Scholes (Elmet) Primary
St James' CE Primary
Moortown Primary

Policy: Food in school

Date: December 2023

Introduction

Our vision for Sphere Federation schools is to be a happy and healthy place to learn (St James' CE Primary: happy and healthy place to achieve and believe). The main aim of the policy is to ensure clear, consistent messages and practices about food and health.

The policy has been developed through a process of consultation and review involving senior leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers. Closely related to the policy is the Packed Lunch Guidance and our DT Cooking and Nutrition Curriculum Guide.

Our school actively supports healthy eating and drinking, ensuring that aspects of food and nutrition in school promote health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors. A good diet is important for health. A healthy and varied diet can help maintain a healthy body weight, enhance general wellbeing and reduce health issues. It can also support concentration, behaviour and attainment.

Key points

Special occasions, birthdays and rewards

Following consultation, treats for birthdays are not allowed. There are a number of reasons for this which include:

- to avoid parents/carers feeling under pressure
- to ensure teaching time isn't wasted
- to avoid problems with allergies
- to avoid litter

In the vast majority of situations, food is not used as a reward (see Relationships and Behaviour Management Policy). Where it is, it would be in exceptional circumstances to a group or class (and never to a single individual) or for very specific celebratory purposes. Such exceptions require the approval of the Head of School.

Staff providing food, drink and ingredients

Where staff provide food, drink or ingredients (eg end-of-term party, cooking sessions), they follow specific points:

- gelatine (eg jelly sweets) must be avoided as it is likely to contain animal fats and therefore should not be eaten by some individuals or groups on the grounds of belief or religion
- sweet snacks (containing sugar or artificial sweeteners) should be minimised – staff check with the Head of School
- butter should be chosen over margarine and low fat spreads (this is because of health concerns around hydrogenated oils)

Current provision

Breaks

Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children are provided with a free portion of fruit or vegetable as part of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme. Key Stage 2 children may bring in fruit or vegetables as a snack at break.

Drinks

All pupils are taught about the importance of drinking water and are actively encouraged to do so throughout the day. All children have access to clean drinking water. All children should bring in their water bottles to school and are accessible during the day. The bottles may be refilled from taps or water coolers. For health and safety reasons, children are required to take home and wash water bottles on a regular basis, replacing bottles where necessary. Water is provided at lunchtime for children having school or packed lunches. All children can buy a daily small carton of milk.

School meals

Menus for school meals comply with the School Food Standards and promote the concept of a balanced and nutritious diet. Our current school meals provider is Catering Leeds, the local authority's catering agency. Their

meals are inclusive and take individual dietary needs into consideration. All children are encouraged to make healthy choices when selecting their food for lunch and to try different foods. Pupils choose their main course at the start of the day to ensure they get their first choice. Children are offered two portions of vegetables and/or salad and are encouraged to eat at least one of these portions.

To increase uptake of school lunches and in particular free school meals, school lunches are promoted eg display of weekly menus, school website, taster sessions.

Staff monitor school lunches on an informal basis eg they might choose to eat school dinner with children.

There is a procedure to ensure that the menu served correlates with the planned menu. When this does not occur, a clear reason is given from the catering staff.

School dinners can be combined with packed lunches over the week.

The dining environment
In line with our Positive Relationships Policy, pupils are rewarded in our dining halls for behaviour, manners and making healthy choices eg with lunchtime certificates ('Lunchtime Legends'), choice chips (St James' CE Primary: shells).

Free school meals
A number of children are entitled to free school meals. There is no stigmatisation of these children. Parents/carers are encouraged to check eligibility for free school meals through reminders, newsletters, posters and school website news posts.

Universal infant free school meals
Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are offered a free school meal.

Packed lunches
We have packed lunch guidance to inform parents, carers and children about what choices should be made for a healthy packed lunch, based on the Eatwell Guide. At least one piece of fruit or vegetable and water is encouraged. Salty or sugary snacks and sweetened drinks should not form the bulk of the packed lunch. We don't allow fizzy drinks, chocolate bars or sweets. Waste and uneaten items are taken home in packed lunch boxes. Staff monitor packed lunches to encourage guidance is followed.

Nuts
Nuts can be a key part of a healthy diet for many people. However, we recognise that for a small number of individuals, there is a risk of allergic reaction and for some, the reaction can be very serious. If we assess a high risk for any individual in school, we will take all reasonable and appropriate precautions. This includes, in rare circumstances, a completely nut-free environment for the length of time an individual is part of the school community, with regular reminders to staff and parents.

Pupil involvement
Pupils have the opportunity to give their views on school meals and the lunchtime experience through pupil questionnaires, Junior Leader meetings, informal questioning and pupil interviews.

Wraparound care: Breakfast club

Scholes (Elmet) Primary	Moortown Primary	St James' CE Primary
• cereal • toast • pancakes • water	• wraparound is 8.00am-8.30am; no food provided.	• cereal • toast • bagels • fruit • water, milk

Wraparound care: After-school

Scholes (Elmet) Primary	Moortown Primary	St James' CE Primary
• bread, wrap, pitta • crackers • chicken/ham • cheese • fruit and vegetables • water	• rice cakes • crackers • cheese • fruit and vegetables • water, milk, apple juice • yoghurt • biscuits	• wrap • rice cakes • crackers • chicken/ham • cheese • hummus • fruit and vegetables • water, milk

Our curriculum

Healthy eating

We encouraging healthy eating habits and choices eg with reference to 5-a-day.

