



Mary, Mother of Hope JNS

Healthy Eating Guidelines

Introductory Statement:

This Healthy Eating Policy is reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Prior to its first implementation it was examined by the SPHE committee. Parent opinion was also sought. The policy was then presented to all teachers at a staff meeting where it was examined in detail and re-drafted.

Rational:

Mary Mother of Hope Junior National School has developed this Healthy Eating Policy to help all those involved in our school community, children, staff and parents, in developing positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance. A healthy diet promotes concentration, protects teeth, lessens hyperactivity and reduces health risks in later life

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) Programme we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes. Having this policy we aim to encourage and develop these healthy habits and inspire our pupils to make healthy choices in their everyday lives.

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.

In our school the children eat twice a day, before going out to play.

To ensure good concentration it is important for children to drink lots of water, we encourage parents to provide their child with a bottle of water each day. This bottle can be refilled throughout the day in each classroom.

We ask you to encourage a healthy lunch from Junior Infants onwards.

Healthy lunches can be delivered to the school directly if you wish. Please see more information on <https://www.thelunchbag.ie/>

Aims and Objectives:

- To heighten an awareness of the importance of a balanced diet.
- To encourage the children to make wise choices about food and nutrition.
- To raise levels of concentration within class by way of consumption of healthy food.
- To enable the children to develop a healthy eating habit for life.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Role of Parents:

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children
- Encourage healthy eating
- Inform the school of any of the child's special dietary needs
- To implement school Healthy Eating Policy by not allowing their children to bring sweets, crisps, bars, fizzy drinks etc... to school
- To send in appropriate utensils e.g. spoons
- To peel/ chop fruit if required

Role of Children:

- To eat all of their lunch
- To bring home any uneaten lunch
- To help make their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Eating Policy
- Not to bring sweets, crisps, bars fizzy drinks etc... to school
- Children are to bring home any wrappers/ yogurt containers and dispose of these at home so as to reduce litter and protect our school

Role of School:

- To promote and encourage healthy eating through the implementation of Healthy Eating Policy
- To educate children on the importance of a healthy balanced diet
- To educate children of the impact of a healthy diet on the body and the mind

- To monitor school lunches and advise where appropriate

Healthy Food Suggestions:

Snacks: whole-meal muffins, scones, flapjacks, raw vegetables, fruit, seeds, dried fruit, fruit yoghurts, crackers, fromage frais or bread
Drinks: water and milk.
Carbohydrates: whole-grain breads, rolls, bagels, wraps, oatcakes, crackers, pasta, rice or rice cakes. Fillings: cheese, tuna, hummus, cold meats, lettuce, cucumber, tomato, onion, peppers, coleslaw or salad. Fruit: apple, orange, banana, grape, pear, plum, kiwi, melon, grapefruit, pineapple and many more ...
Raw Vegetables: carrots, peppers, cucumber, broccoli, tomatoes, sweetcorn and many more ...

Foods not permitted:

The following foods do not support our Healthy Eating Policy and should be excluded from your child's lunch box; crisps, chewing gum, sweets, bars (including cereal bars), lollipops, chocolate, chocolate yogurts, winders, crispie buns, peanuts, cakes, croissants and chocolate croissants.

Due to the incidence of severe allergy to peanuts and mixed nuts amongst some pupils, we ask parents to be vigilant in the following:

- Avoid peanuts or any other type of nut in school lunches.
- Avoid giving peanut butter, chocolate spreads and Nutella,
- Ask children not to share their lunches.

Sample Healthy Lunches Options:

- Wholemeal bread with cheese slice and tomato + 1 banana + water
- Pitta bread with cooked ham, low-fat mayonnaise lettuce and cucumber + orange segments + milk to drink
- Burger bun with chicken, relish, lettuce and grated carrot + dried fruit + yoghurt + water to drink
- Toasted whole meal bread with cooked beef, tomato and cucumber + small apple + milk to drink
- Cooked pasta with tuna, lettuce, tomato and carrot + 2 mandarins + yoghurt + water to drink
- Salad box with cooked rice, lettuce, tomato, cheese cubes, celery sticks, carrot sticks + dried fruit + water to drink

- White roll with mashed hard-boiled egg, lettuce and cucumber + handful of grapes + milk to drink.
- Whole meal bap with lean grilled bacon, tomato and sweetcorn + peach + milk to drink
- Crackers with cheese slices, sliced peppers, grated carrot + apple and orange segments + water to drink
- Cooked rice with cooked peas, carrot and chicken pieces + dried fruit + water
- Hummus sandwich + Banana + water

Exemptions:

Children may have one or two small treats on special days e.g. Special Occasions /School Tour. Parents are notified in advance of these occasions.

Whole School Initiatives:

Fruit/ Vegetable/Water Break. Children to bring in a piece of fruit or vegetable to eat for their small break every day.

Continuous promotion, positive modelling and supportive attitudes of Healthy Eating by all staff members. Food Pyramid will be displayed in all classrooms. Healthy lunches will be rewarded by means of stickers and certificates.

Cross Curricular Links

1. SPHE: Myself/Taking Care of My Body
2. Science: Myself – Living Things/ Myself

o ***School App/Seesaw:*** A selection of children's healthy lunches can be photographed and shared during Wellness Week and/or Eat Smart Week.

o ***Non Food Rewards:*** Food related rewards are not offered in our school.

o ***Healthy Lunch:*** certificates and stickers.

National Initiatives:

Promote healthy eating by registering for participation in initiatives such as:

- ***Eat Smart Week:*** School Eat Smart Week will run in conjunction with Be Active Week. There will be an additional focus on healthy eating children will be provided with a log journal to record portions of fruit and vegetables consumed for the week.

· ***Health Promoting School Programme (White Flag)***: The Health Promoting School concept is a whole school approach to all aspects of health and well-being. In a HPS, health is defined in its broadest sense and refers to social, emotional, mental, spiritual, cognitive and physical health. The school recognises that these dimensions of health are interconnected and that they influence and are influenced by the school environment.

· ***Food Dudes***: Food Dudes is a programme developed to encourage children to eat more fruit and vegetables both in school and at home. It is based on positive role models (the Food Dudes characters), repeated tasting and rewards. . It is ultimately designed to enable children to enjoy eating healthy diets, and to create a healthy eating culture within schools.

· ***Incredible Edibles***: Incredible Edibles is a healthy eating educational initiative developed for primary school students and their teachers across Ireland. The aim of the initiative is to communicate the importance of food origin and of eating fruit and vegetables for a healthy diet - in an interactive way. The project is also set up so that students take these important messages home to parents.

· ***Mighty Mouth***: The overall aim of the programme is to focus attention on the importance of oral health for children who are at greatest risk of developing dental disease. In particular it emphasises the essential role of tooth-friendly foods and drinks, and of supervised regular effective tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste. It outlines the dangers of sugar rich foods to your teeth.

· ***HSE Dental Checks***: School is linked with the HSE. Dental checks are provided for Senior Infants and a follow up dental check occurs in Second Class.

Links for Parents:

www.fooddudes.ie

https://www.healthpromotion.ie/health/inner/3_week_menu_plan

<http://www.safefood.eu/tastebuds.aspx> (Tastebuds: 8 lessons and printouts)

<http://incredibleedibles.ie/> <http://www.moocrew.ie/>