

St Mary's Bryanston Square CE Primary School



LUNCHTIME POLICY

February 2025

"Excellence with Compassion"

Lunchtime Policy

January 2025

What is the aim?

This policy outlines the goals and aims of St Mary's school in helping our pupils have a calm, enjoyable and healthy lunchtime experience. This policy covers all children within school from 2-year-old provision to Year 6, and those pupils who may have a packed lunch.

Lunchtime at St Mary's consists of 1 hour per day for all year groups, this equates to 5 hours per week, which is equivalent to nearly one whole day of the school week. Therefore, it is vitally important that careful consideration is given to this experience for all pupils.

As a school, we hope to help children enjoy the social experience of sitting and eating with friends, having a hot, healthy lunch daily and experiencing new, healthy foods they may not experience at home.

How does it link with other policies?

This policy aligns with our wider [school policies](#) on:

- Healthy Eating
- Behaviour Expectations
- SMSC Policy
- Spirituality Policy
- SEND Policy

St Mary's strongly advocates and encourages all pupils to have a school lunch. We support this due to the number of benefits we know this can bring, such as; reduced cost to parents, children having a hot, healthy meal and children broadening their food palate.

Funding from government (Universal Free School Meals – R/Yr1/Yr2), London Mayor's office and Westminster City Council, means that no children within our school (2YO – Year 6) have to pay for their school lunches.

Our school catering provider (STIR FOOD Ltd) are able to provide adjusted menus for children with allergies and those with medical and culture requirements. Further information about this can be found here: <https://www.stmbs.org.uk/lunch-menus/>

School Expectations (Children)

- Children will arrive in the hall with their class teacher, quietly and will be guided to place their water bottles down on the allocated table for their year group. This should be done, quietly and calmly, with no more than four children being sent at one to place their water bottles.
- Once having placed the water bottle, children should line up in front of the servery, and wait to be guided to collect a lunch tray (colour will be identified for the child by an adult).
- Children will move to the servery, once there is space and select from the menu choices.
- Children will be able to choose from the main option (meat or vegetarian) and then the dessert option (fruit/yoghurt/other)
- Children will then independently move to the salad bar and must take a minimum of one item per bowl. This must be placed on the plate.

- All other items will be placed on the trays, this is to support children's widening palate. We use the guidance from here in supporting children with new foods:
<https://www.childfeedingguide.co.uk/tips/common-feeding-pitfalls/food-refusal/>
- Children will then sit at their place on the allocated table.
- Once sitting children are able to quietly talk to their friends whilst eating. Children usually have around 20 minutes for eating before going outside.
- Children should seek adult support to check that they have eaten enough of their main meal before then starting on their dessert.
- Once children have finished their lunch, an adult will provide instructions to scrape their plates and place them in the trays for cleaning.
- Children will then be directed to wait on the benches at the side of the hall or to enter the playground.

School Expectations (Staff)

- Teachers must bring their classes into the hall calmly and quietly.
- Teacher must support children placing their water bottles down in their places and guide them to line up quietly in front of the servery (leave a gap for children moving from the salad bar)
- There will always be a senior leader on duty in the hall.
- The senior leader will provide agreement that the teacher is fine to leave the hall space and the class.

Staff supervising in the hall:

- All staff, with the exception of the senior leader on duty, should take the responsibility of one main table to supervise.
- Once allocated a table, this will involve encouraging and supporting eating, specific focus on vegetables and salads.
- Encouraging independence with using cutlery, cutting up food items, pouring own water, clearing trays and supporting children to tidy up any individual 'mess', where appropriate.
- Staff should ensure that when supporting pupils they do not lose focus on the wider table, i.e. don't have their back on the rest of the table, do not become so embroiled in a situation/issue which means you can't support others.
- Should staff need support or help, speak with the senior leader on duty.
- Staff supporting in the hall, should ensure that SEND pupils have the appropriate resources to help independence; i.e. now and next boards, timers or wobble cushions.

Pupils with SEND

St Mary's school has high expectations of all pupils, this includes those pupils with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities. However, we understand that some pupils they require reasonable adjustments to enable full access of the school's aims around lunchtimes.

- Pupils with SEND should be supported with appropriate resources/scaffolds – such as a Now & Next boards
- Pupils should have positive reinforcement for achievements, including smelling, touching, tasting or having new foods placed on their plate or in front of them.
- Small steps to build progress in this area should be considered with the approach of '*deliberate sabotage*' – this means introducing new foods or strategies where it is known that the change of routine or introduction of a new food may cause dysregulation or slight anxiety. This should be managed appropriately and consideration carefully given to the pupils' well-being, so any upset and distress is not disproportionate to the aim of introducing new foods/routines. Small steps must be given time and staff must understand that, they may need to go backwards before moving forwards.

- Some pupils with SEND may need to move around the hallspace for a movement break, therefore responses should be considered before telling a pupil to sit down at the end. Sentences such as; **"eating or finished"** should be used. This helps the children to think and communicate about their own needs. If the response is **"eating"**, then the adult should encourage sitting again, through simple sentences such as **"sitting for eating"**. If the response is **"finished"** the adult response should be **"finished, scraping now"**

Timings

- 11.30am – EYFS
- 11.55am – Year 1
- 12.00pm – Year 2
- 12.20pm – Year 3
- 12.30pm – Years 4 – 6