

Fresh Flavours are Blooming!



Get ready for a burst of springtime flavours in our dining rooms!

Dietitian's Corner
Facts around sugar



Chef's Corner
Introducing Nik, our Development Chef



Competition Time
Get crafty this Easter



BALANCED TRAY

More than just lunch

Seasonal Menu



Get ready for a burst of springtime flavours in our dining rooms!

We're excited to announce our new spring menus, packed with delicious and nutritious dishes designed to nourish and delight your children.

As the weather warms up, we're embracing the fresh produce of the season. You'll find vibrant salads, and lighter, brighter meals alongside some familiar favourites. We've been working hard to create menus that are not only tasty but also meet the nutritional guidelines your children need to thrive.



SIMPLY VEG

Simply Veg is an amazing free resource and it's available to everyone!

It has lots of advice on eating healthier and features ideas and suggestions from various experts in nutrition. Here is an extract and an activity from their article on Sensory experience.

Engaging with veg is one of the best possible ways for kids to develop a healthy relationship with them. Physically engaging through their senses and exploring how a veg smells, sounds, feels and looks can make it more likely they want to know how it tastes, too.



Food Detectives

Grab some clean socks and put a fruit or vegetable in each one. Then challenge your child/children to see if they can guess what it is just by feeling it (no peeking!).

Suggested items; whole sweetcorn, pepper, parsnips, sweet potato, garlic, pear, kiwi, mango or you could try some more unusual ingredients like fennel, star fruit or dragon fruit.

There is an activity suggestion for each sense e.g. taste, smell, sound, look and feel simply visit; simplyveg.org.uk/sensory/

Enjoy the flavours of the season

What's New?

- **More Pasta Options** Enjoy a wider selection of delicious pasta dishes
- **Returning Favourites:** We've brought back popular classics like toad in the hole, sweet and sour chicken and weekly roast dinners
- **Dessert:** Indulge in a sweet treat, or choose from sliced fresh fruit and yoghurts

Remember to look out for our theme days: featuring foods from around the world and special occasions like National Biscuit Day, World Health Day and Religious Festivals.

Rest assured, even with these menu changes, all our meals continue to meet the highest school food standards. We prioritise providing your children with balanced and wholesome meals that support their growth and development.

To view your child's menu choices please visit the school website.



Dietician's Corner

Did you know that children are consuming more than twice the recommended amount of sugar? Half of this comes from snacks and sugary drinks!

Its sweet - what's the problem?

While sugar provides energy, it has no nutritional value. Other food groups help keep our bodies strong and healthy, as even small amounts of fat has some benefits. Too much sugar can lead to tooth decay and is linked to serious health problems like type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.

How much sugar is too much?

Children should have no more than:

4-6 years: 19g of sugar (5 tsp) per day

7-10 years: 24g of sugar (6 tsp) per day

This includes sugar added to foods like cereals, sweets, ice cream, biscuits, cakes, and chocolates, as well as the free sugars in fruit juices, smoothies, honey, and syrups. However, you don't need to worry about the natural sugars found in plain milk, yoghurt, or whole fruits and vegetables.

Did you know?

500mls of cola has 13 teaspoons of sugar and a sharing bag of gummy sweets contains about 21 teaspoons.



Spotting hidden sugar

Always check food labels. Many foods like fruit yoghurts and cereals can contain high amounts of sugar, even if they have added vitamins and minerals. Choose those with the lowest sugar content whenever possible.

Suggested swaps

Instead of sugary snacks choose small cheeses, plain yoghurt, low sugar cereals, breadsticks, hummus, reduced sugar biscuits, crackers, fruits and vegetables, olives, peanut butter and nuts. Encourage your child to drink water and plain milk.

Dried fruit, fruit juice and smoothies are higher in sugar that can be bad for the teeth. Choose to have dried fruit with a meal and limit juice and smoothie portions to a small glass a day.

The Nutrition and Dietetic Team have created some fun, interactive sessions focussed on sugar that may be delivered in your child's school – so watch this space!

From our kitchen to yours

Meet Nik, with over 30 years in the culinary industry, Nik's passion for food and sharing his expertise is truly inspiring!



He's a key part of our team, working closely with our onsite chefs to provide training and support, ensuring the delicious meals you enjoy are always top-notch.

Nik and his team will regularly contribute to this newsletter, sharing valuable tips, tricks, and some of their favourite recipes.

To kick things off, and since this is Nik's first appearance, we thought we'd ask him a few questions so you can get to know him a little better:

What's your favourite air fryer hack (or kitchen)?

