

Amanda Butler
Headteacher

St. Luke's Church of England School

Cherish, Challenge, Aspire and Achieve

Life In All Its Fullness



St. Luke's Food Policy (updated June 2020) ** main focus for Nursery & Reception

General Information

Name of Setting: St. Luke's Church of England School

Name of Staff Member Responsible for Food Policy: Charlotte Watson

Date of Policy Implementation: July 2018

We are a nut free school – please do not bring any nut products into school

During COVID-19 arrangements, we are adopting social distancing and sharing of food is not permitted. Children will eat separately and have snacks separated/cut to avoid cross contamination.

Section 1

Overall Aim of the Policy

To promote the health and well-being of children and their families through food within the school and through the information and activities we provide in the community.

Mission Statement/ Rationale

The school's overall aims to link to the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), particularly the welfare requirements for food and drink, and other guidance e.g. the Core Purpose for Children's Centres, the Healthy Child Programme, The Baby Friendly Initiative, and the Children's Food Trust guidance. This policy also applies where appropriate to our main school.

Development and Implementation of the Food Policy

This policy has evolved over time as the staff team's skills and knowledge have been developed, and food and drink has been a topic of review and reflection. Planning for activities has always included a focus on healthy eating, role modelling, and building skills and knowledge with the families accessing services through discussion, experience and information sharing between staff, adults and children.

The policy has been shared with staff and families and is available to families in full via the website or by request. Some information will be displayed.



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When and Who the Policy Applies To

- The policy applies to food provided by the school.
- Families will be asked to take the policy into account in the event food is brought in from home, food provided at events or on trips.
- **It is not possible to control what foods have been brought into the room at all times (on site or off). At sessions run by the school, routines are in place to ensure the environment and utensils are cleaned. However, we cannot guarantee that there is no risk of cross contamination. Please talk to staff about known allergy risks.**
- The policy applies to all school staff within the setting, including those planning menus, cooking, preparing and serving food. In the unusual event that parents bring food into sessions from home they will be asked to take the policy into account and be supported by staff as and when needed.
- The policy will be shared with parents via the website, through discussion and copies on site. Staff will share the policy through team discussion, and on-going induction processes. The policy will be seen by our Governors.

Section 2

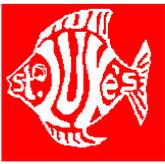
Food and Drink Provision

- Children are offered drinks (water or milk) at snack time, but drinking water is always available to all adults and children throughout operation. Low level sign to be available to prompt children to recognise their own needs from an early age, and to promote good habits in relation to remaining hydrated which benefits health, energy levels, mood, toileting, concentration and learning.
- Drinks and snacks are routinely offered to children. Sometimes the setting provides cooking activities for families to take part in, but this is not on a daily basis.
- When cooking activities are planned, the menu is developed by the staff preparing the session, in line with healthy eating guidance. Healthy snacks will vary to ensure children have good opportunities to try new foods.
- Young children have high energy and nutrient requirements but only small stomachs, so need to eat little and often. Snacks and meals are timed so that they eat regularly. For example, during a morning play and learn session, a mid morning snack is provided between the breakfast and lunch they have at home.



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- **Hot drinks** – in Nursery we do not allow hot drinks during busy sessions such as play and learn. Hot drinks may be provided at other times to adults in insulated mugs. Sometimes staff meet families at community activities not run by school, or on home visits. We do not have control of the provision or not of hot drinks at these times, nor the type of cup they are served in. However, we encourage adults to manage the situation safely for the children, raising awareness of the risk of scalds to young children.

Communicating with Children and Families

Staff running sessions talk to families about food and drink. They find out about family habits, and individual dietary requirements. They share information about what food is provided, and they seek feedback from families in relation to food and drink provided.

