



HEALTHY EATING POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

This policy was reviewed in January 2024.

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, we at St David's National School encourage our children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

We believe that adults (staff, parents and carers) should be good role models and should support the children in understanding how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and general well-being.

St David's National School seeks to help the children to grow and develop into healthy, confident, mature adults, capable of realising their full potential as human beings. Developing a healthy attitude to food and helping children to develop good habits is seen as an important part of school life.

AIMS:

- To encourage a positive attitude to food
- To promote a healthy diet
- To educate about different foods
- To promote good eating habits
- To encourage children to have a healthy diet
- To inform the adults of the school community about healthy eating in school
- To have a healthy school community

OBJECTIVES:

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

CURRICULUM / EDUCATION:

- There are many opportunities in the primary school curriculum for learning about the importance of living a healthy life.
- The importance of balanced nutrition and healthy food choices is explicitly taught through the SPHE curriculum. Food and Nutrition is an important part of the Strand Unit: *Taking Care of My Body* at each class level and is taught each year. These themes are also dealt with in other subjects such as Science
- A copy of the food pyramid is on display in the school.
- As part of our environmental awareness programme and in keeping with our Green schools status, lunches should be packed in recyclable boxes avoiding the use of tin foil, cling film and plastic bags. All packaging and compost waste (i.e. apple cores / orange peelings) must return home in lunch boxes for disposal.

The following guide is designed to help parents provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for our children:

Carbohydrates

Bread or rolls (preferably whole-meal, whole-grain or whole-wheat varieties)
Wraps
Pitta bread
Bread sticks
Rice – wholegrain Pasta – wholegrain Wholemeal Scones / Crackers
Potato Salad

Fruit & Vegetables

Apples, Banana, Peach, Mandarins, Plums
Orange segments
Fruit Salad, dried fruit
Pineapple cubes
Grapes (seedless, cut)
Cucumber, Sweetcorn, Tomato
Pepper slices
Carrot batons

Protein

Lean meat (e.g. chicken/turkey, ham)
Eggs
Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines/salmon
Hummus

Drinks

Water or Milk is the ideal choice Fruit juices - *without added sugar. Pure fruit juice also contains natural sugar and should be diluted with water*
Yoghurt

Dairy

Milk
Natural Yoghurt
Cheese (triangles/slices/ small blocks of cheddar/gouda/edam etc)

Pupils should be encouraged to have a role in preparing their own lunches and meals in order to promote responsibility or their own health and nutrition.

Water

We encourage children to bring in a water bottle (that can be reused) so they can have access to water throughout the day. Hydration is important for concentration.

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 or bars
- Cake/s
- Chocolate biscuits/bars
- Cereal bars (these can often contain as much sugar as chocolate bars)
- Chewing gum or lollipops
- Fruit winders

