



Healthy Eating Policy

St. Ultan's Special School

Roll Number:19216E

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 Irish and 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 becoming over weight/obese and 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 have given them a good start to life, and hopefully started some good habits, which will be with them into adulthood.

This policy has been drafted to encourage healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. We believe that the success of this policy depends on the level of co-operation between parents, schools, health professionals and the wider community.

The staff of St. Ultan's Special School, welcome our revised Healthy Eating Policy. The whole school has always had a huge interest in the health and activity levels of our children. Having been an 'Active School' and a 'Healthy Eating School' for years we are eager to renew our commitment to the implementation of this policy in our school. We look forward to the continued participation and co-operation of all staff members, pupils and parents and we have no doubt it will greatly benefit the entire school community.

Habits of a lifetime are established from a young age and, in so far as health in later life is concerned, children are the ideal group to work with in developing a better outlook to health through diet and lifestyle. Accordingly, in St. Ultan's Special School through our implementation of the Social, Personal and Health Education programme, we assist our pupils in the formation of positive and responsible attitudes to eating and we help them to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health.

We wish to thank most sincerely all those who have participated and contributed enthusiastically and positively to the development of this Healthy Eating Policy

St. Ultan's S.S. Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the subject Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), St. Ultan's Special School encourages the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

A good diet, plenty of sleep, fresh air and exercise are essential to a growing child. It is recommended that children are physically active for at least 60 minutes a day and should have less than 2 hours screen time per day. What people eat is known to be a key factor influencing health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance (e.g. a low sugar intake promotes concentration leading to a better quality of work in school, it lessens hyperactivity and protects teeth). Allow plenty of time in the morning for your child to eat a healthy breakfast. Eating habits started in childhood will influence your child's chances of a healthy life. A good variety of nourishing foods is important from the start to ensure a healthy growing child.

Aims:

- 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.

Objectives:

- To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing, developing and staying healthy.
- To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre (roughage).

We ask you to ensure a healthy lunch right from the start. When making your child's lunch please think 'whole healthy nutritious food'.

The below table is a guide designed to help you provide quick, appetising and nutritious lunches for your children.

<p>Bread & Alternatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread or rolls (preferably wholemeal) • Rice salad (preferably wholegrain) • Pasta salad (preferably wholegrain) • Tortilla wrap (preferably wholemeal) • Wholemeal scones • Pitta bread (preferably wholemeal) • Porridge Bread 	<p>Savouries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lean meat • Chicken / Turkey • Tinned fish e.g. tuna, sardines, salmon • Cheese • Quiche • Healthy pitta pizzas 		
<p>Fruit & Vegetables</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apples • Bananas • Peaches • Mandarins • Orange segments • Fresh Fruit salad • Carrot sticks </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plums • Stewed fruit • Pineapple cubes • Grapes • Cucumber • Sweetcorn • Sugar snap peas </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apples • Bananas • Peaches • Mandarins • Orange segments • Fresh Fruit salad • Carrot sticks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plums • Stewed fruit • Pineapple cubes • Grapes • Cucumber • Sweetcorn • Sugar snap peas 	<p>Drinks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Milk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apples • Bananas • Peaches • Mandarins • Orange segments • Fresh Fruit salad • Carrot sticks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plums • Stewed fruit • Pineapple cubes • Grapes • Cucumber • Sweetcorn • Sugar snap peas 		

The following foods are NOT permitted:

Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives including the following:

- Sweets, bars, chocolate, biscuits etc.

- Chewing gum

- Breakfast or cereal bars

- Fruit winders

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks) or popcorn

- Birthday treats for themselves and fellow classmates

- Chocolate Spread

The following drinks are NOT permitted:

- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices etc)

- Drinks in glass bottles

- Hot drinks, e.g. tea, coffee and hot chocolate.

- Diluted cordial drinks and juices

**** On special occasions the school will decide when a treat is allowed. ****

Food Pyramid:

A very simple approach to healthy eating is to use the guidelines in the new Food Pyramid.

The Food Pyramid

For adults, teenagers and children aged five and over



*Daily Servings Guide – wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice

Active	Daily Servings Guide				Inactive	Daily Servings Guide		
	Child (5-12)	Teenager (13-18)	Adult (19-24)	Adult (25+)		Teenager (13-18)	Adult (19-24)	Adult (25+)
↑	3-4	4	4-5	3-4	3	3-4	3	
↓	3-5	5-7	5-7	4-5	4-5	4-6	4	

There is no guideline for inactive children as it is essential that all children are active.
Source: Department of Health, December 2016.

Drink at least 8 cups of fluid a day – water is best

Get Active!
To maintain a healthy weight adults need at least 30 minutes a day of moderate activity on 5 days a week (or 150 minutes a week); children need to be active at a moderate to vigorous level for at least 60 minutes every day

Green Flag School:

St. Ultan's is part of the Green Schools' Programme, with this in mind we are asking children and families to work with us to ensure we keep our Green flags.

- As part of the Green Schools' Programme it is important that packaging of school lunches is kept to a minimum. Children can cut down on the amount of packaging they use by refilling drink bottles and reducing use of tin foil and cling film. Lunch boxes and reusable sandwich bags are good alternatives to foil and cling film.
- All waste and uneaten food should be returned home in children's lunch boxes.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____

May 2021

Signed: Patrick McCreanor

Date: 09/06/21

Patrick McCreanor Chairperson

These 'Healthy Eating' Guidelines reflect the needs of the St. Ultan's Special School whole School Community - staff, parents and children.