



Whole School Food Policy

1. Introduction

St John's School for the Deaf is a specialist school for children and young people with sensory and physical impairments. Some of our pupils also have eating and drinking difficulties of different types. Due to the nature of the difficulties that some pupils experience with eating and drinking, the School's expectations are flexible in order to adapt provision to individual need.

St John's School provides an environment that promotes healthy eating and lifestyles, to enable pupils to make informed choices about their health and well-being. In residential care groups the school encourages a 'home from home' approach to food provision, to reflect the range of foods that would typically be offered in a healthy home.

This policy was formulated through consultation between members of staff, the school food provider, governors, parents, pupils, the school nurse and the Healthy Eating Advisor and Nutritionist for Leeds City Council.

The following documents have been referred to in the writing of this policy:

The School Food Plan: www.schoolfoodplan.com

School Food Standards: www.schoolfoodplan.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/School-Food-Standards-Guidance-FINAL-V3.pdf

DFE: School Food in England: Departmental advice for governing bodies, July 2016

Ofsted: School Inspection Update, December 2015

The Link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment: A briefing for head teachers, governors and staff in education settings, November 2014

HM Government: Childhood Obesity; A plan for Action, August 2016

Briefing on the New Ofsted Framework 2015 – www.foodteacherscentre.co.uk

The Whole School Food Policy: How to guide – www.schoolwellbeing.co.uk

Minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care, draft August 2016

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School PSHE policy.

2. Rationale

At St John's, we believe that the school environment, examples set by staff and pupils, together with what the pupils learn in the classroom, have a major influence on their knowledge and understanding of food and health. Our aim is to work together to create a whole school approach, which supports all members of the school community with regard to healthy eating and lifestyles.

3. Aims and Objectives

- To provide an enjoyable and healthy eating experience for all our pupils and staff.
- To embed healthy eating messages consistently across the whole school.
- To provide a range of healthy food choices throughout the day and in line with mandatory guidelines outlined in the School Food Standards (January 2015) Some flexibility will need to be applied in the case of pupils with eating and drinking difficulties to meet their special needs.
- To encourage pupils to make healthy food choices.
- To increase awareness of the long term effects of eating an unbalanced diet.
- To provide parents/carers with information and support to adopt healthy eating habits for their children.
- To contribute to the healthy physical development of all members of our school's community.
- To ensure that food provision reflects the wide diversity within our school community

4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff to implement the food policy. They should act as role models to demonstrate positive attitudes towards healthy eating, and to help develop pupils' awareness and understanding about how to make healthy food choices.

John Dyson Catering Services is responsible for providing meals that follow the current School Food Standards (2015).

The multi-disciplinary team (Lead Teacher for Food, Assistant Head Teacher, Head of Care and School Nurse) is responsible for monitoring the review of this policy.

5. Food throughout the school day

All meals in school and care provided include variety and balance, and a range of options consistent with a healthy diet.

- **Breakfast in care groups**

Breakfast is served daily to residential pupils and to any day pupil who arrives at school, not having eaten.

- **Break time provision**

All pupils are offered fresh fruit as a snack. Drinks available include water and dilute sugar free squash. Pupils with particular dietary needs are also offered other snacks, eg: toast.

- **School lunches**

School lunches are available to all pupils and staff. Day pupils may choose to bring packed lunches from home. Parents and carers are encouraged to provide pupils with packed lunches that follow the School Food Standards. Packed lunches provided by the catering staff for trips and outings include a wide range of healthy options.

School meals are provided by John Dyson Catering services, and menus meet the current standards as outlined in 'School Food Standards – A Practical Guide for school their cooks and caterers'. The menus run on a 6 week cycle and are monitored weekly.

- **The dining environment**

The dining space has been reorganised after consultation with the school council. The pupils chose to have the tables rearranged into a circular configuration to make the environment more conducive to small group conversation and to staff, visitors and pupils eating together.

- **Snacks during and after school – for residential pupils**

A range of snacks are provided after school. At times pupils choose to bring food into school. Staff will promote healthy choices and encourage pupils to eat reasonable amounts of snack foods alongside the options offered by school.

