



Food, Nutrition and Mealtimes Policy



Colwall CofE Primary School and Nursery

Our Christian Values as a key aspect in our Policies: **"Let your light shine"**



... in relationships, as we trust... in learning, as we encourage our curiosity.



... in the community, as we develop the courage to light the lives of others.



Colwall CofE Primary School & Nursery: Food, Nutrition and Mealtimes Policy (2–4 Year Olds)

At Colwall CofE Primary School & Nursery, we believe that mealtimes are important social and learning opportunities that contribute significantly to a child's overall development and wellbeing. We aim to create a positive, relaxed, and inclusive environment where children can enjoy food, learn about healthy choices, and develop independence and good manners.

This policy reflects current **Department for Education (DfE)** guidance, including the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)* and *Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England*.

Our Aims

- To promote a healthy, balanced diet for all children.
- To ensure children's individual dietary needs and cultural preferences are respected.
- To support children's social, emotional and physical development during mealtimes.
- To create a safe environment that minimizes the risk of choking or allergic reactions.

Provision of Food and Drink

We are committed to offering healthy, balanced, and nutritious food and drink that meets the dietary needs of young children. We ensure:

- **Healthy meals and snacks** are provided throughout the day: a morning snack, a nutritious hot lunch (if ordered), and an afternoon snack.



- **Processed foods high in fat, sugar, or salt** as well as artificial additives, preservatives, and colourings are avoided.
 - **Fresh drinking water** is freely available and accessible to all children throughout the day. Children are encouraged to drink regularly, especially in hot weather.
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Individual Dietary Needs

- Parents/carers are asked to provide detailed information about their child's **dietary needs**, allergies, and preferences before the child starts.
 - Where applicable, we create **individual dietary plans** and conduct risk assessments in collaboration with parents and healthcare professionals.
 - Staff are trained to understand and respect children's dietary requirements and ensure that no child is singled out or made to feel different because of their diet or allergy.
 - **Seating arrangements** are carefully considered to avoid cross-contamination of allergenic foods. Staff sit with children to support safety and reinforce healthy behaviours.
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Mealtime Environment and Learning

- Mealtimes are **happy, relaxed, and social occasions**. Children and staff eat together in small groups, promoting interaction and positive role modelling.
- **Good table manners** are encouraged, and children are supported to say "please" and "thank you."
- Children are **never rushed** during mealtimes. They are encouraged to eat at their own pace and offered help when needed.



- Children are encouraged to **serve themselves** where appropriate, make choices, and develop independence in feeding themselves.
 - Staff use mealtimes as an opportunity to **discuss healthy eating**, introduce new foods, and support children's understanding of nutrition and wellbeing.
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Food Refusal and Preferences

- Children who do not like or refuse a meal are **not forced to eat**. Staff remove uneaten food without fuss and may gently encourage the child to try a small amount.
 - All children, unless on special diets, are encouraged to **try a small portion** of each item offered.
 - If a child refuses a meal, they will be **offered food later** in the day at an appropriate time.
 - Dessert is **not used as a reward** and will still be offered even if the main meal is not finished.
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Portion Sizes and Nutrition Standards

- Portions are **age-appropriate**, guided by government recommendations for children aged 1–4 years.



Cultural and Religious Considerations

- Foods from all children's cultural backgrounds are provided.
 - Cultural and religious dietary practices are fully respected and supported.
 - We aim to both provide familiar foods and introduce new flavours and textures, expanding children's experiences and encouraging acceptance of diversity.
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Special Occasions and Celebrations

- We celebrate **birthdays and special occasions** in ways that reflect our commitment to healthy eating and wellbeing.
 - **Parents are asked not to send in cakes, sweets or other high-calorie foods.** We promote **non-food-based celebrations** such as:
 - Choosing a favourite story to read with the group
 - Choosing a favourite song or game
 - Enjoying a celebration circle or group time
 - **All celebrations are inclusive**, culturally sensitive, and focused on creating positive memories rather than food.
 - We communicate with families in advance about celebration practices to ensure alignment with our healthy eating policy.
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Let me know if you'd like me to update this in the full policy or format it as a document.



Safety and Supervision

- Children are **never left alone** while eating or drinking. A staff member is always present to supervise and assist.
- Staff are trained to **respond to choking** and to identify early signs of allergic reactions.
- **All staff handling food** receive up-to-date **Food Hygiene Training**, renewed every three years.
- In the unlikely event of a **food poisoning outbreak** affecting two or more children, we will inform **Ofsted** and relevant health authorities within **14 days**, and follow all required protocols.