



## Margaret Roper Catholic School Food Policy

At Margaret Roper we are committed to encouraging and developing positive attitudes towards food and a healthy diet. Promoting a healthy life style is integral to our curriculum and we recognise the importance of offering children the opportunity to make informed choices about what, when, where and why they eat. As a school we know that food is fundamental to the quality of a child's life; not just in providing essential nutrition but in communicating and sharing positive values, attitudes and experiences with each other. We believe that adults (staff, parents and carers) should be good role models and should support the children in understanding how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and general well-being.

### Aims

We aim to

- Increase knowledge and awareness of a healthy diet through our PSHE and Science curriculum.
- Provide safe, tasty, and nutritious food that promotes health
- Enable all pupils to have a healthy school meal
- Make healthy eating enjoyable
- Provide safe, easily accessible water during the school day
- Promote healthy eating/healthy food choices and discouraging unhealthy eating/unhealthy food choices
- Be a role model for healthy eating
- Monitor healthy choices, including packed lunches
- Use a range of opportunities to promote healthy eating
- Ensure consistent messages regarding healthy eating are reinforced throughout the school day.

### Why children need to eat well

- What children eat today shapes how they'll eat for the rest of their lives
- Too many children aren't getting enough of the right foods to eat – and too little of the foods that help keep them healthy
- When children eat better, they do better – they're in better shape to reach their full potential
- Being able to cook is an essential life skill: it all starts with getting children excited about food
- Eating good food is one of life's real pleasures: every child should know how it feels to enjoy a tasty meal with people you love. <http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/childrens-food-trust/parents/why-kids-need-to-eatwell/> This policy covers all food provided and consumed in school including before, during and after school and on school trips and in extra-curricular events.

### Curriculum

- 1) We regard healthy eating and healthy lifestyle education as a whole-school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum.
- 2) Assemblies (one per term) to offer an opportunity to explore health and food related issues.
- 3) Healthy eating education forms an important part of our school's curriculum. The importance of balanced nutrition and healthy food choices is explicitly taught through the Science, Design and Technology and PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) curriculum.

4) All children have the opportunity to learn about safe food preparation and to learn about where food has come from. Children learn about the requirements for plant growth, the food chain, healthy lifestyles (exercise, sleep and the components of a healthy diet) and its effect on the human body through the Science curriculum.

### **School lunches**

All our school meals are provided by a contracted caterer, who acts in accordance with the School Food Standards. A copy of the weekly menu is on display in every classroom, as well as in the school hall. The menu is also available via the School Office if required. Staff monitor food choices and encourage pupils to try new foods, we encourage all parents to take free school meals, where there is an entitlement.

### **Packed lunches**

This applies to all pupils and parents providing packed lunches to be consumed within school or on school trips during school hours. To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the pupil with healthy and nutritious food that is similar to food served in schools which is in line with The School Food Standards.

#### **Packed lunches should include:**

- at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day.
- meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel) every day
- oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks
- a starchy food such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals every day
- dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard everyday

#### **Packed lunches MUST NOT include**

- nuts – including peanut butter and Nutella – **because of the life threatening risk** to any other child who may have a severe allergy
- confectionery such as chocolate bars and sweets (fruit strings are considered to be sweets). Cakes and biscuits are allowed but encourage your child to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.
- drinks other than water – fresh water is available at all times so you do not need to include this
- snacks such as crisps. Instead, include seeds, vegetables and fruit (with no added salt, sugar or fat). Breadsticks served with fruit, vegetables or dairy food are also a good choice.

### **Special diets and allergies**

The school recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents and carers are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For these reasons, pupils are also not permitted to swap food items.

### **Packed lunch containers**

Pupils and parents/carers are responsible for providing a packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period. Pupils and parents/carers are encouraged to bring packed lunches in reusable plastic containers, rather than disposable plastic bags. Foods are at risk of bad bacteria if they are prepared and stored in warm temperatures, so it is advised that an ice pack is included in the food container.

#### **Assessment, evaluation and reviewing:**

Where packed lunches that aren't in line with the packed lunch policy are brought into school regularly, then the school will contact the parents to discuss this.

### **Waste and Disposal**

We will, within reason, send any uneaten packed lunch food items back home. The rationale for this is that parents can also monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake with the school.

### **Snacks**

EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 classes benefit from the Government Fruit and Vegetable Scheme of a morning break time snack. Milk is provided free for under-fives and is available at a cost for those over five in the rest of the school. As

part of promoting healthy eating children are encouraged to eat the fruit and vegetables. Children are given responsibility for passing the fruit to others and for helping to clear it away.

*Key Stage 2* children are asked to bring in fruit (fresh or dried) or vegetables for playtime. Only healthy snacks are allowed at this time. **No nuts or nut-based foods.**

### **Water for all**

During school meal times, only water may be consumed. If children bring in a sugary drink they will be asked to take it home and we will talk to parents and carers and remind them of the food policy. We have a water fountain in the playground and children are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day and have water bottles in class.

### **Dining environment**

At Margaret Roper we are committed to providing a welcoming eating environment that encourages the positive social and cultural interaction of children. The school will aim to provide a calm, ordered environment conducive to good behaviour and mutual respect.

- The dining room is well staffed with lunchtime supervisors and older pupils who assist the children in a variety of ways such as opening yogurt lids, opening containers, keeping table surfaces clean and tidy and clearing trays.
- Children will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners at lunch time and will be given plenty of time to eat. They will also be encouraged to eat their sandwiches and savory things first.
- Children will be encouraged to try a wide range of foods at lunchtimes to develop a taste for a greater variety of foods and achieve a balanced diet.
- Children will be required to enter and leave the dining hall in an orderly way; to show respect for other diners.
- Parents or carers will be advised if their child is not eating well.
- The children will be encouraged to demonstrate good manners in the hall e.g. using quiet partner voices and saying “please” and “thank you”.
- The children will seek permission from a Lunchtime Supervisor before leaving the table and they will be encouraged to eat the food they have been provided with.

### **Nut allergies**

We are a nut free school but we cannot guarantee that food products are totally nut free. Parents are asked to refrain from providing food products, which may contain nuts, in packed lunches or any other food brought into the school and children with a nut and/or peanut allergy have an individual management plan. Staff are trained to recognise and manage allergic reactions.

Reviewed : C Garcia  
January 2024