



Marsh Green Primary School

Whole School Food Policy 2026–28

Approved by:

School Governing Body

Date: 16th July 2026

Last reviewed on:

30th June 2026

Next review due by:

30th June, 2028

1. Purpose of Food Policy

This policy has been written to give clear guidance to staff, outside visitors, parent and carers, and pupils about the provision of food during the school day and our approach to the positive promotion of healthy eating and supporting good oral health. Good food provision in schools has been shown to lead not only to healthier children, but to improved attainment.

2. Food and Drink Provision Throughout the Day

2.1 Food Standards for Schools, maintained nurseries and nursery units attached to

The school food standards (SFS) are mandatory for all maintained schools and intend to help children develop healthy eating habits and ensure they obtain the energy and nutrition they need across the whole school day, which includes food provided between 8am and 6pm which would include breakfast, mid-morning snack, lunch, tuck shops and after school clubs. All academies and free schools are also expected to comply with these standards, and since 2014 is an explicit requirement within funding agreements.

For children in Reception, there are other requirements in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that must be followed including portion sizes, dietary requirements, communication with parents/carers, food brought in from home, cost-effective healthy food, planning food activities, meeting the needs of all children (additional support needs, special diets, allergies, intolerances, coeliac disease, religious faith and beliefs) and safely managing special dietary requirements

For children aged under 5 years, schools should ensure they access free foods and drinks where available to support younger children, who have slightly different energy and nutrient needs such as the free fruit and vegetable scheme, and access to free milk, and free meals (where eligible).

For more information please refer to:

- The DFE Standards for School Food in England (updated 2023)
- The DFE School Food Standards – Resources for schools (updated 2025)
- The School Food Plan – provides a range of resources including recipes ideas, portion sizes and learning from others
- The EYFS Nutrition Guidance (2025)– provides information to support children aged 5 years and younger (includes reception and nursery age)

2.2 Breakfast

Breakfast is an important meal and contribution towards energy requirements and is an opportunity to provide essential vitamins and minerals. We offer healthy foods selecting lower sugar, fat and salt options and fruit/vegetable is always available. We only offer healthy drinks including plain milk and tap water. Our menu is compliant with the school food standards, and we do not offer any foods that are restricted across the whole school day/week such as meat products or pastry. Our breakfast offer takes into account the needs of younger children aged 0 to 5 years, such as choosing cereals with the lowest sugar and salt content and only offering plain milk or water as a drink.

Our breakfast menu includes

- a range of low sugar cereals
- wholemeal toast
- fresh fruit
- water
- milk.

After School Club

We serve a light snack at after school club, in line with the School Food Standards, including the following:

- **Sandwiches:** Fillings include cheese, tuna, and butter.
- **Vegetables:** Carrots or cucumber are served with every meal.
- **Fruit:** A variety of fruit is available with every meal.
- **Additional Snacks:** * Beans on toast. Crackers with cheese. Wrap with cheese. Pasta
- **Drinks:** Water or milk.

2.3 Snacks

Snacks can play an important part of the diet of children and young people and can contribute positively towards a balanced diet. Snacks provide an opportunity to have 1 of your 5-a-day, as well as include other important nutrients in the diet.

As part of the School Food Standards, schools are only able to provide fruit, vegetables, nuts and seeds as a snack. Dried fruit is not offered as a snack and is only offered at mealtimes within a meal/dessert. The Government's school fruit and vegetable scheme entitles all children in KS1 to one piece of fruit and / or vegetable per day. For maintained nursery schools and nursery units attached to primary schools only, the Eat Better Start Better guidelines recommend that each snack for 1-4 year olds.

At Marsh Green Primary we provide snacks as follows:

- Children in Nursery/EYFS and KS1 are provided with fresh fruit or vegetables every day at breaktime
- Children in KS2 are invited to bring in either fresh fruit or vegetables for break time snack
- No other snacks are provided or brought in at any other time in the school day

2.4 School Lunches

The school lunches meet the statutory school food standards. The offer is compliant with the school food standards, where certain foods/drinks are required; restricted or forbidden. In

London, all primary school pupils are currently entitled to free school meals.

Our lunch offer takes into account the needs of younger children aged under 5 years, such as ensuring all children have access to a non-dairy protein food, minimising the inclusion of less healthy foods that are high in saturated fat, salt and/or sugar, and only offering plain milk or water as a drink.

Our lunch menu is advertised on our website and can be found [here](#)

2.5 Drinks

Water is available for all pupils throughout the day, free of charge. Pupils are able to refill water bottles easily and are actively encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day.