Food and nutrition education is taught within Science, Design and Technology and Living and Learning sessions. Key learning in our curriculum includes:

- food origins, including growing and farming
- food choices, including why different people might choose different foods for different reasons
- food labelling, including nutritional values
- food prices, including unit costs of a food

Food and nutrition education is delivered by school staff and sometimes outside agencies. Key priorities of teaching are:

- providing pupils with the opportunities to learn about different types of food in the context of a balanced diet (using the Eatwell Guide) rather than labelling foods good and bad
- understanding the need to limit the consumption of foods high in salt, sugar and fat and increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables
- providing pupils with the opportunity to develop food preparation / safety skills through hands-on activities

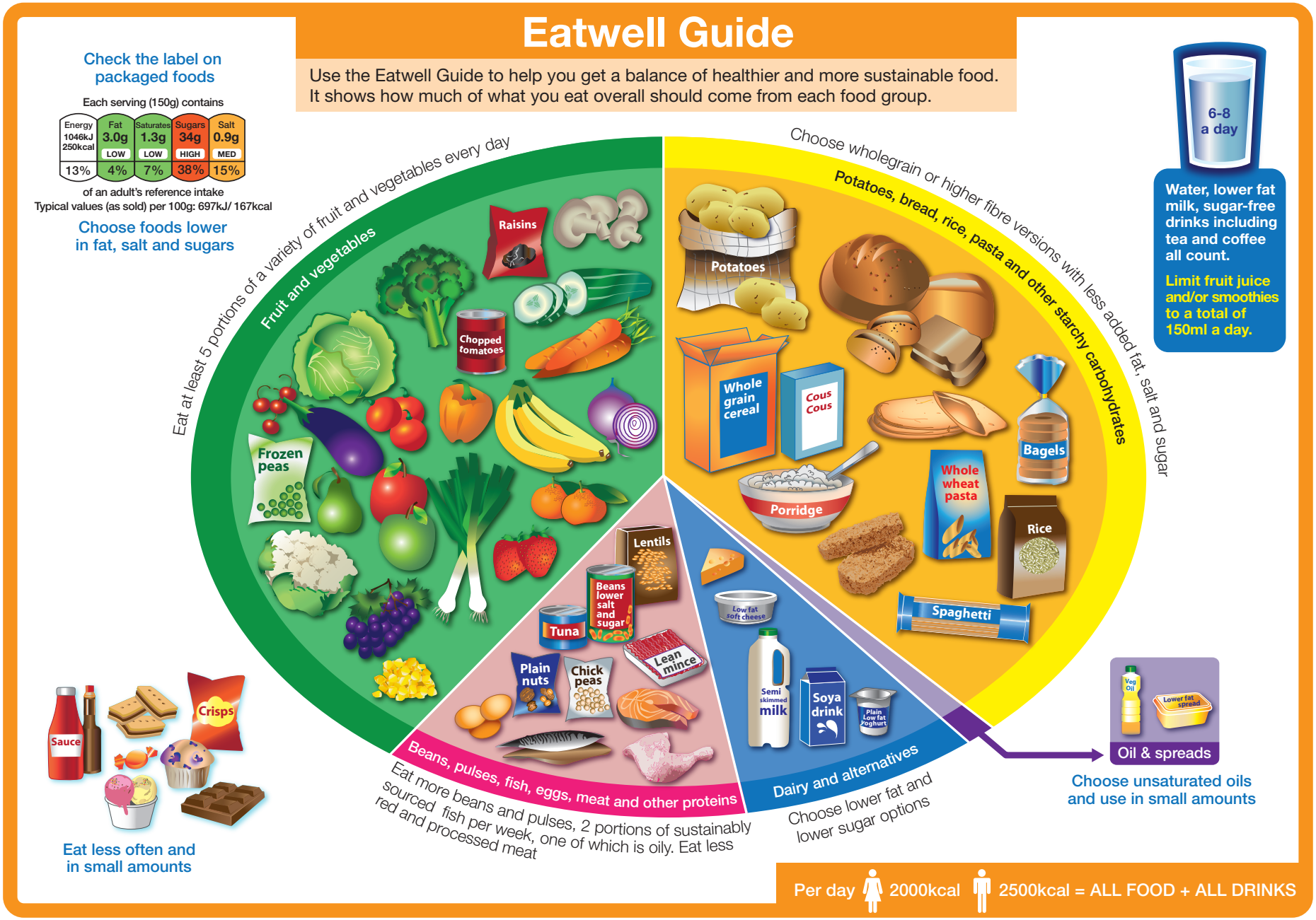
Cooking in the curriculum

When children are preparing and cooking food, they do as much as possible. Adults should not do the preparing whilst children watch. This includes the use of knives for cutting and the stirring of food on the cooker. If supervised effectively, children should be able to do these things without the risk of injury, and we believe they will become safer in the process. The emphasis is on making sure children are aware of dangers and how to be safe, rather than preventing them from encountering any dangers. Cutting techniques such as the bridge hold and claw grip (www.foodafactoflife.org.uk) are demonstrated and used by pupils. Recipes chosen are predominantly savoury. Copies of recipes are sent home to encourage children and parents/carers to work together; they are also available on our website (Our curriculum and expectations > Design and Technology: Food and Nutrition Guide).

Staff involved in food education have opportunities for relevant training including diet, nutrition, food safety and hygiene. Individual pupil's dietary needs are taken into consideration. Staff are made aware of allergies that children may have and act accordingly.

Eat Well Guide

Read more about the Eatwell Guide and other NHS advice: https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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