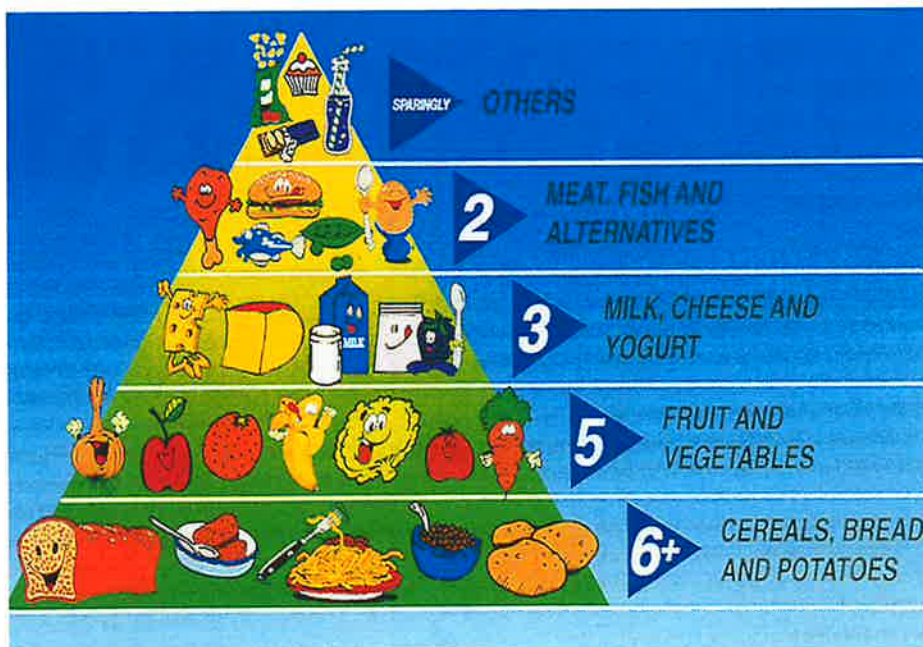


St. Joseph's NS,
Knockatallon, Co. Monaghan

Healthy Eating Policy

THE FOOD PYRAMID



for our

Primary School Children

Introduction

Welcome to the Health Service Executive Dublin North East Schools 'Healthy Eating Policy'.

We establish our eating habits at a young age. What we eat affects our own immediate health, and for those who are still young enough it will make a significant difference to how healthy they are in later life.

We know from recent European studies that our young people eat too much sugar, salt and fats. On the other hand, they don't eat enough fruit and vegetables. There is a clear link between what we eat and our risk of getting heart disease or diabetes. What we eat when we are young has an impact on how well we are when we are older.

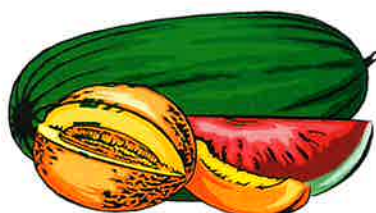
If we encourage young people to choose and enjoy different foods, we will have given them a good start to life, and hopefully started some good habits, which will be with them into adulthood. Maybe as part of this project they can also influence *our* eating habits -it's never too late to start healthy eating.

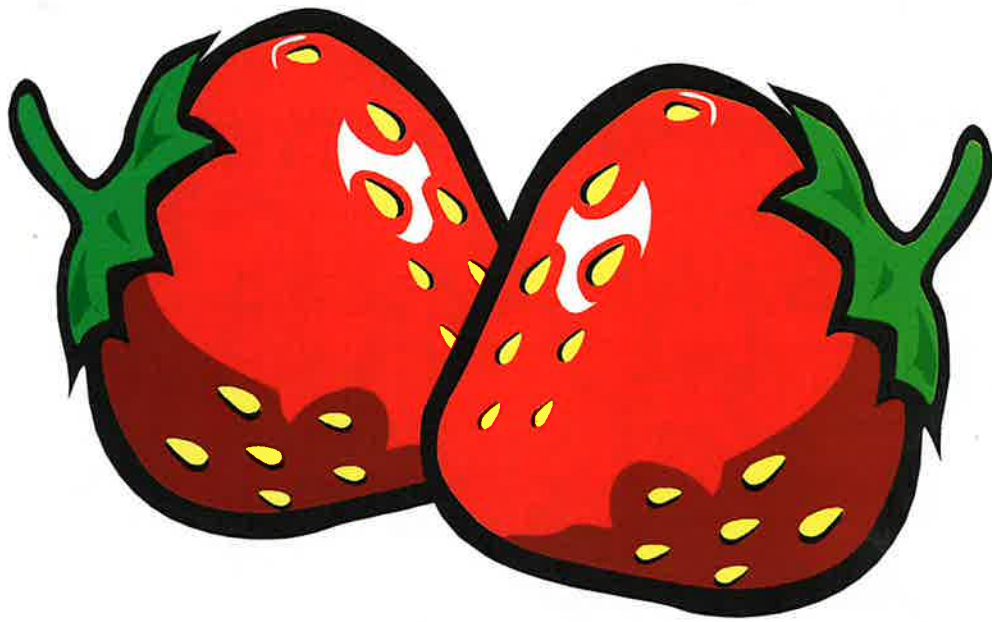
One believes that the success of such a policy depends on the level of co-operation between parents, schools, health professionals and the wider community.

