

## Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at *School of the Holy Spirit* we encourage the students to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

What people eat is known to be a key factor influencing health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance (e.g. a low sugar intake promotes concentration, lessens hyperactivity, protects teeth, and lessens the risk of diabetes. A low salt intake reduces the risk of heart disease in later life).

To promote healthy eating habits in our school, we introduced a healthy eating policy. As part of our Active School and Health Promoting Schools Programme, we also introduced a Healthy Eating Week programme to continue on an annual basis.

### **Aims**

1. To promote the personal development and well-being of the young person.
2. To promote the health of the young person and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.

### **Objectives**

1. To enable the young person to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy
2. To enable the young person to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

Lunch is an important meal for students. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre (roughage).

The traditional packed lunch of milk and sandwiches is under attack from a range of convenience foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, chocolate and soft drinks. Parents and teachers are concerned about this trend, but some find it difficult to come up with popular healthy alternatives. We ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start.

The following guide is designed to help you provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for your children

<b>Bread &amp; Alternatives</b>	<b>Savories</b>
Bread or rolls, preferably wholemeal	Lean Meat
Rice - wholegrain	Chicken/Turkey
Pasta - wholegrain	Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines
Potato Salad	Cheese
Wholemeal Scones	Quiche
Bread sticks, Crackers, Pitta bread	Pizza

<b>Fruit &amp; Vegetables</b>	<b>Drinks</b>
Apples, Banana Peach	Milk
Mandarins, Orange segments	Fruit juices
Fruit Salad, dried fruit	Squashes, i.e. low sugar
Plum, Pineapple cubes, grapes, various berries	
Yoghurt, Cucumber, Sweetcorn, Tomato, Coleslaw	

### **A word about Milk**

Growing children should get approximately one pint of milk a day, or its equivalent as cheese, yoghurt or milk pudding. This ensures that they get enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth. If a student does not drink a glass of milk at lunch, encourage him/her to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead.

**We ask that students do not bring the following to school:**

Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including the following:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)</li> <li>• Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc)</li> <li>• Sweets</li> <li>• Chocolate biscuits/bars</li> <li>• Cereal bars</li> <li>• Fruit winders</li> </ul> |
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So as to take a proactive approach to healthy lunches, teachers will from time to time, reward children who can show a piece of fruit or other healthy foods in their lunchboxes.

**A very simple approach to healthy eating is to use the Food Pyramid:**

Fats, Sugar, Sweets etc.	Sparingly
Meat, Fish, Peas/Beans	2 portions per day
Milk, Cheese, Yoghurt	3+ portions per day
Fruit & Vegetables	4+ portions per day
Bread, Cereals, Potatoes	6+ portions per day

### **Treat Day**

At the discretion of the class teacher, Friday can be a treat day. On this day, students can include one item from the 'not allowed' list. Students can also have some treats to celebrate birthdays during the school year.

### **Carambola**

Currently in our school, lunch is provided by Carambola through grant assistance. They provide the students with best and healthiest lunch possible with the most variety. They are compliant with Healthy Ireland Nutrition standards and Department Audit requirements for schools. Carambola will also supply the school with water dispensers and reusable bottles which all students and staff can have access to throughout the school day.

### **Food Dudes**

As part of a three year cycle our school will participate in the food and nutrition initiative - Food Dudes. This programme encourages students to eat more fruit and vegetables both in school and at home. It is based on positive role models, repeating tasting and rewards.

### **Green Flag School**

Our school is a Green Flag School. As such management of rubbish and recycling is of importance to us.

With this in mind, students are also asked to:

- take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons
- put only fruit peel into the compost bins
- not bring in cans and glass - for safety reasons.

**N.B. Parents/guardians of any student with a medical condition or sensory issues around food which requires a special diet should contact the Class Teacher in writing.**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_.

It will be reviewed on \_\_\_\_\_.