They make a perfect fried egg! Simply grease a small ovenproof tin, crack open your egg and cook for 3 mins on max crisp...Voila!



If you could only eat 3 dishes for the rest of your life what they be?

Air fried belly pork, garden salad, cake and custard

What would your luxury item be on 'I'm a celebrity get me out of here'?

Picture of the family (including Teddy the dog!)

As you cycle for miles, what's your favourite snack when cycling?

Homemade protein bars (I will share a recipe in a future edition)

Who is your favourite celebrity chef?

Jamie Oliver, he's good at what he does and drawing attention to specific issues. He also has some great cost-effective recipes.

Do you have a dish you'd love to see featured? Let us know, and we'll happily consider including the recipe and expert advice in a future edition! Send your recipe request to ukmarketing@taylorshaw.com

Nik's favourite recipes

Cauliflower cheese soup serves 4

Ingredients

10g butter or dairy free spread
 1 tbsp oil
 1 large onion
 1 large cauliflower *approx 1kg*
 1 large potato *approx 300g*
 700ml stock *vegetable or chicken*
 400ml milk
 100g mature Cheddar *grated*
 salt and pepper to taste

Method

- 1 Peel and rough chop the onion and potato
- 2 Place a large pan on a medium heat and add the oil and butter
- 3 Add the chopped onion to the butter and cook until soft
- 4 Add the potato, cauliflower, stock and milk to the pan and bring to the boil
- 5 Add salt and pepper
- 6 Reduce the heat and leave on a medium heat for 20 to 30 minutes
- 7 Blend or mash the mixture until you are happy with the consistency
- 8 Taste and add more salt or pepper if needed
- 9 Add the cheese and stir. If it is too thick, add milk. Enjoy!

Chef TIP
 Use oat milk and vegan cheese if anyone has a dairy allergy!

Rhubarb crumble with crème Anglaise (custard) serves 4

Ingredients

For the rhubarb mix:

10 sticks of rhubarb
 8 tbsp caster sugar
 1 tsp ground ginger *optional*

For the crumble topping:

110g butter *softened*
 110g sugar
 200g plain flour

For the crème Anglaise:

4 egg yolks
 65g caster sugar
 10ml vanilla essence
 235ml milk

Method

For the rhubarb mix:

Preheat the oven to 180°C

- 1 Cut the rhubarb into approx. 7cm lengths and place in your oven proof dish
- 3 Add 4 tbsp of water and the caster sugar
- 4 Mix everything together
- 5 Place in the preheated oven for 10 minutes
- 6 If using ginger, sprinkle over and mix well

For the crumble topping and assembling:

- 1 Rub the butter into the flour
- 2 Add the sugar and mix together
- 3 Pour the crumble topping over the rhubarb mix and place in the oven for 40 minutes or until the crumble topping is crisp and golden brown

For the crème Anglaise

- 1 Heat the milk and vanilla essence until bubbles start to break surface then remove from the heat
- 2 In a large bowl or jug whisk the egg yolks and sugar together until smooth
- 4 Slowly add a ladle or cup of the hot milk into the eggs – ensuring that you stir constantly
- 5 Gradually add the egg mixture into the pan containing the remaining milk
- 6 Continuously stirring the mixture over a low heat
- 7 Remove from heat when the crème Anglaise coats the back of a spoon

If you prefer you could always use a mix or ready-made carton of custard

Allergen TIP
 Simply replace the flour and butter for GF and dairy free alternatives!



Make it more fun and let your child dress up as a chef with a tall hat!



What's in season?

Did you know that eating what's in season is not only good for the planet, but also for your taste buds and your wallet?

Seasonal fruits and veggies, like juicy berries in summer or crunchy root vegetables in winter, haven't travelled far to get to your plate, meaning fewer food miles and a smaller environmental impact. Plus, they often cost less because they're plentiful, and they taste amazing because they're picked at peak ripeness. Why not check out your local greengrocer or farmer's market to see what delicious seasonal goodies they have on offer? You might discover some exciting new ingredients to experiment with in your kitchen!

In season right now...

