HEALTHY EATING POLICY

St. Patrick's Boys' N.S.
Dublin Road, Limerick Roll no: 16443A

Introductory statement

Eating habits throughout life are established at a young age. Therefore, learning to choose and enjoy different foods in childhood provides the foundation for healthy food choices in adulthood. Recent research and media reports have highlighted disturbing trends including an increase in both childhood obesity and levels of physical inactivity.

Research also suggests that the provision of a nutritious lunch enhances your child's health while also helping him in his learning by improving concentration.

This policy is based on Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Primary Schools and Healthy Lunchboxes Guidelines by Safefood. It was designed by the staff, parents, pupils and management of St. Patrick's Boys' National School.

This policy is linked to

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

Aims/Objectives

- To help children improve concentration, learning and energy levels.
- To encourage and promote the importance of a balanced diet.
- To support parents and children to make healthy and enjoyable decisions around food.
- To develop nutritional awareness i.e. ingredients in foods.
- To support the school's environmental policy – reusable containers, minimise wrappers.

Healthy Eating Guidelines

Hot school lunches

Under the DEIS school meals scheme, children are offered the option of a hot lunch every day they are in school. Food providers, Gourmet Kids, operate the scheme on behalf of the school. A varied and nutritious menu is offered to parents. Parents select their choices online via their app. Parents have total autonomy on what they order for their children.

All of the products that are on the Gourmet Kids menu, are built to meet the Healthy Ireland - 'Nutrition for School Meals' guidelines which have been devised by the Department of Health's

Working Group. These guidelines were created with the help of safefood and the Healthy Eating Living Programme from the Health Service Executive.

Other food permitted/not permitted in the school.

Food permitted	Food/ Drinks not permitted
o Scone **o** Pitta bread **o** Cream Crackers **o** Rice cakes **o** Pasta **o** Cheese(strings) **o** Sandwiches (Brown Bread preferably) with fillings such as: -Cheese -Ham -Tuna -Chicken -Salad -Egg o Wraps **o** Fresh fruit **o** Raw vegetables **o** Yoghurt (no chocolate) **o** Dried fruit -Raisins -Apricots **o** Drinks -Water -Milk -Unsweetened Fruit Juice -Smoothies -Yoghurt drinks -Soup (3rd – 6th) o Noodles o Liga o Unsweetened jam o Sugar free jelly o Yoghurt (size suitable to child)	o **-Chocolate spread sandwiches** **-Cereal-bars (every kind)** -Biscuits -Sweets -Cakes -Buns -Fizzy drinks -Winders -Jelly -Desserts -Energy drinks (high caffeine content) o -Crisps -Sausage rolls -Rashers -Crisps
Food not permitted for Health and Safety reasons	

o Chewing Gum	

- Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school.
- School staff will provide positive modelling and supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.
- All classes will receive a minimum of 2 lessons on healthy eating.
- A healthy lunchbox includes a piece of food from the first four shelves of the food pyramid (Appendix 1).
- Food with packaging should be kept to a minimum, with pupils bringing their waste home to recycle when possible.
- One proven method of reducing packaging is to use plastic reusable bottles for drinks.

Exceptions

- On limited occasions during the year, teachers may provide a treat for individuals or the whole class. e.g. end of term

Promotion of Policy

- Parents, staff and pupils will promote the policy throughout the school week.

Links

- http://www.safefood.eu/Home.aspx
- http://www.healthpromotion.ie/hp-files/docs/HPM00796.pdf

Review

The policy will be reviewed every three years. All the stakeholders will be involved in the review.

Ratification:

This reviewed policy was ratified by the Board of Management on

08/05/2024. The policy will be effective from the beginning of the

2024/2025 school year.

