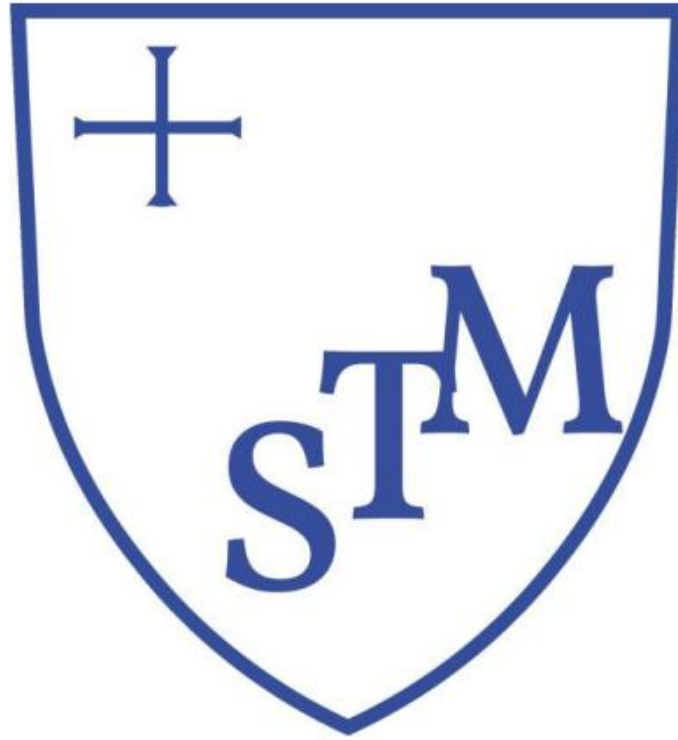


St Martin's C of E Primary School



Food and Nutrition Policy

May 2026

Statement of Intent

At St Martin's we are committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of our pupils through a whole-school approach to food and nutrition. We recognise the vital link between a nutritious, balanced diet, pupils' health, and their ability to learn, concentrate and grow academically, socially and spiritually.

This policy outlines how we aim to foster a positive food culture that promotes healthy lifestyle choices, supports inclusion, respects cultural and medical dietary needs, and ensures food safety at all times. We work collaboratively with parents, carers, staff, catering providers and our wider community to instil positive habits that will benefit pupils throughout their lives.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance, including but not limited to:

- School Food Standards (2014)
- Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019 (Natasha's Law)
- Food Safety Act (1990)
- School Standards and Framework Act (1998)
- Public Health England menu and nutrition guidance
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and Nutrition Guidance

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide a curriculum and ethos that promotes a positive attitude towards healthy eating as part of caring for the bodies God has given us.
- Ensure that all pupils have access to safe, healthy, nutritious food that is inclusive of religious, cultural, medical and sensory needs.
- Encourage good hydration and discourage the consumption of unhealthy drinks.
- Ensure all food provided by the school meets appropriate nutritional standards.
- Involve pupils, families, staff and the wider community in promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All food and drink provided by the school, including breakfast provision, snack times, lunch times and after-school clubs.
- Packed lunches and snacks brought from home.
- Food used in curriculum-based activities.
- Whole-school events, celebrations and fundraising activities involving food,

Food and Nutrition Provision

Break Times and Snack Time

At Martin's we participate in the School Fund and Vegetable Scheme, which provides one portion of free fruit or vegetables daily to all pupils in Early Years and Key stage 1.

Older pupils are encouraged to bring a healthy snack from home; chocolate, cake, biscuits, sweets and crisps are not allowed.

On arrival at school, bagels are provided for all pupils. We also participate in the Cool Milk scheme, offering pupils the opportunity to receive a daily portion of chilled milk. After the age of five, parents can purchase milk through the scheme for their child.

Lunch Time Meals Provided by School

Lunchtime meals provided by the school's catering service (SIPS), are balanced, nutritious and varied, incorporating a selection from the four key food groups. Food that are high in fat, sugar and salt are limited in both portion size and frequency. Menus are designed to reflect cultural diversity and provide opportunities to explore a variety of flavours and textures. SIPS have their own comprehensive food policies in place.

