



St. Joseph's Junior School

Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at *St. Joseph's Junior School* 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 September 2017.

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.

Objectives

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

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

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 or fruit-flavoured water, juices, cordials etc... even if they say "no added sugar"
- Sweets
- Chocolate biscuits/bars
- Cereal bars
- Chewing gum
- Fruit winders
- Popcorn

All pupils at St. Joseph's Junior School can avail of a **free lunch daily** from our school food provider. These lunches include a variety of sandwiches, rolls, brown bread and baguettes. Pupils also receive milk daily and have a personal flask in their classroom to access our filtered water. School lunches include a mixture of fruit and healthy snacks which are included on the Department of Social Protection's recommended list of appropriate school foods for the free lunch scheme.

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.

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

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 4th February 2016.