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Date ratified by Governors:

Signed:

Mary Hare School Meal time policy

Main meals at the Secondary School are served in a purpose built dining room. A wide variety of nutritious food is on offer, with special dietary and religious needs accommodated. Pupils are regularly consulted about meals through pupil questionnaires, suggestions boxes and student council meetings, which the catering manager regularly attends.

Meal times (Secondary School)

1. Breakfast is provided for all pupils at 07.30. There is a mix of served hot food and self-service provision of breads, pancakes, cereal, fruit, yoghurt and a variety of drinks. A self-serve toaster is provided. Sixth form and year 11 pupils may choose to have breakfast in their own houses.
2. Lunch starts at 12.50. There is a wide variety of meals on offer, with several choices of main course and dessert as well as cheese and biscuits. A full salad bar is available each day as well as baked potatoes. Most pupils choose to have their main meal of the day at this time.
3. Supper is provided at staggered times from 17.50, starting with year 7 pupils. A good variety of meals is offered with several choices of main course and dessert each evening. A substantial salad bar is always available, including baked potatoes and breads.
4. Fruit is available during all meal times and fruit boxes are provided for individual houses up to three times a week.
5. Vegetarian and Halal options are always available. All stocks and sauces are gluten free. Gluten free alternatives to meals are also available. Other special dietary needs are catered for on an individual basis.
6. A record of menus is kept in the Domestic Bursar's office. These are used on a four weekly cycle. Menus are distributed to each house and displayed on noticeboards. The Domestic Bursar visually monitors waste levels of food at mealtimes to aid provision of popular meals. In addition to weekly menus, there are special occasion meals, such as Valentine's day, barbecues, etc.
7. A suggestion box is in place in the dining hall, where pupils and staff can comment on what they like and what they don't, as well as request options that may not be on offer. These are regularly discussed between the Domestic Bursar and the Heads of Care and responses are displayed next to the suggestions box. The student council is also a forum where food and mealtimes are regularly debated and the Domestic Bursar is invited to attend.

8. Pupils may be sanctioned at meal times for poor behaviour. This means they are asked to wait last in line, or to sweep and serve at the end of the meal. This means they accompany staff in wiping tables, sweeping the floor and tidying chairs. Pupils are never excluded from communal meals as a sanction. It is recognised where a pupil has existing issues with food that these sanctions may not be appropriate.

Supervision

9. Breakfast and Supper are supervised by members of care staff and lunch is covered by teaching staff. There is a record book kept in the main kitchen office to make note of any pupils who appear to be eating inappropriately (too little, too much, no variety). Duty staff are responsible for recording observations in the book and signing off each meal time. These records are discussed weekly at a meeting with the School Nurse and the Heads of Care. Pupils who have consistent issues with meals, are brought under the care of the School Nurse who uses various methods to monitor and support. In extreme cases, external services are accessed.

Provision of food at other times

10. Fresh drinking water is available in all houses and the main school at all times.
11. For pupils in year 7 – 11, Blount Hall provides break time biscuits and a cold drink in Summer or hot chocolate in Winter at morning break (10.10am – 10.30am) on weekdays. Sixth form pupils attend break separately in Jean Carnarvon Hall.
12. Tea is provided in the houses after school and consists of biscuits, homemade cakes or fruit and a drink.
13. Pre-ordered packed suppers are provided by catering staff for pupils who are out on trips or taking part in activities in the early evening. Time between preparation and eating is considered here and low risk foods are provided where necessary. Insulated boxes are also available to keep food fresh.
14. Other food offered in the boarding houses or youth club is prepared by staff or pupils who have the appropriate training in food handling and hygiene. Pupils have access in each house to basic kitchen facilities in which to prepare their own food should they wish. On Saturday nights and on some other occasions, pupils may order and pay for takeaway pizza or Chinese food. Sixth form may use this privilege on Thursday to Sunday evenings. Youth club offers a variety of food, drinks and snacks twice a week for its members, often involving a theme or incorporated as part of an evening activity. All pupils are encouraged to attend communal meal times in spite of these additional arrangements.

Meal times (Primary School)

15. Staff and pupils take their meals together at the Primary School. This encourages healthy eating, good manners and social skills. It also allows any unusual eating habits to be monitored appropriately. Any issues with a pupil's diet are discussed at staff meetings, which the School Nurse also attends.
16. Breakfast is provided at 8am in the Dining Room and is prepared by a qualified chef and catering staff. A hot option is available every day as well as the usual cereal and breads.
17. Lunch is served between 12.15pm and 1.30pm and supper is served at 5.15pm, also in the Dining Room. Lunch and supper are served from the counter by catering staff and an extensive, self-service, salad bar is available at both meals. All food is freshly prepared at the Primary School by a qualified chef.
18. Meals are pre-chosen from the Secondary School menu by the catering department, with input from the care staff. The Primary School aim to provide a balanced and varied diet that also best suits the younger pupils. Special dietary requirements are catered for, such as a vegetarian option and gluten free meals. As with the Secondary School, special themed food evenings are offered throughout the year. Drinking water is available at all times.
19. All staff involved in preparation and serving of food have the relevant food handling and hygiene qualification.

Provision of food at other times (Primary School)

20. Break-time is held at 10.45am where a drink of squash or water and chopped fruit is on offer.
21. After school at 4pm, drinks and biscuits are given on the care landing.
22. Pupils may bring their own food or snacks which are kept in the care kitchen and can be eaten during tea-time or later in the evening. These are often reserved for taxi rides home at the end of the week.