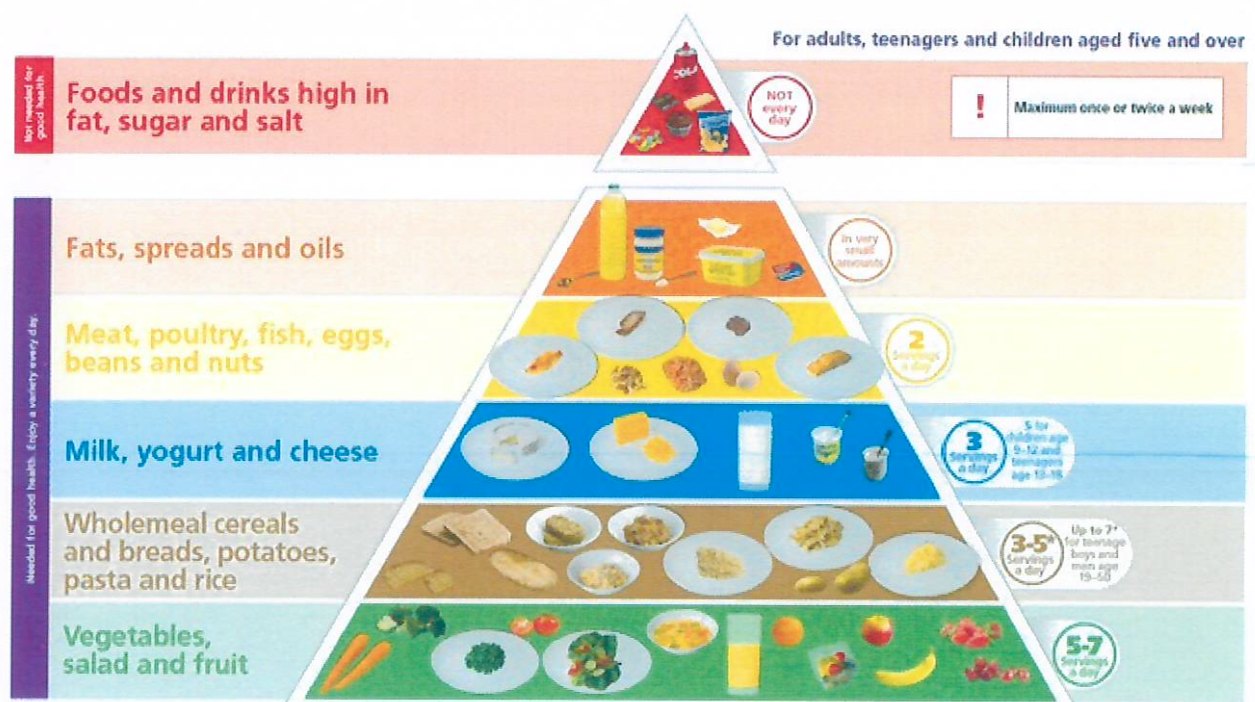
FOOD PYRAMID (RECOMMENDED DAILY INTAKE):

Useful Links with Ideas for Healthy Lunches: (these URLs may be subject to change)

www.indi.ie (Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute website)

www.healthpromotion.ie

<http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/healthy-lunchbox-picnic.aspx>



TREAT DAYS, SPECIAL DAYS AND CELEBRATIONS:

In consultation with parents, it was decided not to have Fridays as treat day. Treat day is now only applicable on the pupil's birthday. On their birthday this child may bring in a special treat in their lunch boxes for themselves. They are allowed a small portion from the top shelf of the food pyramid e.g. fun size chocolate bar/small iced bun/biscuits. Foods with artificial additive and colours e.g. Smarties, M & M's, boiled sweets etc. should be avoided. Treat day also at teacher discretion.

Please do not provide treats for the whole class due to allergies.

Special events and celebrations e.g. end of term parties – treats may be offered, but the staff will remind the children that this is an “occasional” treat and not “every day food”.

In keeping with our healthy food policy the children will be rewarded with activities such as golden time, PJ day, extra PE etc. over treats.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Sensory Aversion

We acknowledge that certain pupils will have extreme aversions to some foods. In consultation with parents, staff may allow pupils to eat certain foods due to individual circumstances.

Allergies

The school community is aware of the possibility of food allergies within the school population. Parents or carers of children who are on special diets for medical reasons, or who have allergies, will be asked to provide as much information as possible about which foods are suitable or foods which must be avoided. This information will be relayed to all staff.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Role of Parents

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children
- Encourage healthy eating
- Inform the school of any child's special dietary needs

Role of Children

- To eat their lunch
- To bring home any uneaten lunch
- To help make their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Eating Policy

Role of School Staff

- To promote and encourage healthy eating
- To educate children by teaching the appropriate content from the curriculum

RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW:


A policy review will take place as and when required.

RATIFICATION:

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 16/7/24.

Signed: 
Chairperson

Date: 16/7/24

Signed: 
Principal

Date: 16/4/24