



**St Columba's N.S.
North Strand
Dublin 3**

Healthy Eating Policy

St Columba's NS

Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme at St Columba's NS we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes. To promote healthy eating habits in our school, we introduced a healthy eating policy which commenced in 2020.

Aims & Rationale:

- To encourage the children to make healthy food choices
- To develop positive and responsible attitudes to eating
- To enable the children to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy.

Linkage and Integration:

This policy is promoted within the school and is strongly integrated within the following curricular areas:

- SPHE: Taking Care of My Body - Food and Nutrition and Making Choices
- Science: Myself - Human Life Processes

Healthy Eating in St Columba's N.S:

A healthy lunchbox should be packed daily. Children should be encouraged to eat a healthy breakfast before coming to school as this will help with concentration and energy levels until first break. Children will have two food breaks during the day and will be given adequate time to eat. School lunches should provide children with the energy they need for a busy school day.

We believe that if good eating habits are developed at an early age these habits will continue as children grow up. In school, we learn about the food pyramid and encourage children to consult this when deciding what to eat. Any food from the top shelf of the pyramid is actively discouraged during school hours.

To assist parents with making healthy lunches for their children we have provided a list of healthy lunch ideas (See Appendix 1). A healthy lunchbox includes a piece of food from each of the following shelves of the food pyramid:

- Meat, poultry, fish, beans
- Milk, yogurt, cheese
- Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice.
- Vegetables, salad and fruit.

Drinks:

Children are encouraged to drink water (plain and unflavoured fizzy water). Water may be flavoured naturally with some lemon, lime, cucumber or other fruits.

Children are not permitted to have hot drinks for health and safety reasons.

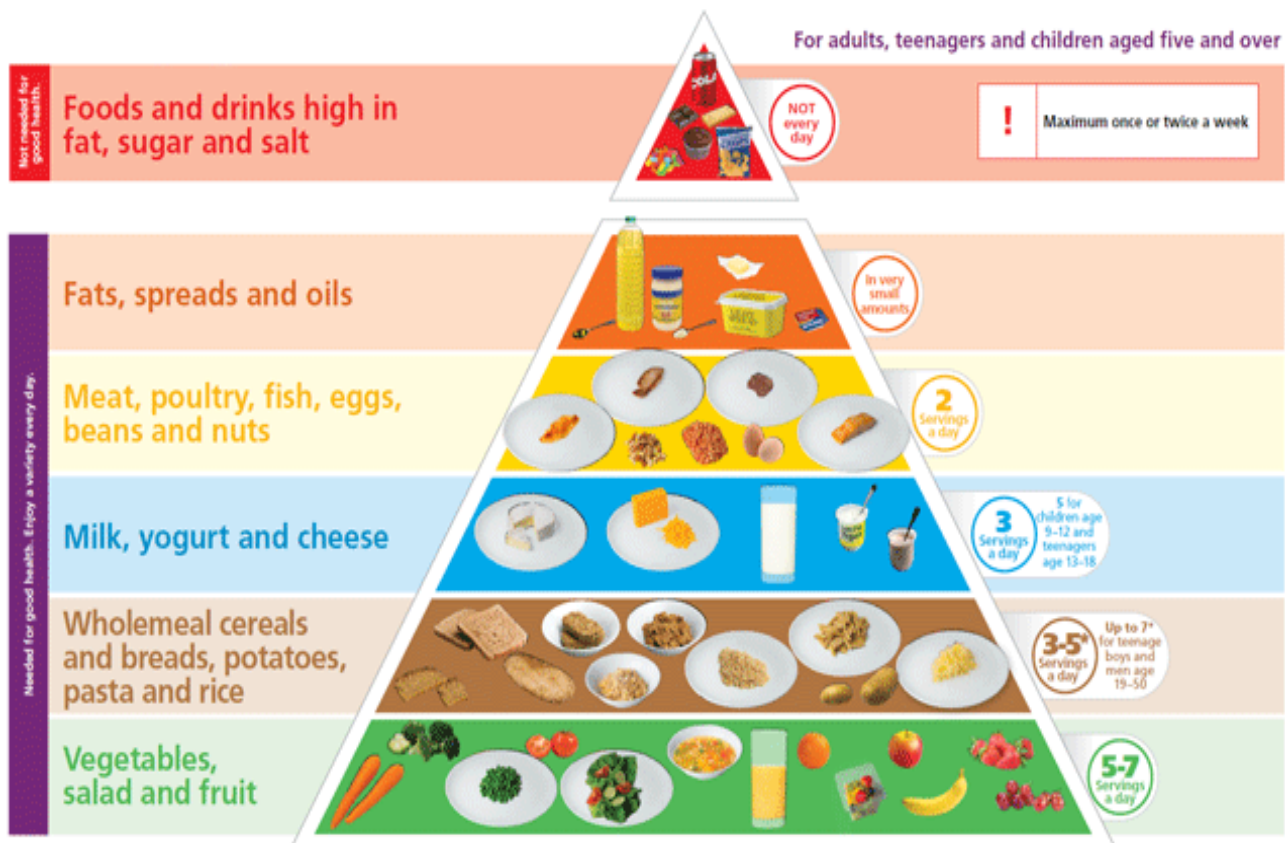


Image courtesy of: www.safefood.eu/Healthy-Eating/The-Food-Pyramid-and-The-Eatwell-Guide/The-Food-Pyramid.aspx

