

St. Joseph's National School



Healthy Eating Policy

This policy was developed by the staff, parents and Board of Management of St. Joseph's NS in 2016. Our school is a community where pupils, teachers and parents work together for the greater good of the children in our care. The home and school work together to foster the social, spiritual and intellectual development of every child in our school and to nurture within them good moral values in a mutually supportive and respectful manner. As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, we encourage the children 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 starting from January 2016. We are applying for the Active School Flag so need to incorporate healthy eating as part of the criteria for achieving the flag.

Aims:

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

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. 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

Bread & Alternatives

Bread or rolls, preferably wholemeal
Rice – wholegrain
Pasta – wholegrain
Potato Salad
Wholemeal Scones
Bread sticks
Crackers
Pitta bread

Savouries

Lean Meat
Chicken/Turkey
Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines
Cheese
Quiche
Pizza

Fruit & Vegetables

Apples, Banana, Peach
Mandarins, Orange segments,
Fruit Salad, dried fruit,
Plum, Pineapple cubes
Grapes,
Cucumber, Sweetcorn
Tomato,
Coleslaw.

Drinks

Milk
Water
Fruit juices

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 child does not drink a glass of milk at lunch, encourage him to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead.

We ask that children do not bring the following to school:

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

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)
- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy, fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc)
- Sweets
- Chocolate biscuits/bars
- Cereal bars
- Chewing gum
- Fruit winders
- Popcorn

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

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

Treat Day

There is no treat day except on special occasions such as the end of year school tour. Instead the children will have “A treat that is not a sweet”.

Active School Flag

Our active school motto is: “If you run, you will have fun”.

Fruit Break is at 2pm daily.

Children are also asked to:

- take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons
- not bring in cans and glass – for safety reasons.

N.B. Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school.

Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be assessed at the end of each school year by the teaching staff. The Parents' Association will be consulted regularly.

Roles and Responsibility.

Teaching Staff

Parents' Association

Board of Management

Review Date: June 2019

Ratified by the Board of Management

Signed: _____ Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____ Principal

Date: _____