For these reasons the Health Service Executive Dublin North East is delighted to support this healthy eating project with St. Joseph's NS. The project adopts a whole school approach that involves the teachers, pupils, parents and the community, in line with the World Health Organisation's 'Health Promoting School'.

Thanks to the school principal, teachers, staff, parents and students for the time and expertise that they put into the development and implementation of this Healthy Eating Policy.

*Dr. Nazih Eldin
Head of Health Promotion
HSE Dublin North East
May 2011*





Developing Healthy Eating Guidelines

Developing School Healthy Eating Guidelines

- Healthy eating guidelines should reflect the needs of the whole school community e.g. staff, parents and children. The reason for developing these guidelines may vary from one school to another. It may be due to a litter problem or teachers concerns regarding the nutritional content of the children's diet.
- Only by taking these reasons into consideration will your school ensure that its own needs are met.

As St. Joseph's NS decided that it wanted to be involved in developing guidelines the following points were considered:

- Parents to compile recipes and demonstration of cooking to be carried out by a parent at the launch of Health Promoting Primary Schools Initiative.
- Variety of foods to be stressed.
 - a) Unsweetened fruit juices can increase the risk of tooth decay because of their high concentration of sugars and are not recommended for consumption between meals.
 - b) Fruit juices, juice drinks, squashes and fizzy drinks should be avoided as they contain sugar and acid, both of which are harmful to teeth.
 - c) Chewy/sticky bars and sweets are not advisable at any time.
- Cans, glasses, chewing gum, fizzy drinks and crisps are not permitted for health and safety and litter reasons. All litter must be taken home by the pupils in order to reduce litter and protect the school environment.
- Nutrition and healthy eating will be included as part of the primary school curriculum. Also, parents should provide positive attitudes to healthy eating. A one page newsletter containing healthy recipes including a special section for the children will be published regularly.
- Information on healthy eating will be offered to all parents at the launch of these guidelines.
- Food and Drinks should not be used as rewards
- Extra emphasis on physical activity e.g. Gaming Leagues, Rugby, Cross country.

Steps in Developing School Healthy Eating Policy

1. Set up working group

- Ensure involvement by all those who will be affected by the policy; Teachers, Parents, Members of Board of Management, Parents Council, Health Board Officials, Sixth Class pupils.

2. Set date for meeting

- Outline the project and develop a plan of action.
- Review existing policies and legislation e.g. What policies are in place, e.g. code of practice, environmental health policy, behaviour code, litter policy.
- Review current practice
 - What guidelines are already in place.
 - Does the school take part in the milk scheme.
 - Health & Safety Procedures in the school.
 - Where is food eaten in the school.
- Review staff training, support and resources
 - What training is available for staff relating to food & nutrition.
- Are resources adequate for food storage etc.

3. Review of needs

- What are the real needs.
- For whom is the policy being formulated
- When needs are established, set priorities, time scale, and resource implications.

4. Student Survey

- Survey on eating habits.

5. Draft Initial Guidelines

- Focus on food brought into school
- Foods to be encouraged as alternatives
- Staff training in food & nutrition education.

6. Consultation

- Consultation e.g. letter to parents.
- Circulate draft policy for comment and amendment to staff, parents, board of management, parent's council, pupils, health board representatives.

