STOUR VALE ACADEMY TRUST

SCHOOL FOOD POLICY

VERSION / DATE	VERSION 1.0 SEPTEMBER 2025
NEXT VERSION DUE BY	SEPTEMBER 2026

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1.0 Aim

This policy has been written to give clear guidance to staff, visitors, parents and carers, and pupils about the provision of food during the school day and our approach to the positive promotion of healthy eating. It recognises the importance of nutrition in supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people in our school and our role in helping to ensure they develop good, healthy eating habits for life.

The policy adheres to the principles under data protection law. For further information please review the Stour Vale Data Protection Policy published on the Trust's website.

2.0 Food and drink provision throughout the day

2.1 Food Standards for Schools

As part of the School Food Plan, a new set of standards for all food served in schools was launched by the Department for Education. These standards are mandatory for all schools, including academies.

They are intended to help children develop healthy eating habits and ensure they obtain the energy and nutrition they need across the whole school day.

The standards do not apply to food provided:

- At parties or celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions
- At fund-raising events
- As rewards for achievement, good behaviour or effort
- For use in teaching food preparation and cookery skills, including where the food prepared is served to pupils as part of a school lunch
- On an occasional basis by parents or pupils
- After 6pm, or during weekends or school holidays

For more information please refer to:

- The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014
- The DFE Standards for School Food in England (updated 2023)
- The DFE School Food Standards – Resources for schools including a practical guide, checklists , portion sizes and allergy information (updated 2025)
- The School Food Plan – provides a range of resources, including recipe ideas, portion sizes and learning from others

2.2 School lunches

Our school lunches meet the statutory school food standards. Our menus include a range of healthy, quality ingredients with the choice of meals designed to appeal to all pupils. We aim for them to be offered a tasty, balanced and affordable lunch every day. We make provision for cultural, religious and special dietary needs, including food allergies and medical conditions.

Northfield Road Primary School: All children from Reception to Year 2 are eligible to receive universal free school meals.

Schools cannot provide the following foods for lunch:

- Starchy food cooked in fat or oil on more than two days each week (applies to food served across the whole school day)
- A meat or poultry product more than once each week (applies across the whole school day)
- More than two portions of food that has been deep-fried, batter-coated or breadcrumb-coated each week (applies across the whole school day)
- More than two portions of food that include pastry each week (applies across the whole school day)
- Snacks, except vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat (applies across the whole school day)
- Confectionery, chocolate or chocolate-coated products

Although schools are permitted under the school food standards to provide snacks containing nuts at lunch and at other times during the day (see section 2.3 below), in line with our Pupil Allergy Policy we encourage our pupils and staff to avoid bringing in certain high-risk foods, such as packaged nuts and foods containing nuts, to reduce the chances of someone experiencing a reaction.

2.3 School food other than lunch

The School Food Regulations 2014 also set out the requirements for food and drink other than lunch, provided to pupils on school premises up to 6pm, including breakfast clubs, tuck shops, mid-morning break, vending and after-school clubs. They also apply to other food provided before 6pm on school trips where the trip is for at least seven days.

Schools cannot provide the following foods outside of lunch:

- Starchy food cooked in fat or oil on more than two days each week (applies across the whole school day)
- A meat or poultry product more than once each week (applies across the whole school day)
- More than two portions of food that has been deep-fried, batter-coated or breadcrumb-coated each week (applies across the whole school day)
- More than two portions of food that include pastry each week (applies across the whole school day)
- Savoury crackers or breadsticks
- Snacks other than vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat (applies across the whole school day)
- Confectionery, chocolate, chocolate-coated products, cakes, biscuits, pastries or desserts (except yoghurt or fruit-based desserts containing at least 50% fruit)

Food is provided in school at the following times outside of lunch.

Breakfast

Breakfast is an important meal and contribution towards energy requirements and is an opportunity to provide essential vitamins and minerals.

Breakfast is served from 7.30. We provide the following foods/drinks at breakfast:

- Toast
- Cereal
- Juice

Snacks (including tuck shops, mid-morning break and vending)

Healthy snacks can contribute positively towards a balanced diet. They provide an opportunity for children to have one of their five-a-day, as well as include other important nutrients in the diet.