All pupils in Early Years and Key Stage 1 are entitled to a free school meal each day. In Key Stage 2, school meals are accessible to those who are entitled to free school meals or those that choose to purchase a meal.

Packed Lunches and Food Brought from Home

Parents and carers are encouraged to provide healthy, balanced packed lunches which comply with the school's healthy eating guidance. These should include items from the major four food groups and avoid high-sugar or high fat. All packed lunches must be **nut-free** to protect pupils with allergies. Pupils are not permitted to share or swap food.

Celebrations

To support our commitment to healthy eating and ensure compliance with Natasha's Law, 2019, and the Early year's Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance, 2025, pupils are not permitted to bring any food items to share for birthdays or other celebrations. This is to protect pupils and staff with allergies and to ensure consistent food safety practices. Instead, at St Martin's we invite pupils to wear their own clothes to school on their birthday (or the closest school day if falls over the weekend) as a fun and inclusive way to celebrate. We also present the pupils with a special birthday pencil in our weekly praise worship.

Whole School Events

While we place a strong emphasis on healthy eating, we also recognise the importance of balance and celebration. On special occasions, pupils may be offered treat items as part of a reward or school tradition for example:

- An ice cream or ice lolly
- Hot chocolate and biscuits reward for dojo points
- Festive snacks or themed treats during religious and cultural celebrations.

All treats provided by the school are carefully considered and provided in a safe, controlled manner that adheres to allergy guidance and supervision.

Allergens and Dietary Requirements

The health and safety of pupils and staff with allergies and special dietary needs is of paramount importance. Medical and allergy needs of an individual pupils will be obtained in advance of them starting at the school. All known allergies, intolerances and dietary requirements are recorded and communicated to relevant staff. Individual Health Care Plans (IHPs) are created by the school nursing team, where needed, and appropriate risk assessments are carried out. Relevant emergency medication will be provided by parents/carers and the necessary paperwork completed; school also has spare emergency medication stored in a central location.

Staff receive annual allergy awareness training, including how to recognise symptoms of allergic reactions and respond appropriately, including in the event of anaphylaxis. If a food intolerance is suspected, staff will work with parents / carers to keep a diary of the foods eaten within the setting / at home and any symptoms experienced. If an allergy is suspected, the food will be avoided whilst the parents / career seeks medical advice from an appropriate health professional. Food will not be excluded from a pupil's diet without a valid reason, as this can result in an unnecessary restricted diet, which could have a negative impact on nutrition.

St Martin's, we strive to be a **nut-free school** due to the life-threatening risk nut allergies pose to some pupils and staff. If a pupil brings in any food items, including snacks or packed lunch items that contain nuts, staff will confiscate the items, provide an alternative, and return the time to the parent or carer at the end of the day.

We liaise closely with our catering providers to ensure that the allergy and dietary requirements of our pupils are met safely and effectively. Our caterers (SIPS) follow their own robust food safety policies and adhere to strict guidelines that prevent cross-contamination of allergen during food preparation.

Our school lunch menu ensures that there is at least one vegetarian option available to accommodate religious or ethical preferences. Pupils are not permitted to share or swap food at any time, whether it is provided by the school or from home.

Pupils with Additional Needs

Some pupils may have specific dietary needs because of physical or developmental difficulties, which may impact on their ability to eat independently, for example a pupil with swallowing difficulties. Staff will follow the guidance of parents / carers or professionals when preparing food for mealtimes and when providing additional support.

Some pupils may experience sensory needs in relation to food, for example sensitivity to textures, tastes or smells, which may lead to limited preferences or aversions towards specific foods. Staff will consider these needs when preparing food and will communicate these needs with the catering company if required.

Early Years Nutrition Guidance (Nursery and Reception)

In line with the DFE's Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance 2025, St Martin's recognises that the years are a critical period for establishing healthy eating habits, addressing health inequalities and laying the foundations, for lifelong well-being. Pupils in our nursery and reception classes are supported to eat well through a structured approach to food provision that meets both their developmental and nutritional needs.