- **Evening meal: residential groups**

KS2 - KS4

Food is ordered from the school kitchen by the care groups. The menu is discussed with pupils and they are encouraged to choose a range of meals from the hot selection provided. However, if they do not want what is on offer, they can choose from alternative 'cupboard foods' including pasta, spaghetti hoops on toast or sandwiches.

Sixth Form

As part of their independent living programme, students work with staff in planning the menu for the week. They take account of diet, religious needs, costing, and individual likes/dislikes when forming the menu. When shopping, students are encouraged to read labels to select healthier options where possible. They then prepare the meals for themselves.

Students in post 16 are allowed to buy take-away meals, and staff encourage this to be limited to once a week.

6. Water for all

Water is available in three dispensers around the school. These are available to the whole school community throughout the day. Pupils are encouraged to drink regularly and recognise the benefits of drinking water. Water is also available in jugs on the dining room tables at lunch time.

7. Special diets

The kitchen staff are aware of the pupils in school who require special diets, and produce meals to accommodate their needs.

The school nurse notifies staff of any pupils with food allergies so that they all are aware and can support the pupil appropriately when carrying out supervisory duties at mealtimes. Allergens are identified clearly in the menus.

Referral to Speech and Language Therapists is made when planning the needs of pupils with specific eating/swallowing/drinking difficulties or concerns. Information is cascaded to staff regarding specific requirements via a readily available file in the dining hall so all staff working with a specific pupil are able to meet their dietary requirements and keep them safe. This information is updated by the SaLT team and all staff have a responsibility to pass any new information or concern to them promptly.

Where school pupils are not able to meet food intake guidelines due to anxiety or eating disorders - commonly selective eating - the School Nurse is responsible for care planning and will document recommendations in the pupil's Health Care Plan.

If the level of concern regarding nutritional food intake warrants it, a referral will be made to the CAMHS service and their advice will be followed.

St John's school is committed to staff training for children with eating disorders and staff engage in appropriate training; learning points are then cascaded to other staff.

8. Food and Cooking curriculum

Food and Cooking are included in the curriculum for pupils of all ages and abilities.

Aims of the Food and cooking curriculum:

- To create an enjoyable learning experience finding out about food, healthy eating and lifestyles and the influence of different cultures on food.
- To provide a well planned course of study based on National Curriculum guidelines, incorporating messages about where food comes from, food preparation and cooking, nutrition and healthy eating, food hygiene and safety and sustainable and ethical food production.
- To develop a practical, hands on food experience, to enable pupils to develop vital life skills that can be carried forward into their adult lives.
- To learn about the new Eatwell Guide and encourage pupils to identify where the food they have prepared fits the Eatwell Guide.
- To taste a variety of foods including those which are unfamiliar, to broaden pupils' experience and help to develop balanced eating patterns that will continue into their adult lives.
- To plan, prepare and cook healthy meals from scratch (as appropriate).
- To understand how to shop and cook economically.
- To explore and enjoy working with food and pass on their knowledge and skills to others.

9. Food and Nutrition across the curriculum

Students have a number of opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of food and healthy eating.

Science: provides knowledge about balanced diets and healthy eating through the KS2, 3 and 4 curriculum when appropriate.

PSHE: encourages pupils to learn about the *Eatwell Guide* and why a healthy diet is important. Some groups will consider the main constituents of a healthy diet and the importance of each within the context of physical and mental health.

The School nurse: works with a number of groups across the school (care, sixth form, PSHE) to educate pupils about the Eatwell Guide, NHS '5' a day campaign, making healthy food choices, oral care and hygiene, bowel care and diverticular disease.

10. Special occasions and rewards

Celebrating special occasions is an important part of the life at St John's, and food and drink play an important role in this. We aim to reach a sensitive balance between on the one hand encouraging our pupils to participate in eating and drinking as part of special occasions, but also recognising that the level of engagement will vary according to the special needs of our pupils.

11. Working in partnership with Pupils and Parents/Carers

St John's recognises the benefit of working closely with parents, where required, to provide support in dietary issues and concerns. Parents and carers are kept up to date with current guidelines being adopted in school via letter.

Pupils have the opportunity to discuss issues around healthy eating and food in Care and School Councils.

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