

St. Paul's S.N.S.



Healthy Eating Policy

Healthy Eating Policy

The Board of Management of St. Paul's S.N.S. has adopted this policy on 25/6/24, following consultation with all staff members.

Introduction

St. Paul's SNS aims to help all those involved in our school community, children, staff and parents, to develop positive attitudes to eating and healthy living. We wish to promote 'the personal development and wellbeing of the child and to provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects'. (SPHE Guidelines) St Paul's is fortunate to have a 'Breakfast Club' where children have access to healthy meals at both breaks.

Context

St Paul's SNS aims to have a clear set of guidelines concerning Healthy Eating on the premises of the school. We recognise the importance of Healthy Eating and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Recent research (Department of Health and Children) has highlighted disturbing trends, including an increase in childhood obesity and diabetes so therefore our policy and guidelines are both timely and critical for the health and development of children. This Policy has been created in line with the Department of Health Promotion's Healthy Food for Life Campaign. It also forms part of our curriculum through subjects like SPHE, SESE and PE and we aim to promote nutritional awareness and to positively affect healthy food and drink choices within the school community.

Rationale

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).

Children form their eating habits for life from an early age. A healthy diet and plenty of sleep, fresh air and exercise are essential to the growing child. We ask parents to allow plenty of time in the morning for a healthy breakfast. Breakfast is perhaps the most important meal of the day. Not only does breakfast break the child's long overnight fast and help concentration, it also lays down the foundation for healthy eating for the rest of the day.

Children's lunches sometimes tend to be low in fibre and high in fat and sugar. The food pyramid below will offer a guide for a healthy and varied diet for your child.

Food Pyramid

For adults, teenagers and children aged five and over



Aims of the Healthy Eating Policy

The overall aim of our Healthy Eating Policy is to promote a Healthy Lifestyle. Our objectives include:

- Educating children of the importance of a Balanced Diet.
- Making Children aware of the reformed Healthy Eating Food Pyramid.
- Empower the children to make educated food choices.
- Promoting healthy lunches while discouraging consumption of unhealthy snacks and treats.
- Work in close collaboration with various agencies and Government sponsored organisations in order to develop children's awareness of food.
- Ensure each room in our school has a copy of the healthy eating food pyramid.
- Working alongside parents in order to appropriately educate children on the difference between a 'healthy diet' and an 'unhealthy diet' and the implications that come with both.
- Enabling the children to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy.
- Enabling the children to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy balanced diet.

Guidelines

Teachers and other adults who work in the school will provide positive modelling and supportive attitudes.

A healthy lunch box includes a piece of food from the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid (vegetables, salad and fruit, whole grains, dairy (milk, cheese, yogurt) & protein (meat, fish, pulses)).

Acceptable food items to eat in school include:

- Sandwiches with healthy fillings & bread (preferably whole meal/wholegrain)
- Fruit & vegetables
- Plain or fruit yoghurts with spoon
- Crackers (preferably whole meal/wholegrain) & rice cakes
- Water, squash, fruit juice or yoghurt drinks

Unacceptable food items to eat in school include:

- Fizzy drinks/ Capri Sun/ Fruit Shoots/ other similar drinks
- Any other drinks that are high in sugar
- Crisps & popcorn
- Chewing gum
- Sweets
- Chocolate bars/biscuits
- Yoghurts which are based on confectionery products (e.g. aero, crunchie bars)
- Pastries and cakes
- Any other foods high in sugar
- Chocolate spread (usually contain nuts as well as sugar)
- Nuts. In themselves nuts can provide a very healthy snack but due to the increasing number of children who are suffering from food allergies we feel we would be introducing unnecessary dangers to children who have an allergy to nuts. A bad reaction to nuts can actually be life threatening. Even on days when we have parties or treat days in school and children are allowed treats, nuts will not be allowed for this reason.

Exceptions

Exceptions to these rules will occur:

- During end-of-term parties.
- On some school trips / tours.

Class teachers will clarify on each occasion.

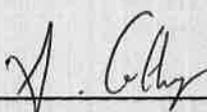
Allergies

N.B. Parents/guardians of any child with an allergy / medical condition which requires a special diet should inform the school secretary and the class teacher.

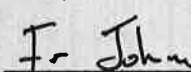
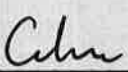
Ratification by the Board

This policy has been reviewed and updated by the staff of our school and will be available on the school website. The Board of Management reserves the right to amend this policy as needs arise.

Reviewed by staff on: 30/4/24

Signed: 
(Principal)

Date: 25/6/24

Signed:  John  P.
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 25/6/24