The Eating Environment and Social Aspects of Meal Times

We make sure drinking water is available at all times but we do not operate a rolling snack bar system where children can access food throughout sessions. We prefer to ensure that when families eat and drink the experience is sociable. This is because children are more likely to get involved in helping, serving themselves, trying new food, and bring co-operative and interact with others when sitting together and learning from those around them. By sitting together, there are fewer distractions in the playroom which may put some children off eating or drinking. Portion sizes are small to avoid children feeling overwhelmed, they are never expected to finish everything on their plate, and food is never withheld (expect in relation to individual dietary needs). We do not use food as a punishment or a reward, so for example a food item would not be withheld if they had not eaten something else. Children are not expected to sit for the duration of snack time when they are new to activities, it is something that tends to build up over the initial few visits. However, on no account may children move around the playroom or garden with food or drink, for their own and other children's safety. Children are not allowed to take food or drink from other's plates or cups, as this may not meet individual children's dietary needs.

Adults and children always wash their hands before eating, or handling food. Wipes are available if families prefer, but as a first choice children use soap and water in the low level sinks and dry their hands on paper towels.

Only water or milk are provided to drink between meals as squash, fruit juice or fizzy drinks can lead to tooth decay.

Snack times include apples, cucumber, pears, sugar snap peas, oranges, tomatoes, etc.



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Celebrations and Special Occasions

Food and drink often play an important role at special occasions and events. These occasions are also useful to provide opportunities for children to learn about food and drink from different religions and cultures. However, as with all food provided we are careful to restrict saturated fat, sugar and salt and therefore it may be more appropriate to find other ways to celebrate and share special occasions for example through craft, signing and storytelling if there is a danger that less healthy celebration foods are to be provided regularly. See note re **COVID-19**

Providing Food For All

We want to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment for all, and this includes providing food and drink which everybody can take part in having. We do not always know who will be attending the activities we plan. It is very important for adults to talk to staff about specific dietary requirements, particularly where cultural or religious beliefs impact on diet, there are complex or special educational needs or disabilities which impact on eating or drinking, or known food allergies or intolerance. The foods which most commonly cause an allergic reaction in children are eggs, milk, soya, wheat, gluten and peanuts, but this is not an exclusive list, it may be necessary for staff to seek additional medical advice, and we would talk to parents about this.

Parents/carers remain with their children and are responsible for the food choices being made during activities. In the event of staff being responsible for the children in a crèche situation, dietary information is shared and recorded. In the event that a food allergy is known a protocol will be shared with staff so that all know about the child, their allergies and symptoms, and what to do in the event of an emergency. There is always at least one member of staff on side with paediatric first aid, however we work towards all staff being trained at any one time. **See note regarding COVID-19**

Encouraging Fussy Eaters To Eat Well

Fussy eating and fear of new foods are part of development affecting 10-20% of young children.

All children are encouraged to take part in snack time, but there is no pressure placed upon them to eat and drink at that time. We keep portion sizes small, as larger portions may be off putting. Role modelling is often very successful in resulting in children trying foods being eaten around them, and adults being enthusiastic and not letting their own personal dislikes show also works. We give the children regular and repeated chances to taste new foods as it can take as many as 10-15 tastings before they like it. Encouraging a child to taste something but allowing them to spit it into a tissue if they do not like it is fine! This helps encourage children to give it a go. We always praise children for trying new foods, and do not use favourite foods as a reward. Sometimes we may use non-food items such as stickers as a reward for eating.



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Food Brought In From Home

Generally, food is not brought in from home. However, in the unusual event that a parent chooses to bring food in (for a party or a celebration) it must be clearly labelled with the child's details and is stored appropriately. If a member of staff is responsible for caring for the child, rather than the parent, the appropriate documentation must be completed to ensure that the child's dietary and medical needs are understood. In all cases staff will talk to adults about healthy eating guidance, and the policy. Our aim is for children to develop their social skills and togetherness which is why we provide all snacks unless there is a special occasion or a specific dietary / allergic need.

See note regarding COVID-19

Learning About and Through Food

Learning about food is integrated into our educational planning in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum.