Signed: Signed

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

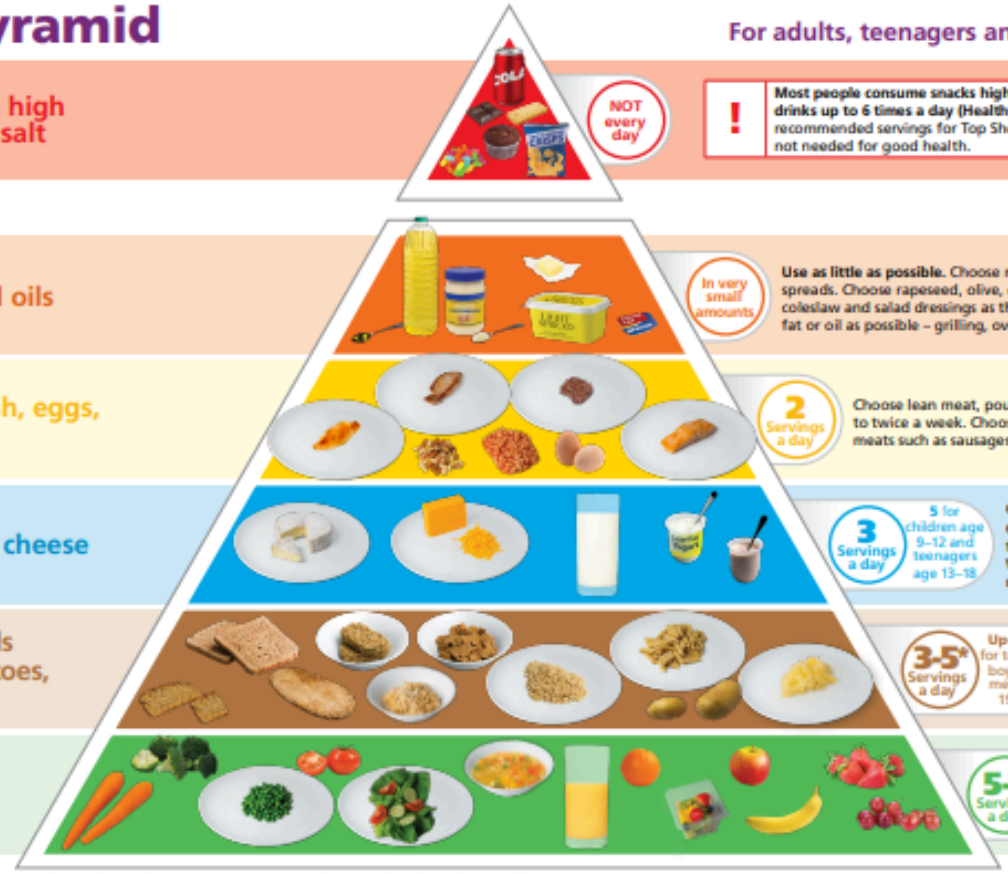
Date: 08/05/2024

Healthy Food for Life

www.healthyireland.ie

The Food Pyramid

For adults, teenagers and children aged five and over



Foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt (Not needed for good health.)

NOT every day

Most people consume snacks high in fat, sugar and salt and sugar sweetened drinks up to 6 times a day (Healthy Ireland Survey 2016). There are no recommended servings for Top Shelf foods and drinks because they are not needed for good health.

Needed for good health. Enjoy a variety every day.

Fats, spreads and oils

In very small amounts

Use as little as possible. Choose mono or polyunsaturated reduced-fat or light spreads. Choose rapeseed, olive, canola, sunflower or corn oils. Limit mayonnaise, coleslaw and salad dressings as they also contain oil. Always cook with as little fat or oil as possible – grilling, oven-baking, steaming, boiling or stir-frying.

Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts

2 Servings a day

Choose lean meat, poultry (without skin) and fish. Eat oily fish up to twice a week. Choose eggs, beans and nuts. Limit processed salty meats such as sausages, bacon and ham.

Milk, yogurt and cheese

3 Servings a day

5 for children age 9–12 and teenagers age 13–18

Choose reduced-fat or low-fat varieties. Choose low-fat milk and yogurt more often than cheese. Enjoy cheese in small amounts. Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding need 3 servings a day.

Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice

3-5* Servings a day

Up to 7* for teenage boys and men age 19–50

Wholemeal and wholegrain cereals are best. Enjoy at each meal. The number of servings depends on age, size, if you are a man or a woman and on activity levels. Watch your serving size and use the Daily Servings Guide below.*

Vegetables, salad and fruit

5-7 Servings a day

Base your meals on these and enjoy a variety of colours. More is better. Limit fruit juice to unsweetened, once a day.

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

Active	Child (5–12)	Teenager (13–18)	Adult (19–50)	Adult (51+)	Inactive	Teenager (13–18)	Adult (19–50)	Adult (51+)
♀	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.

Average daily calorie needs for all foods and drinks for adults

♀ **Active** 2000kcal **Inactive** 1800kcal ♂ **Active** 2500kcal **Inactive** 2000kcal

Serving size guide

Cereals, cooked rice and pasta, and vegetables, salad and fruit Use a 200ml disposable plastic cup to guide serving size.

Cheese Use two thumbs, width and depth to guide serving size.

Meat, poultry, fish The palm of the hand, width and depth without fingers and thumbs, shows how much you need in a day.

Reduced-fat spread Portion packs found in cafes can guide the amount you use. One pack should be enough for two slices of bread.

Oils Use one teaspoon of oil per person when cooking or in salads.

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.

Source: Department of Health. December 2016.