To ensure food safety and reduce the risk of choking, all food items provided to pupils under the age of five are prepared and served in line with national food safety advice

- Small round foods such as grapes, cherry tomatoes and blueberries are always cut lengthways into quarters.
- Hard foods like raw carrots or apples are either finely grated or cut into matchstick size pieces.

Staff will monitor pupils to ensure they are putting appropriately sized portions into their mouth. Any food that poses a choking hazard is removed or modified in line with current safety recommendations from the Food Standards Agency and an NHS start for Life guidance. All our staff involved with food preparation have appropriate food hygiene training.

Pupils are always supervised during meals and snack times. Staff sit with, or closely monitor pupils, model appropriate behaviour, encourage positive eating habits and respond promptly to signs of difficulty, discomfort or distress. At least one member of staff present during meal times is trained in paediatric first aid.

Staff will monitor pupil's appetites and adjust portion sizes to ensure pupils get enough energy and nutrients. Although staff will encourage people to eat their lunch and try different foods, pupils will not be encouraged to clear their plate or eat more food than they want to. Reward incentives such as stickers or dojo points will not be used during main or snack times.

Within Early Years Foundation Stage

- Only milk or water will be provided within the classrooms as drink options in support of hydration and dental health and in line with the DFE's Early Years Foundation Stage

Nutrition Guidance, 2025. Pupils can bring a small bottle of sugar free squash to drink at lunchtime alongside their school meal or packed lunch.

- Pupils in Nursey and Reception can access the Cool Milk scheme providing one carton of milk per day.
- Daily fruit or vegetable snacks provided to the School Fruit and Vegetable scheme will be offered to all nursery and reception pupils.

Peoples are encouraged to develop independence at meal times and try a wide variety of healthy foods. Our school catering service (SIPS) avoids processed and packaged foods in favour of favour or freshly prepared meals that expose pupils to a range of textures and flavours. Our menus rotate on a three-week cycle and are adapted to reflect seasonal produce, dietary requirements and cultural diversity.

Our EYFS staff are trained to observe signs of hunger or fullness and respond to pupils' cues during meals. Peoples are never forced to finish their food, instead we promote positive pressure- free eating environments. Fussy eating is managed with patience and consistency, using strategies that align with home practises and encourage the gradual acceptance of new foods.

Curriculum and Education

Healthy eating is embedded across the curriculum and will be taught directly through subjects like science, PSHE, design and technology. Whole school initiatives such the CUSP Food Festival will reinforce this learning. Peoples are educated about nutrition, hygiene, cooking skills and the importance of balanced diets and hydration.

Practical cooking and tasting opportunities are offered to engage pupils and help. Develop confidence with food choices. Pupils with additional needs may be provided with food opportunities to support the sensory needs and development.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

We understand that food can be connected to emotional well-being and staff are trained to recognise early signs of disordered eating or food related anxiety. This this includes patterns such as skipping meals eaten in isolation or showing signs of physical distress related to food.

Any concerns are discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Senior Mental Health Lead. And support is provided in line with safeguarding mental health policies. We strive to promote positive body image, emotional resilience and healthy attitudes towards food and physical health.

Role of Staff and Parents

Families are vital partners in providing healthy eating culture. The school regularly communicates menus, healthy eating tips, allergen information, updates to this policy via letters, newsletters on the school website. Staff will provide feedback on pupil's food intake and engage parents / carers during menu planning and routine where necessary. Where

concerns arise regarding the pupil's eating habits, staff will contact parents / carers to work together on a suitable approach.

Staff are encouraged to model healthy eating behaviours and are responsible for ensuring that food bought into school or ingredients used within lessons complies with this guidance and follows healthy and safety regulations regarding allergens.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher, EYFS lead and the governing body.

Updates or amendments will be made in response to statutory guidance, school priorities or feedback from stakeholders. All updates are communicated clearly to the relevant parties.

Compliance with Food Standards will be regularly monitored by senior leaders.