- Personal, social and emotional development; meal times offer children experiences to taste different foods, overcome dislikes and learn how to share. Cooking activities offer opportunities for learning through working with others and increasing self-esteem.
- Physical development; fine and gross motor skills can be developed through activities such as gardening, using knives and forks, preparing food and washing up. Mealtimes can be used to help children make healthy food choices.
- Literacy; many stories involve food. We use these to learn about ingredients, where food comes from (growing in the garden, harvesting and cooking and eating), and about food for special occasions from different cultures. Language can be developed and senses explored through discussing and describing the taste, texture, size, look and smell of food.

- Mathematics; activities such as counting out spoons or pieces of fruit when setting the table at snack time can support numeracy skills. Sorting and matching foods into different types can help promote organisational skills and reasoning.
- Communication and language; sitting together around the table is a good way to teach conversation and social skills such as looking after neighbours.
- Understanding the world; food tasking activities teach children about ingredients, the seasons and where food comes from including food from different cultures. Growing fruit and vegetables teaches children where food comes from, life cycles, about gardening and looking after plants, and it's a good form of physical activity.
- Expressive arts and design; art activities can encourage children with food and alert them to colours and shapes.



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Cooking With Children

Cooking with children is an enjoyable activity and an effective way to encourage all children to try and eat a wide range of foods. Recipes are chosen to promote and encourage healthy diets, and extend family experiences. The recipes we choose include meals. All recipes involve mixing, combining, and assembling activities such as dips, scones, layered fruit and yoghurt pots. Activities are well planned to be as safe as possible. Children may need help from their adult and the activity is carefully supervised by parents and staff. In the event sweet foods such as cakes or biscuits are made, these are eaten here as part of a meal, or taken home to do so, to best protect dental health.

Food Safety and Hygiene

At St. Luke's Nursery food is stored, prepared and presented in a safe and hygienic environment and children are taught basic hygiene, including learning when and how to wash their hands inside. This is very important as young children may have a low resistance to food poisoning.

Surfaces and cooking equipment are kept clean and in good condition.

Staff involved in preparing and handling food must be competent to do so. Cooking is led by a member of staff who has completed appropriate training, including food hygiene training.

Protecting Children's Health

We promote health and development in relation to diet and being active in relation to maintaining a healthy weight. We signpost to health professionals if there is a known concern that children are gaining weight too rapidly or are growing too slowly, or if there are concerns about a child's eating behaviour for dietary advice.

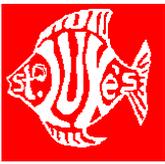
We take seriously our responsibility to protect children's health including helping children to maintain a healthy weight as they grow, and encouraging breastfeeding and good dental practices. Regular physical activity during the early years provides immediate and long-term benefits for physical and psychological well-being. Physical activity has very low risks for most under fives, whereas the risk that childhood inactivity will lead to poor health in later life is high. All children aged under five years should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (being restrained or sitting) for extended periods (except time spent sleeping). We include physical activity in all sessions eg walking, active play and games, and offer some purely physical activity sessions too.

Children are more likely to maintain a healthy weight if they are physically active for at least 180 minutes (three hours) each day, as recommended for children aged five years in the UK (Department of Health).



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Evaluation and Review of the Settings Approach to Food and Drink Provision

To review this policy we will:

- Use the Code of Practice Checklist to evaluate the settings approach to food and drink provision (see pages 58-59 of the practical guide) and the Menu Planning Checklist to evaluate your food and drink provision, particularly when planning new menus (see pages 61-65 of the practical guide).
- Getting feedback from parents, carers and children.
- Look at the way other settings approach food and drink provision.
- Keep up to date with current good practice on meeting the welfare requirements for food and drink. Visit the Children's Food Trust website: www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk
- Regularly review staff training and development plans for food safety, hygiene and nutrition.
- Review the food policy at least once a year.

Date: June 2020

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Next Date for Policy Review: June 2022

Signed:

Date:



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