7. Amendments of initial draft guidelines – 'Final Copy of Guidelines'

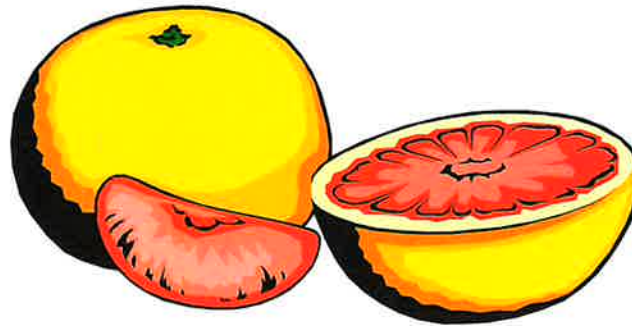
- Once developed, circulate.
- Inform those concerned- e.g. launch day, in-service training day, newsletter, induction evening for new parents and staff, posting on notice board.

8. Implementation of Policy

- Ensure the whole staff team is familiar with the policy and is prepared to work with it.
- Ensure that the staff are confident of working with the new policy
- Ensure everybody is aware of changes that the policy will make in practice.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Monitoring of policy- monitor aspects on a regular basis.
- Guidelines need reviewing on an annual basis.



Format for Healthy Eating Guidelines

1. Mission Statement/Rationale for Guidelines

2. State what foods are encouraged and state what foods are to be kept to a minimum.



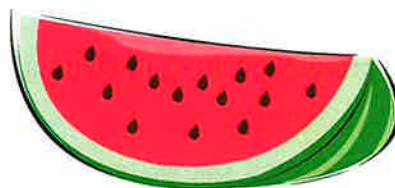
3. Education measures.

4. Support for parents



5. Practical support from school

6. Review and evaluation





Healthy Eating Policy St. Joseph's NS

*What people eat is known to be one of the key factors influencing long term health of school children and staff. The school day provides the opportunity for having at least one of the daily meals within the school. Food is often a feature of school celebrations. The curriculum provides an opportunity to learn and explore about food and healthy lifestyles. Through these guidelines **St. Joseph's National School** aims to help all those involved in our school community, e.g. children, staff and parents in developing positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health.*

1. A healthy lunchbox includes a helping of a variety of fresh food from the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid e.g. bread (energy bottom shelf), protein (meats, fish, eggs shelf), fruit (vegetables, salads, fruit shelf), calcium (milk, cheese, yoghurt shelf).
2. Some of the healthy snacks that we encourage for the small break include fresh fruit, raw vegetables, standard yoghurt, fromage frais (see recommended list), crackers, cheese, seeds, pasta. Chewy/sticky bars and sweets are not advisable at any time.
3. Healthier choices of drinks include milk and water (children will be permitted to drink water/milk at mid-morning and lunchtime). Pure unsweetened juices may be included but only as part of their lunch meal, to reduce the risk of tooth decay. Other drinks such as sweetened fruit juices, fruit drinks, squashes, fizzy drinks (including diet drinks and sparkling water) should be avoided due to their sugar and/or acid content, as these are also harmful to teeth.
4. All pupils are encouraged to avail of the school plain milk scheme (all milk cartons are stored in the refrigerator) and milk will be given out at break time and lunch time.
5. Cans, glasses, chewing gum, popcorn, peanuts and crisps are not permitted for safety and litter reasons. Foods which have wrappers are to be kept to a minimum and disposed of properly to reduce litter and protect our school environment.
6. Nutrition, SPHE and healthy eating will be included as part of the primary school curriculum.
7. Teachers and staff will provide positive modelling and support attitudes to encourage healthy eating.
8. A treat will be permitted from the top shelf of the food pyramid on Fridays at Golden Time, provided lunch is eaten.
9. The '*Healthy Eating Guidelines*' will be reviewed on a 2 yearly basis and the policy will be visibly displayed in the school.

The Board of Management ratified this policy at a meeting on the 6th April 2011.

Working Time Frame

Steps	Tasks
<p>Step 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School visits by HSE Dublin North East Schools Senior Health Promotion Officer. ▪ Agreement between School and Health Promotion Service to be signed and agreed.
<p>Steps 2, 3, & 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carry out survey of lunch boxes. ▪ Draft guidelines for school. ▪ Distribute letter to parents. ▪ Information sessions for all classes.
<p>Steps 5 & 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take feed back on draft guidelines. ▪ Redraft guidelines. ▪ Plan for 'healthy eating awareness week' in school.
<p>Step 7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awareness week. ▪ Class work. ▪ Parents evening and launch of Policy ▪ Implementation of Policy.
<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of Policy.
<p>End of Term</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and evaluation of project.