Lower fat milk is available for pupils at least once a day in addition to before and after school clubs. This is free of charge for pupil premium and reception aged children / all children.

Children aged 5 years and younger are not offered skimmed or 1% cow's milk. Appropriate drinks for children aged 1 to 5 years include fresh tap water and plain milk (whole milk, semi skimmed cow's milk or unsweetened calcium fortified non-dairy alternatives).

Other than milk provision once per day, as required by the School Food Standards, we are currently operating as a 'water only' school for all pupils of reception age and older (this is optional but recommended) and using this [toolkit](#).

3. Menu Development and Consultation

Our school engages with key stakeholders before implementing any menu changes and these include:

- Healthy Schools Consultant
- Catering company/provider including the catering company nutritionist/dietitian
- Senior Leadership Team
- School Governors

Our school consults with school council about menus and food provision to ensure that the pupil's voice is heard when reviewing our food and drink provision. We actively encourage children from different backgrounds to join this group.

4. Food and Drink brought into School and Parent Engagement

Packed lunches

We encourage parents to provide healthy and well-balanced packed lunches. Please see our website [here](#) for our packed lunch guidance. This includes guidance for early years.

In addition to our guidance, we communicate the importance of a healthy balanced packed lunch and other food provision by running parent workshops, auditing packed lunches and including information in our newsletters

5. Breastfeeding and Healthy Start

We have a supportive breastfeeding environment. Mothers are welcome to breastfeed (or express breastmilk), and a secluded space will be provided, if required.

For more information about how to create a baby friendly environment, please refer to:

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/about/standards/>

We encourage pregnant women and mothers with children under four to register with the Healthy Start Scheme to access free weekly food vouchers and Healthy Start Vitamins.

For more information on the Healthy Start Scheme please refer to:

<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk>

6. Birthdays and Special Occasions

As a school, we celebrate children's birthdays by promoting healthier choices and initiatives in the following ways

- Children celebrate birthdays in our celebration assemblies where they will receive a sticker and a certificate. If children would like to share special cakes, biscuits, chocolate or sweets they may do so outside of school premises.
- When children attend school trips, they are encouraged to bring in healthy packed lunches, in line with the healthy packed lunch guidance

7. Special Dietary Requirements

We are aware of food allergies, intolerances and other dietary requirements of children and have procedures in place to identify and manage these, including

- School lunch menu options which cater to religious and ethnic groups, vegetarians and vegans, people with food allergies and intolerances and people with medical conditions where dietary needs are impacted
- We are familiar with, and follow the Top Tips for safely managing special dietary requirements as detailed within the EYFS Nutrition Guidance

Relevant staff have completed the following training to enable them to manage food allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements:

- First Aid
- Adrenaline / anaphylactic shock training
- Free food allergy training – offered by the Food Standards Agency

8. Ethos and Environment

Good quality eating environments significantly increase the uptake of school food. We have done the following to ensure that we have a pleasant eating environment for children:

- Our lunchtime staff support children to line up, enter the dining hall quietly and are welcoming to all children as they come in and during the entire meal time
- providing space for social seating so that all pupils can sit with their friends, in a place of choice, each lunchtime
- menus and food posters are displayed around the dining hall
music is played during lunchtimes

9. Food Safety and Hygiene

We ensure food safety at all stages of food preparation and storage, including:

- Adequate facilities, suitable equipment, risk assessments and hazards identified.
- Staff are trained (e.g. relevant staff hold Level 2 food safety certification).
- Additional food safety measures for younger children is understood and adhered to

10. Cooking and Food Education in the Curriculum

Teaching pupils how to cook is an important part of our whole school approach to health and wellbeing. It captivates and stimulates pupil's interest and enjoyment of food as well as building self-confidence.

The school follows the National Curriculum which states that healthy eating, nutrition and cooking must be taught in Science, Design and Technology (D&T), and Health Education. We deliver a spiral curriculum building on pupil's knowledge and skills and learning is assessed throughout.

Food and cooking activities are included for younger children aged 5 years and younger, in line with EYFS requirements to help create a positive relationship with food. Activities aim to support independence, safe eating habits and food hygiene; develop fine motor skills and support children to make healthy food choices. Activity ideas are shared with parents/carers so these can be repeated at home.

11. Enrichment Activities

Cooking Club - our fun-filled cupcake classes are a fantastic way to learn a variety of new culinary skills. Each class begins with a short demonstration displaying what will be cooked during the class, followed by hands-on cooking for the students to put their newly found cooking skills to the test.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored and evaluated every 2 years by SLT, governors, caterers

and the Healthy Schools Lead.

This policy will be shared with staff, parents/carers and pupils via the school website