We ask that children do not bring the following to school:

Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including but not limited to the following:

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)
- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc)
- Hot drinks
- Sweets
- Biscuits
- Bars
- Chewing gum
- Fruit winders
- Lollipops

Exemptions:

- Friday is “treat” day. On this day a treat-size piece of food from the top shelf of the food pyramid may be included in the lunchbox.
- While teachers usually give stickers, no homework, extra play time, extra computer time and extra PE time as rewards, they may continue to occasionally give children a sweet treat in recognition of work done, improvements in work or behaviour and at end of term.

Green Flag School:

At St Columba's NS, we worked hard to attain our Green Flag in 2021. In order to maintain our success, the following will be implemented:

- Children will take home (in their lunchbox) all uneaten food, wrappers, containers and cartons
- Children will not bring in cans or glass – for safety reasons.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Responsibilities of Parents:

- To provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children.
- To encourage healthy eating.
- To inform the school in writing of a child's special dietary needs e.g. allergies/ special diet.
- To implement the school policy by not allowing their children to bring chewing gum or fizzy/energy drinks to school or anything from the suggested list above.

Responsibilities of Children:

- To eat their lunch.
- To bring home any uneaten lunch.
- To dispose of rubbish appropriately.
- Not to bring chewing gum or fizzy/energy drinks to school.

Role of School:

To promote and encourage healthy eating by:

- Working with parents and children in supporting healthy eating.
- Informing children about healthy eating at the start of each school year.
- Promoting healthy eating through SPHE.
- Displaying healthy eating posters e.g. Food/Exercise Pyramid.
- Modelling this behaviour and leading by example.

Formulation:

This policy was formulated in consultation with parents, staff and the Board of Management.

Implementation:

This policy was implemented at the beginning of the academic year 2020-2021 and will be reviewed regularly after this.

Appendix I

Healthy lunch ideas

- Sandwiches containing meat, fish, cheese or salad.
- Cheese and crackers
- Hummus and crackers
- Wraps containing meat, fish, cheese or salad
- Pasta
- Rice salad
- Fruit salad
- Dinner leftovers brought to school in a flask – please ensure it is not piping hot
- Filled bagels
- Yoghurt and fruit
- Plain rice cakes with cheese spread or hummus
- Vegetable crudities and dip such as hummus or cheese spread
- Homemade lunchables including crackers, ham and cheese
- Breadsticks and dips

Sample menus for lunch:

- Wholemeal bread with cheese slice and tomato + 1 banana + water to drink
- Pitta bread with cooked ham, lettuce and cucumber + orange segments + milk to drink
- Burger bun with chicken, relish, lettuce and grated carrot + dried fruit + yoghurt + water to drink
- Toasted wholemeal 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 ham, lettuce and cucumber + handful of grapes + milk to drink.
- Wholemeal 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 to drink
- Hummus sandwich + Banana + water to drink

Mix-and-Match Strategy: Kid-Friendly Mediterranean

If you buy...

Plain Greek yogurt

Mini whole-wheat pita pockets

Cucumber

Mozzarella balls

Tomatoes

Canned tuna (in water or oil)

Then you can make...

- **Monday:** Tuna Pockets
Mix 1/4 cup drained tuna with 1 Tbs. yogurt, chopped cucumbers, sliced tomatoes, and a few herbs. Stuff into two mini pita pockets.
- **Tuesday:** Pita Crackers with Cucumber Raita
Cut 2 mini pitas in half. Brush on olive oil and sea salt or garlic salt. Bake at 450°F until pitas are crunchy, about 8 minutes. Mix 1/2 cup yogurt, 2 Tbs. chopped cucumber, and dill; pack in a container for dipping.
- **Wednesday:** Stuffed Tomatoes and Grilled Cheese
Hollow out a few small tomatoes. Mix 1/4 cup drained tuna with 1 Tbs. yogurt and chopped cucumbers. Stuff tomatoes. Place three mozzarella balls in a pita pocket and grill until cheese is melted, about 5 minutes.
- **Thursday:** Salad Sticks
Thread cucumbers, mozzarella balls, and tomatoes on three 6-inch skewers. Cut off the pointy end.
- **Friday:** Repeat a lunch.

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