Survey

(Please tick the appropriate box)

1. What did you have to drink in school today?

Milk Water Juice Fizzy Drink Tea/Coffee

2. Did you have a sandwich?

Yes No

3. Have you eaten any fruit today?

Yes No

4. Have you eaten anything from the top shelf of the Food Pyramid at school today?

Yes No

5. Did you buy something to eat in the shop today?

Yes No

If yes, what did you buy? _____

6. What else was in your lunch box?

7. Name one thing you like about lunch in school?

8. Is there anything that you do not like about lunch in school?

1. What did you have to drink in school today?

Milk



Water

Juice



Fizzy

Tea

Drink

Coffee

2. What did you have in your lunchbox?



a) Bread

white/
wholemeal



Roll

Crackers

Pitta
bread

Baps

Rice

Pasta

Potato

b) Fruit



Salad/
Vegetable



The Food Pyramid

c) Cheese



Yoghurt

d) Cold
meat

Fish

Chicken/
Turkey

Eggs



Peanut
Butter



e) Other

(Please specify)

3. Name one thing you like about lunch in school.

4. Is there anything that you do not like about lunch in school?

Ideas for Awareness Week

1. Table Quiz with a food theme.
2. Class trip could be organised to a local supermarket to explore the range of foods available, prices etc.
3. Make your own food pyramid with pictures and/or foods.
4. Make a little 'food family' with foods from each shelf of the food pyramid and create a story around it.
5. Invite a cook from a local restaurant to visit and prepare a fruit salad / sandwiches, etc. and to talk to the children about his/her work.
6. Make a healthy eating calendar.
7. Organise a 'brunch in school'. The children could make place mats, invitations, and labels for foods, during art class. A variety of foods could be brought from home e.g. cereals, fruit, bread. The morning break could be extended.
8. Organise a multi-sensory table using food for junior classes, e.g. smell – fruit and vegetables with a distinctive smell such as onion, orange, lemon, herbs.

Sound *percussion instruments using dried pulses, seeds.*

Touch *textures of various fruit and vegetables such as orange, apple, kiwi, etc.*

Sight *colours of fruit and vegetables*

Taste *blindfold test to identify various foods and their tastes - sweet/sour/bitter.*

Record events of the week using a journal and photographs taken by the children of the various activities.

Cross-Curricular Links:-

<i>Art</i>	Food poster. Collage.
<i>Maths</i>	Calculate cost of healthy and not so healthy lunchbox.
<i>Geography</i>	Journey of various foods e.g. exotic fruits from country of origin to the shop.
<i>Science</i>	Growing food such as watercress, mustard, and seeds of various fruits.
<i>History</i>	Finding out what their grand parents ate on a typical day.



Letter for Parents

Name & Address

Dear Parents,

As you may be aware, we have been working on developing '*Healthy Eating Policy Guidelines*' for our school. A group of parents, staff and children have come together to work on these guidelines. This work has been part of the '*Healthy Eating in Schools Project*' supported by the Health Service Executive Dublin North East.

The aim is to help all those involved in our school community – parents, children and staff, in developing positive and responsible attitudes to eating, and to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health.

Please find enclosed a copy of the draft guidelines for our school. We would appreciate if you could read these and forward any comments or changes you wish to make at your earliest convenience.

Many thanks for your ongoing interest and support.

Yours sincerely

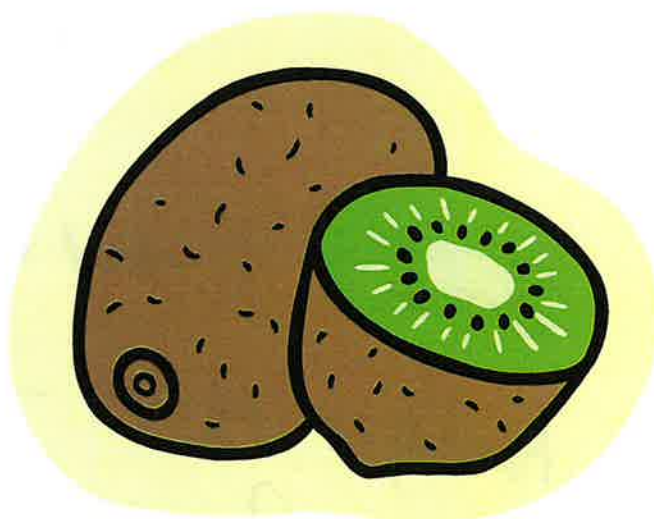
Principal

Please return this page to the school at your earliest convenience.



Healthy Eating Guidelines

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Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Produced by
**The Health Promotion Department,
Health Service Executive Dublin North East**

Signed today at BOM
Meeting 17-06-15
Dria Leahy.