

# St. Declan's National School

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## School Policy

### Healthy Eating Policy

This policy has been formulated by St. Declan's National School and is guided by the SPHE Curriculum and healthy eating guidelines from the HSE to inform Teachers, S.N.A.s and parents of our Healthy Eating Policy.

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# 1. Introduction

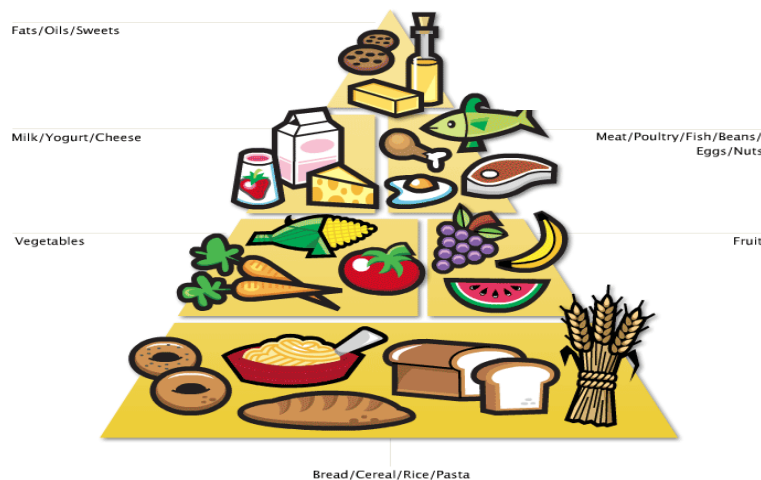
In St. Declan's we have a strong tradition of healthy eating as part of our SPHE programme. We establish our eating habits at a young age. What we eat affects our immediate health and it will make a significant difference to how healthy we are later on in life. In St. Declan's both parents and teachers encourage the children to eat healthy food and we promote the link between healthy eating habits and a healthy lifestyle.

## 2. Rationale

St Declan's cherishes all pupils equally. We aim with the involvement and co-operation of the entire school community, to assist each child to reach his/her full potential. To explore and become aware of the importance of food for promoting growth, keeping healthy and providing energy.

## 3. Aims

- To explore and become aware of the importance of food for promoting growth, keeping healthy and providing energy.
- To encourage the children to make wise choices about food and nutrition and the importance of a balanced diet. The food pyramid is our guide to striking the right balance. We need a variety of foods in different amounts to get all the nutrients we require.



## 4. Healthy Food Choices

- Help us concentrate and learn.
- Provide energy to play.
- Promote general health and well-being.
- Are kinder to our teeth and enjoyable to eat.
- Are not as expensive to prepare as pre-packed lunches
- Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Every child should have a proper breakfast in the morning before school to help them concentrate. Breakfast rolls are not a substantial substitute for a healthy breakfast.

## 5. Foods we recommend

- Sandwiches, cream crackers, scones, rolls, rice cakes, wraps, pitta breads, croissants.
- **Fillings** ; ham, cheese, beef, tuna, eggs, tomatoes, lettuce, turkey, pate.
- **Snacks** ; all types of fruit and vegetables, yoghurts, frubes, yoghurt drinks, custard, rice pudding.
- **Drinks** ; water, juice, milk, smoothies.

## 6. Foods we discourage

We **discourage** the following ; crisps, popcorn, fizzy drinks, ,any type of hot deli foods, sweets, chocolate products i.e. chocolate spread , cereal bars (research has shown that many cereal bars contain high levels of sugar, fat and calories, therefore they are not always a healthier option). We have a ban on nuts in some classes due to specific nut allergies. Parents are informed at the beginning of the school year of these allergies.

## 7. Notes

- The dispersal of birthday cake/treats is not encouraged.
- Teachers sometimes give sweets/ lollies as a reward /prize .
- Our school usually has a party on the day of the Christmas and Summer holidays and the children are permitted to bring in one treat as part of their lunch.

As part of our Green schools Programme it is important that packaging of school lunches be kept to a minimum. We encourage the use of plastic bottles which can be refilled and reusable sandwich bags are a good alternative to tinfoil and cling film.

Our school has taken part in the Food Dudes Programme to promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables in school three times in the past five years. Food Dudes boxes for bringing in fruit and vegetables have been distributed throughout the school and teachers monitor how much fruit and vegetables are being brought into school as part of a healthy lunch on a regular basis. Food dudes water bottles have also been distributed to encourage the children to bring water to school in reusable bottles.

The teaching staff will be monitoring the above to ensure the policy is followed by all children and parents. Unsuitable food will be sent home in your child's school bag. Help us to encourage your child to develop a healthy and positive attitude towards food.



## 8. Success Criteria

- We receive positive feedback from parents in relation to our healthy eating policy.
- We receive positive feedback from staff in relation to healthy eating choices made by children.
- That all children become aware and improve their food choices to lead a healthier lifestyle.

## 9. Ratification and Communication

The policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on the 5th April 2022 and will be reviewed again in three years, or sooner if required. It will be appropriately communicated to members of the school community and made available on our school's website.

**Signed and dated:**

	
Mr. Noel Curtin	Mr. Cian Kearins
<b>Chairperson of the Board of Management</b>	<b>Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management</b>
Date: 05-04-2022	Date: 05-04-2022