



Healthy Eating Policy

SMGS - 2023

Introductory Statement

This policy is based on the previous policies of SMGS and was formulated in conjunction with staff and parents.

Rationale

It was decided to focus on this area for development in order to improve the pupils' health. Our SPHE & Science programmes endorse this view:

- **SPHE Strand Unit:**
 - Taking Care of My Body: Food and Nutrition (Curriculum J. Infants – 6th Class Making choices
- **Science Strand Living Things: Strand Unit: Myself:**
 - Human Life Processes (Curriculum J. Infants – 6th Class)

Aims of this policy:

- To promote the personal development and well-being of the child.
- To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.
- To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy.
- To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy balanced diet.

Implementation

This policy will be implemented from 2023.

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, so please encourage your

child to bring a bottle of water. Our school also recognises that growing children should drink milk. This ensures that they get enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth.

We provide milk as part of the school lunches to the pupils in our school. Milk is a rich source of protein, calcium, vitamins and minerals. Water fountains are also available in all of the rooms.

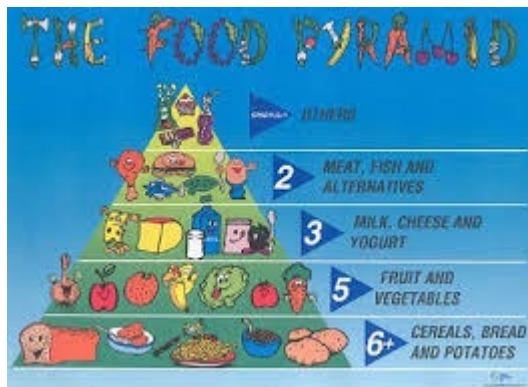
Healthy Lunch Guidelines

The children are provided with a healthy snack at small lunch and a hot meal on big break. However if they chose to bring their own food the following are the guidelines for healthy eating in SMGS

The Food Pyramid is the key tool to communicate healthy eating messages.

It is very important for children's energy and concentration levels that they eat a healthy breakfast before coming to school.

- A healthy lunchbox includes a piece of food from each of the first four shelves of the food pyramid.



- Children will normally have two food breaks during the day and will be given adequate time to eat.
- Only milk and water are allowed for drinks. No cordial or juices. Children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day during class time in a non-spill bottle. Water fonts are available in the classrooms to allow the children to replenish their bottles.
- Bottom shelf carbohydrates (energy) and fruit and vegetables (vitamin/mineral rich) are especially encouraged (to ensure recommended daily portions are met).
- Any food from the top shelf of the pyramid is NOT permitted.

- Nuts and nut products (including peanut butter and chocolate spread) are not permitted as a number of children in school have serious allergies.
- Chocolate, chocolate spread, crisps, cereal bars, sweets and chewing gum are not permitted.
- Staff will support the healthy eating policy through incorporating it in their SPHE and physical education lessons.
- In the interest of fairness cakes, buns or treats (sweets and chocolate) for birthday celebrations will not be distributed.
- In support of our Green School Initiative, we encourage reusable airtight lunch containers and all waste materials are brought home.

Examples of Healthier Snack Options:

Extra piece of fruit	Unsalted crackers	Sugar-free jelly pots
Washed, raw vegetable pieces	Crispbreads	Pot of custard or rice pudding
Plain breadsticks	Plain rice cakes	Natural or low fat yoghurt

Review and Evaluation

- ✓ This policy revises the previous Healthy Eating Policy.
- ✓ We appreciate that encouraging children to choose certain foods is not always easy. However, with the increase in obesity, type 2 diabetes and the prevalence of dental caries, we are encouraging best practice especially during school hours and after school activities held on site. For this policy to be successful, we need support from the whole school community.
- ✓ This policy will be reviewed each year.
- ✓ The children of SMGS are very keen to have healthy lunches and show a good understanding of what that means. We hope these guidelines will assist everybody in making healthy choices.

Useful links

- http://www.fooddudes.ie/Primary_Schools_Food_Nutrition.pdf
- http://www.healthpromotion.ie/health/healthy_eating
- <http://www.safefood.eu/>

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 21st November 2023

This plan will be communicated to all staff by Aladdin and is available in the plan scoile.

Signed: Mary O'Brien (Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Date:21st November 2023