



ST THOMAS'S
SCHOOL

Food and Drink Policy

Purpose

St Thomas's School promotes a safe, healthy food and drink environment that supports student wellbeing, learning, concentration, oral health, and positive lifelong habits.

Rationale

The school recognises that food and drink consumed at school should support student health, learning, and wellbeing. Ministry of Health guidance encourages schools to provide healthy food and drink environments and recommends water and unflavoured milk as preferred drink options.

Guidelines

1. Healthy Food and Drink Environment

The school will:

- encourage healthy, balanced lunchboxes
- discourage high-sugar foods and highly processed "treat" foods
- not allow students to bring, consume, sell, or swap confectionery, chewing gum, or sugary/caffeinated drinks (including fizzy, energy, or sports drinks)
- promote water as the main drink and ensure access throughout the school day, including sports activities

2. Food Provided by the School

When food is provided by the school for lessons, special events, celebrations, treats, camps, sports, cultural activities, or other school occasions, staff will ensure food is:

- prepared hygienically
- handled with clean hands and clean equipment
- covered when left on benches or tables
- stored safely before serving
- cooked properly where required
- chilled or refrigerated where appropriate
- served in a way that avoids contamination
- managed carefully in hot weather and with higher-risk foods

Food safety practices will follow the key principles of clean, cook, cover, and chill. There should be an emphasis on handwashing, clean utensils and surfaces, thorough cooking, safe chilling, and avoiding cross-contamination.



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3. Classroom Food Preparation

Where food preparation or food handling is part of a classroom lesson:

- students must be taught safe food-handling expectations before beginning
- students and staff must wash and dry hands before handling food
- food and ingredients must be stored correctly and covered
- surfaces and equipment must be clean before and after use
- students must be supervised appropriately
- food allergies, intolerances, and cultural or dietary needs must be considered before food is shared

4. Staffroom Food Handling

In the staffroom:

- food must be covered on benches or stored in the refrigerator
- hands must be washed before preparing or serving food
- staff are responsible for washing, drying, and putting away their own dishes, or placing them in the dishwasher
- shared food must be stored and served hygienically

5. Fundraising and Food Sales

If the school sells food for fundraising, fairs, sausage sizzles, discos, camps, or other events, the school will follow the key principles of clean, cook, cover, and chill.

6. Allergies and Special Dietary Needs

The school will take reasonable care to manage known food allergies, intolerances, and dietary requirements. Staff will:

- check relevant student health information before shared food activities
- avoid unnecessary food-sharing where allergies are known
- communicate with parents/caregivers where required
- remind students not to swap food
- follow individual health plans where these apply

7. Celebrations and Special Occasions

Food may be used for cultural learning, curriculum activities, celebrations, and special occasions. Healthy options are encouraged wherever possible. High-sugar foods and confectionery should not be used as routine rewards.



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8. Curriculum and Community Education

The school will encourage students and whānau to make positive food and drink choices through:

- Health and Physical Education learning
- classroom discussion
- school newsletters or reminders
- modelling healthy food and drink practices
- consistent expectations across classrooms, sports, camps, and events

Ratified by Board

Signed _____

Date

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16 June 2026

Reviewed: June 2026

Next Review: June 2029
