

Healthy Eating Policy

The original policy was formulated by the staff of St. Anne's National School in 2007. This reviewed policy was completed in October 2014 in consultation with staff, parents and the Board of Management.

Mission Statement

1. Through these guidelines St. Anne's N. S. 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 well-being of the child and to provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects'. (SPHE Guidelines)
2. To help achieve this, our guidelines will reflect good eating habits. These should be established at an early age as the purpose of making healthy food choices is to enable children to attain their optimum growth, development and health potential.
3. Recent research (Department of Health & Children) has highlighted disturbing trends, including an increase in childhood obesity and diabetes. Therefore our policy and guidelines are both timely and critical for the health and development of our children.
4. Through a whole-school approach, and within the context of SPHE, the children, parents and staff will learn about nutrition, healthy eating and healthy living.

5. Our healthy eating guidelines aim to enable the children to develop and understand healthy living and develop an ability to implement healthy behaviour and willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health. This includes physical activity.
6. We believe that, in developing and implementing the policy, parents, children, teachers, school staff and the BOM should be involved in a collaborative way.
7. All classes will receive at least one lesson on healthy eating each term.
8. School staff will provide positive modelling and supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.
9. We will hold a Healthy Eating Awareness week annually.
10. Parents will be supported in their role as Primary Educators by providing them with up-to-date information on healthy eating habits from the Department of Health.

Guidelines

A healthy lunch box includes:

- At least 2 portions from the bread/cereals group
- One portion from the meat and meat alternatives group
- 2-3 portions from fruit and vegetables
- One portion from the dairy products

Healthy Lunch Options (Lower in sugar and fat)

Foods from the top tier of the food pyramid should not be included in your child's lunchbox

Sometimes it can be difficult to think of alternatives to these. Here are some tasty alternatives.

- Fruit (for example, an apple or banana, handful of grapes)
- Washed, raw vegetables pieces (for example, sticks of carrot, celery, pepper and cucumber)
- Washed, raw vegetables (for example, cherry tomatoes)
- Half a tin of fruit (in its own juice)
- Plain popcorn (unsalted)
- Plain breadsticks, unsalted plain or wholewheat crackers, crispbreads or water biscuits served with fruit or cheese
- Plain rice cakes
- Natural or low fat yogurt with fresh fruit (fresh, frozen or tinned in its own juice)
- Wholemeal or plain scones
- Plain biscuits (for example, digestive biscuits, rich tea)
- Fruit bun or mini fruit loaf
- Sugar-free jelly pots or fruit jelly
- Pot of custard or rice pudding

Drinks

- Water
- Fruit juices
- Diluted drinks
- Actimel
- Smoothies

Exemptions

- Children are allowed a small treat on *Friday Only*
- Children will be allowed to have a treat day at the end of term parties
- In order to adhere to the Healthy Eating Policy, teachers are unable to facilitate birthday celebrations
- Teachers will continue to give children a sweet treat on occasions in recognition of work done, improvements in work or behaviour and in an effort to promote positive behaviour. Sweet treats used prudently by teachers will not interfere with the health of the children.