come in contact with the food that they are allergic to.
- 6) All children are asked to wash their hands before they have their snack or eat their lunch.

Dining Room Environment

Our dining room environment is bright, clean with adequate tables to ensure the comfort and safety for our pupils. Our dining room is used for several extra-curricular activities, including Breakfast Club.

Pupils having a hot dinner or packed lunch all sit together and our aim is to make sure that they eat their lunch and do not need to rush. Pupils are given ample time to eat and enjoy their food. Opportunities to socialise are evident and good manners are always encouraged by our staff and supervisory lunchtime assistants.

Pupils are encouraged to think about why they have chosen their food and are given time to reflect on whether they have made healthy choices. The pupils are taught the importance of healthy eating and living within our school curriculum, including good PSHE links.

Supervisory staff encourage our pupils to eat their packed lunches and hot dinners and assist our pupils with eating and holding their knife and fork correctly i.e. basic table manners.

We also encourage children to tidy up after themselves to help encourage independence. Our school council is firmly in place and this offers opportunities for everyone to share their thoughts, ideas and to raise concerns if there are any to be addressed.

Lunchtime Behaviour

Our lunch time supervisors know their roles and responsibilities and carry them out accordingly. They have regular meetings in school to evaluate provision and agree any improvements. Our pupils know how to respect our lunch time staff and our staff are good role models and reinforce the importance of respecting others.

Our lunchtime supervisors contribute to a friendly and welcoming dining environment. Excellent standards of behaviour are encouraged and maintained which has been a consistent strength in monitoring of lunchtimes. Our pupils are praised for good manners and behaviour and any inappropriate behaviour is addressed immediately and dealt with by HT/ DHT if necessary.

Snacks

As a whole school, we provide some free snacks including fruit from the national free fruit and vegetable scheme for EYFS/KS1. Free milk is also available for eligible pupils at EYFS.

Children are encouraged to eat a healthy snack.

Children are allowed to eat a plain biscuit or fruit.

Chocolate, sweets, crisps and fizzy drinks are not permitted.

Drinks and Water

Our pupils and staff have access to fresh, free drinking water across the school day. We all understand the importance of staying well hydrated and our children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day.

Fizzy drinks are not permitted.

Special Diets, Allergies, Dietary Requirements

We take allergy and food intolerance management seriously and follow strict procedures to ensure that all children can eat safely.

Before a child joins our school, we gather detailed information about any known food allergies or intolerances. Parents are asked to inform the school if their child suffers from any medical

allergy, identifying the foods to which they react and the usual symptoms of the reaction. They will be invited into school to complete an Individual Healthcare Plan or provide one given to them by a medical practitioner.

A visual register is displayed in the school kitchen with a picture and information about selected pupils who have special diets, or diet related disorders and even medical conditions / medications that we may need to know.

Information about pupils with allergies is shared with all staff.

All staff and regular pupil facing visitors have completed Allergy & Anaphylaxis Training for Schools and are aware of how to react if a pupil has an allergic reaction to a food.

Our school has reporting procedures for identifying and accessing support for pupils who are at risk e.g. failing to thrive, eating disorders, allergies, overweight, obese or dietary related conditions.

We provide a vegetarian option for children who do not eat meat which is covered through the food standards and non-dairy protein items are included at least three times each week on the menu

See Allergy Safety Policy September 2026

Food Information Regulation and Allergen Labelling

At St Michael's Catholic Primary School, we adhere to the policies implemented by Food for Thought in all matters of allergen information and regulation. Food for Thought support us by:

- Providing accurate allergen information for all menus.
- Using approved recipes, ingredients and suppliers.
- Operating robust allergen management procedures.
- Ensuring catering staff receive appropriate allergen training.
- Completing regular hygiene and service audits.

Our premises are regularly inspected by the Local Environmental Health Officer who uses the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme to rate the hygiene standards of our school. The school catering company, Food for Thought, is responsible for monitoring the overall quality of food provision at our school in partnership with the headteacher.