Northfield Road Primary School: The Government's School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme entitle all children in Key Stage 1 to receive one piece of fruit and/or vegetable every school day, free of charge.

We provide the following snacks in school:

- Toasted Bagels
- Toast

After-school clubs

We provide the following food at our after-school club:

- Sandwich of cheese
- Crackers & Cheese
- Juice

2.4 Drinks

Drinking water is available to all pupils throughout the day, free of charge. They can refill water bottles easily and are encouraged to stay hydrated throughout the day.

3.0 Menu development and consultation

Before implementing any menu changes, we consult:

- Catering company/provider
- Lunchtime supervisors

4.0 Food and drink brought into school and parent engagement

4.1 Packed lunches

We encourage parents and carers to provide healthy, well-balanced packed lunches.

For children aged five years and above, a healthy, well-balanced lunchbox includes] / A healthy, well-balanced lunchbox includes.

For more information and practical tips for children aged five years and above: https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/

5.0 School events, trips, birthdays and special occasions

Children across the UK eat significantly more sugar than the maximum daily limit recommended by health professionals. This has led to an increase in tooth decay and a range of health problems. The biggest source of sugar in children's diets is sugary drinks, followed by sugary snacks.

The NHS' Change4Life programme has developed a range of useful resources to help children and families cut down on sugar and become 'Sugar Smart'.

We recognise that there will be times when pupils may be permitted to consume snacks, in limited quantities, that do not meet the usual school food requirements. At Northfield Road Primary School pupils may bring the following foods into school for school events and special occasions:

- Cake sale for charities
- Popcorn/Nachos for cinema days
- Christmas party days

6.0 Special dietary requirements

We are aware of food allergies, intolerances and other dietary requirements of our pupils and have procedures in place to identify and manage these. They cover:

- Religious and ethnic groups
- Vegetarians and vegans
- Pupils with food allergies and intolerances
- Pupils with medical conditions where dietary needs are impacted

Nominated staff in school have completed training in first aid. All staff have completed training in understanding anaphylaxis, to enable them to respond to emergencies caused by food allergies.

7.0 The dining experience

Our dining hall is an integral part of our school and a place where our pupils can enjoy sitting down to eat and socialise with their friends. We have done the following to ensure that we have a pleasant eating environment for pupils:

- Engaging displays
- Our catering company provide a healthy balanced meal
- Our staff engage with the children to help them learn about the etiquette of eating, table manners
- Staff encourage children to eat and enjoy their meals

8.0 Catering team

Our food is provided by Alliance in Partnership. We have in house lunchtime supervisors, and members of the teaching and learning support teams who complete duties during lunch times.

9.0 Food safety

We ensure food safety at all stages of food preparation and storage. This is demonstrated in the following ways:

- We provide safe and hygienic facilities to prepare and store all our food.
- We complete regular staff training and ensure that hazards are identified and risk assessments completed.
- Catering staff/staff with food handling responsibilities have completed food hygiene training

Under Natasha's Law, as a school we ensure that a list of ingredients will be provided for any food that is repackaged for direct sale on the premises.

10.0 Cooking and Food Education in the curriculum

Teaching pupils how to cook is an important part of our whole-school approach to health and wellbeing. It captures and stimulates pupils' interest and enjoyment of food as well as building self-confidence.

The school follows the National Curriculum, which states that healthy eating, nutrition and cooking must be taught in Science and Design and Technology (D&T). Cooking and nutrition is taught across each key stage in PSHE, science and DT. We also talk about healthy eating within our PE lessons.

For more information please refer to:
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum

11.0 Extracurricular activities

We offer the children a cooking club during the year, but this is subject to staff availability.

12.0 Monitoring and evaluation

Trustees, headteachers and local governors monitor and review this policy, including all menu provision, annually.

13.0 Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Effectiveness of the policy will be assessed through:

- Feedback from staff, pupils, and parents and carers
- Review of the policy by trustees, headteachers and governors to determine if objectives have been met and ensure ongoing policy development

14.0 Linked policies

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid in Schools Policy
- Pupil Allergy Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Data Protection Policy