



St Mary
Magdalene
Academy

NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS POLICY

St Mary Magdalene Academy is a Christian community of learning. We aim to nurture young people to become high achievers and to discover their vocation in the global society.

“Show by a good life that your works are done by gentleness born of wisdom”
James 3.13

Good Health is important to everyone. The Academy wants to secure, maintain and improve students' and young people's health. One of the ways of doing this is by setting minimum nutritional standards for lunches for student in schools.

Introduction

A varied and balanced diet is an important way of protecting health and promoting proper growth and development. **In the short term it can help children and young people to improve their concentration and fulfill their potential both inside and outside school.** It helps to minimise some health risks such as anaemia and dental decay. A good diet in childhood can also help prevent ill health in later life. Unhealthy diets, which include too many fatty foods, too much salt, and not enough vegetables and fruit, are linked to the risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers.

What Is A Healthy Diet?

There are no healthy or unhealthy foods, only healthy and unhealthy diets. For children aged five and over a healthy diet means broadly:

- A balanced diet with variety and enough energy for growth and development.
- Plenty of fibre-rich starchy foods such as bread, rice, pasta, potatoes and yams.
- Plenty of fruit and vegetables.
- Not eating too many foods containing a lot of fat, especially saturated fat.
- Moderate amounts of dairy products.
- Moderate amounts of meat, fish or alternatives.
- Not having sugary foods and drinks too often.

What are the Compulsory Standards?

The standards require that at least two items of each of the following food groups must be available every day and throughout the lunch service.

- Starchy foods such as bread, potatoes, rice and pasta. At least one of the foods available should not be cooked in oil or fat. (For example if one option is roast potatoes, another option could be boiled rice).
- Vegetables and fruit.
- Milk and dairy foods.
- Meat, fish and alternative (non-dairy) sources of protein. Red meat must be served at least three times a week. Fish must be served at least twice a week.

What do National Standards Apply To?

- All lunches provided for students during term time, whether they are free or lunches which students pay for. Students who are entitled to a free school lunch cannot spend their entitlement on other school food such as breakfast or break time snacks.
- Hot and cold food, including packed lunches provided by the school for students on school trips.

Additional Recommendations

Although not in the regulations, the Secretary of State:

- Expects that drinking water should be available to all pupils all day, free of charge, and
- Strongly recommends that schools should offer some hot food, particularly in the winter months. A school lunch does not have to be a hot meal. However, a hot meal can be useful morale-booster during the colder months. Parents often prefer to buy a hot meal for their children and see it as offering added value.
- Strongly recommends that drinking milk is available as an option every day.

Change History

Date	What Changed	Committee Date Approved
24 February 2005	New	
Derivation	DfES & LEA Guidelines	
Revision Policy	Every 3 years in line with LEA and DfES Directives & Inclusion Policy	

APPENDIX 1

Good Catering Practice

This is guidance on good practice, but which is not required by law. This guidance offers a practical way of meeting the new minimum nutritional standards, while meeting the needs of students.

Key Points for Catering Staff to Bear in Mind:

- Reflect the likes and dislikes of students.
- Work with the school. For example with food technology teachers to reinforce healthy eating messages at lunchtime and in the classroom.
- Encourage all students to have a balanced diet.
- Aim to offer a selection of food which over the week reflects the proportions in the Balance of Good Health. Make changes gradually.
- Offer a variety of foods.

Use a Variety of Cooking Methods:

Steaming	braising	blanching	boiling	stewing
Poaching	casseroling	baking	grilling	barbecuing

Roasting with no fat or oil on a rack.

It is important to use cooking methods that lead to minimum destruction of nutrients. For example over cooking vegetables can lead to loss of important nutrients.

Monitoring Nutritional Standards

Monitoring what your customers are eating is essential to your business and to their health. The ultimate responsibility for ensuring that national standards are met with the Local Education Authority or, if they have delegated the budget for school meals, with the school governing body.

Regular monitoring by caterers of school lunches is essential. It will demonstrate that the school is:

- Meeting compulsory national nutritional standards and other contractual requirements.
- Giving your students the nutrients they need for proper growth and development, and
- Keeping your students happy.

Monitoring can help identify where improvements can be made and provide a framework for taking action.

The Government recommend that caterers keep records of the food provided:

- To check that they are meeting national nutritional standards every day.
- To see what items are selling and being eaten. For example, are some foods running out too early? Are some dishes always left over? What foods are not being eaten?
- As a record of whether healthier catering practices are being implemented.

Caterers can monitor performance by using a checklist. (See Appendix II).

An additional method of monitoring is by seeking feedback from customers. This could involve undertaking a survey, or setting up a suggestions scheme, to identify:

- What customers think of the food on offer?
- What improvements could be made to the service?

APPENDIX II

Example of a self-monitoring check list

Compulsory Requirements

• Bread, other cereals and potatoes (at least one of these must not be cooked in oil or fat).	Yes / No Action Taken
• Vegetables and salads	Yes / No Action Taken
• Fruit and fruit juice	Yes / No Action Taken
• Milk and dairy foods (are lower fat options available?)	Yes / No Action Taken
• Meat, fish and alternative (non-dairy) sources of protein	Yes / No Action Taken
• Is red meat available at least three times a week? (What type of red meat is served?).	Yes / No Action Taken
• Is fish available at least twice a week with at least one of those servings of oily fish?	Yes / No Action Taken
• Comments	

Strongly Recommended

Is drinking water available free of charge every day?	Yes / No Action Taken
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