All catering staff have completed Allergen training including allergen labelling.

We do not allow children to bring in nuts or product containing nuts because we have children and staff with serious allergy requiring an EpiPen in the case of anaphylactic shock. Parents are reminded of this regularly.

Religious and Ethical Diets

A vegetarian option is available on a daily basis. Our menus can be viewed on the school website. On three days each week the vegetarian option will be made up of a non-dairy protein option in line with the current school food standards as set out by the government.

We use Halal meat at the school.

Food bought in for special occasions (birthdays religious celebrations etc.)

As a school we recognise the benefit of birthday celebrations for children, however, due to having pupils and staff with severe allergies, we will no longer be handing out birthday cakes in school. If parents do wish to share a birthday treat with their child's class, then these must be pre-packed, individually wrapped items with allergy information printed on each packet. Children are not permitted to consume these in school, they will be asked to take these home where parents can make the decision on consumption of such food items

Staff Food

Our school staff are very professional and ensure that positive messages are consistent across the whole school community. We are all aware of the importance of healthy eating and healthy lifestyles and act as positive role models for our pupils.

Curriculum Learning Opportunities

We exploit opportunities within the existing curriculum to discuss and work with food.

We expose the children to the benefits of a balanced diet.

We recognise that food has great potential for cross curricular work.

Cookery is delivered through the Design and Technology Curriculum. There are also topics and opportunities in PSHE, History and Literacy.

The school commissions the support of food professionals from time to time to work with the children in the classroom and sometimes the children will be encouraged to take home things that they have made.

Dental Health is addressed throughout the curriculum as a focus in several year groups. The use of outside agencies i.e. dental nurses etc reinforce the importance of looking after our teeth. We use a range of resources in school to promote healthy eating i.e. posters, PowerPoints, models of teeth, assemblies and smartboard activities.

Our school follows specific schemes of work for PSHE, DT and Science which cover all relevant areas of healthy eating and drinking, food preparation and hygiene and the effects of unhealthy eating and drinking.

Treats, Rewards, Celebrations and Events

Our school gives consistent messages regarding healthy eating. Our pupils, parents, staff and the wider school community are aware of the provision in place as information is shared through newsletters.

The message that our school communicates to the children is that it is perfectly acceptable for children to have the odd treat as part of their well-balanced diet. Occasionally, our school will run a special day or event where we allow less healthy food to be consumed e.g., Cake sale, movie treats, class Christmas party, however, this is kept to a minimum.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Our school regularly engages in cookery workshops/gardening and growing clubs and our pupils are enjoying these learning experiences. Our school has the space and members of staff who are involved in developing our school garden areas.

Risk assessment and Health and Safety procedures are adhered to and are firmly in place. Pupil voice and involvement is encouraged through school council meetings. Our messages are consistent between our whole school community and participating staff.

Participation in National and Local Events and Initiatives

Food may be the medium used to celebrate international and local events such as Chinese New Year, Diwali etc.

Our school makes use of the Liverpool Healthy Schools Team and events organised by Food for Thought e.g. Liverpool Healthy Schools Programme, Specific Food weeks

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed regularly to take account of new developments, in particular, the new School Food Standards from September 2027.

The policy will be accessible to everyone, including children, parents and extended staff, online and by request of a hard copy.

We will know that our policy has made a difference by seeing improvements of food provision and consumption throughout our whole school. We are to continue to monitor healthy eating and drinking options and general food provision.

Conclusion

It is hoped that by adapting a healthy food policy that the school can promote health and wellbeing while also educating the children to take the practices of the school into their daily lives. Subsequently this will help them to make informed health decisions for the rest of their life.

We will continue to monitor, evaluate and review the food and drinks provision throughout our whole school and will also continue to monitor the food provided to our pupils by Food for Thought.

We are working together as a whole school and are all in agreement as to the importance of healthy eating and have therefore been successful in achieving the Silver Healthy School Award, most recently in Summer Term 2026.