Cauliflower

Rhubarb

Kale

Savoy cabbage

Asparagus

Purple sprouting broccoli

Spring cabbage

Spring onions

Shepherd's pie serves 4

Ingredients

For the lamb base:

- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 onion *peeled and chopped*
- 450g minced lamb
- 2 tsp mixed herbs
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 garlic cloves *chopped*
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- 500ml lamb stock *any stock cube works*
- 100g frozen mixed vegetables *peas and carrots**

For the potato topping:

- 1kg peeled potatoes
- 1 tbsp butter or dairy free spread
- 3 tbsp milk
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper
- Grated cheese

Method

For the lamb base:

Preheat the oven to 170°C

- 1 Pour the oil into a large pan and place it over medium heat
- 2 Add the onions and cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally
- 3 Then add the minced lamb and break it apart with a wooden/plastic spoon
- 4 Add the mixed herbs, salt and pepper and stir well
- 5 Cook for 6-8 minutes until the meat is browned, stirring occasionally
- 6 Add the Worcestershire sauce and garlic and stir to combine for 1 minute
- 7 Add the flour and tomato puree. Stir until well incorporated and no clumps
- 8 Add the stock and vegetables. Bring to a boil then reduce to simmer
- 9 Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally and remove from the heat

For the potato topping:

- 1 Place the potatoes in a large pot, cover with water and bring to a boil
- 2 Reduce to a simmer and cook until potatoes are fork tender, 10-15 minutes
- 3 Drain the potatoes and let them rest in the hot pot for 1 minute to evaporate any remaining liquid
- 4 Add butter, milk, salt and pepper to the potatoes, mash and stir until all the ingredients are mixed together

Assemble the Shepherd's Pie:

- 1 Pour the lamb mixture into an oven proof dish and spread evenly
- 2 Spoon the mashed potatoes on top of the meat and spread to an even layer
- 3 Place in the middle of the oven for 20 minutes
- 4 Remove the dish and add grated cheese to the potato topping

Why not serve with some delicious, in season, purple sprouting broccoli! Either baked on tray with a small amount of oil or boil in slightly salted water

Chef TIP

If the baking dish looks very full, place it on a baking tray so that the filling doesn't bubble over into your oven. Cool for 5 minutes before serving

This dish is very versatile, the lamb can be switched to beef to make Cottage Pie or a vegetable mince to make 'Shepherdless' Pie! All the other ingredients remain the same



Easter Competition Time!

Looking for a fun and creative way to celebrate Easter?

Want to make a special gift for a friend and have a chance to win £25 worth of high street vouchers?

Then get your craft on and enter our Easter decorating competition! Let your imagination run wild and create a stunning Easter masterpiece for the chance to win.

Simply decorate a delicious cookie, muffin or chocolate egg. We have provided a recipe for a cookie and muffin or if you prefer you can purchase plain ones from a local store. If you decide to go with decorating a chocolate egg, simply purchase a chocolate egg of choice from a local supermarket.

- **Royal and Fondant icing;** You can purchase these from a local shop
- **Water icing;** Simply mix 125g icing sugar and 15ml warm water together until nice and smooth
- **Butter icing;** Simply mix 300g butter/spread and 600g icing sugar, then combine until smooth



Top TIP
Add a drop of
food colouring
to your icing
to mix it up
a bit!



Recipes

Lemon crunch cookies makes 8

Ingredients

270g self-raising flour
175g granulated sugar
200g butter or dairy free spread
1 medium egg
½ lemon

Method

- Preheat oven 170°C / 350°F / gas mark 4
- 1 Zest and juice the lemon
 - 2 Mix the butter and sugar together until creamy
 - 3 Slowly mix in the egg or equivalent
 - 4 Add the remaining ingredients
 - 5 Roll the dough into a sausage shape
 - 6 Cut into 8 even slices and place onto a greased baking tray
 - 7 Cook for approximately 20 mins until cooked



Allergies?...No Problem!

Example substitute ingredients:

Gluten-free flour Cook in a slightly colder oven and leave in for slightly longer until cooked

Butter Replace for a dairy free spread

1 medium egg Replace for 70g mashed ripe banana or 70g smooth apple sauce plus 5g baking powder

White chocolate and raspberry cupcake makes 12

Ingredients

150g margarine
150g caster sugar
3 medium eggs
150g self raising flour
5g baking powder
50ml milk
100g white chocolate

Method

- Preheat oven 180°C
- 1 Line your muffin tins with paper cases
 - 2 Sieve the self-raising flour with the baking powder
 - 3 Cream the margarine with caster sugar until light and fluffy
 - 4 Add the eggs one by one, beating well between each
 - 5 Break the white chocolate into small chunks and fold into the flour mix
 - 7 Add the milk until well combined
 - 8 Divide equally between the paper cases and bake for approx. 20-25 minutes or until well risen and golden
 - 9 Remove from the oven and cool on a wire rack

Chef TIP
Frozen raspberries are more affordable and taste just as delicious with no waste!

HOW TO ENTER: Simply ask a parent or guardian to send in a photo of your edible gift along with your name and year group to UKMarketing@taylorshaw.com

Please note any photos sent in may appear on our social media channels please ensure that you let us know if we can't post them.