**St. John’s CE Primary School**

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Headteacher: Sarah Stone

Thursday 11th September

Dear Parents and Carers

**Re: Development of a Food and Nutrition Policy in Line with New Early Years Guidance**

We hope this letter finds you well. At St. John’s, the health and wellbeing of our children is at the heart of everything we do – ‘Nurture’ is one of our key school values. As part of our ongoing commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles, we are pleased to inform you that we are currently developing a Food and Nutrition Policy for our school.

This initiative is being guided by the recently updated [**Early Years Food and Nutrition Guidance**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-nutrition) **(May 2025)**, which sets out best practice to ensure children receive the nourishment they need to thrive, both physically and mentally. The guidance emphasises the importance of balanced meals, healthy snacks, hydration, and developing positive attitudes toward food from an early age: ***“Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy, balanced and nutritious”.***

The guidance has been produced with the aim of tackling childhood obesity and high levels of tooth decay in children due to excess sugar intake. Although the guidance is aimed at children aged 0-5, it offers excellent advice for providing healthy and nutritious meals for all children (and adults), and includes guidance regarding potential life threatening conditions (choking and allergies). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-nutrition>

Our goal is to create a policy that reflects:

* Current nutrition and health standards for young children.
* A consistent and supportive approach to food and mealtimes across the school.

**What we currently do to ensure that meal and snack times are safe and nutritious:**

* Follow the Food Standards guidance for food provided in school.
* We have a robust procedures in place for children who have food allergies.
* Any food provided in the school is checked for potential allergens.
* A number of staff on site are Paediatric First Aid trained.
* All staff have completed / are due to complete anaphylaxis awareness training.
* Staff who work in Early Years are aware of, and implement, the guidance in the updated Early Years Statutory Profile (Sept 2025), and the Early Years Food and Nutrition Guidance (May 2025).
* Early Years pupils have a lunch time which is separate to the rest of the school.

The Food and Nutrition Policy will build upon current practice and will help pupils to foster healthy habits now that will have a lasting impact on our children’s future health and wellbeing.

**What does this mean for families?**

It is important to ensure as much as practically possible that food provided from home aligns with the healthy options offered by St. John’s, so that children receive consistent messages about nutrition.

Having a food and nutrition policy in place will help us work together to ensure that children have healthy, balanced and nutritious food and encourage healthier food choices for packed lunches. Your support and collaboration are essential in helping us build an environment where every child can flourish.

**To support the Food and Nutrition Policy and meal times at St. John’s:**

We are asking families to help us follow the new guidance for all children at St. John’s by:

* Avoiding foods high in saturated fat, salt, and/or sugars like cakes, sweet and savoury pastries, biscuits, crisps, chocolate and other confectionary.
* Avoiding artificial sweeteners as they may encourage children to prefer very sweet foods.
* Avoiding sugary drinks (including fruit juices, squash and smoothies).
* Following the government guidance if your child is in Early Years, including the advice on how to prepare foods to avoid choking.
* Teaching your children to use a knife and fork.

**Celebrations / Special Events:**

Many families and schools like to celebrate birthdays and other special events by bringing in a cake or sweets to share. This can mean that some children are eating these unhealthy foods several times a week. The food and nutrition guidance recommends alternatives to ‘sweet treats’ in the form of fruit platters or non-edible options such as stickers.

As part of the process of developing our Food and Nutrition Policy, we value the input of our school community and would like to invite you to share your thoughts on this section of the policy (highlighted in red) on how we can best support healthy eating at St. John’s.

A link to the policy and this letter will be sent via text. Please use the link to access the survey to share your views: <https://forms.office.com/e/LtjtJ0V2mT>

Thank you for your continued partnership.

Best wishes

Mrs Stone

**Supporting / Further information:**

**School Food Standards**

St. John’s follows the guidance of the The School Food Standards (SFS) which regulates the food and drink provided at school settings. The SFS define the foods and drinks that must be provided, which foods are restricted, and those, which must not be provided. They apply to food and drink provided to pupils on school premises up to 6pm, including, for example, breakfast and after school clubs, mid-morning break, and after school clubs.

<https://www.gov.uk/school-meals-food-standards>