

## Healthy Eating Policy

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

A good diet and 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 also 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.

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'.

**Please remember that nuts, or nut products, are not allowed in the school.**

The lists below have ideas to help you provide quick, appetising and nutritious lunches for your children. Biscuits, sweets, crisps, popcorn, treats, cereal bars, Winders and lollipops are not permitted in school. Raisins are not recommended because they lodge in the children's teeth and can lead to decay. A healthy lunch should contain bread (or an alternative), a protein /savoury filling, water, fruit and/or vegetables. Make sure that the food is easy for your child to eat in the allotted time.

### **Bread & Alternatives**

- 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

### **Savoury fillings**

- Lean meat
- Tinned fish e.g. tuna, sardines, salmon
- Cheese
- Quiche
- Eggs

## Fruit & Vegetables

- Apples (consider quarters or slices for younger children)
- Bananas / Grapes
- Mandarins / Orange segments
- Peaches / Plums
- Carrot sticks / Cucumber sticks / Sugar snap peas
- Strawberries / Raspberries

## Drinks

- Water
- Milk
- Low sugar content yoghurts or yoghurt drinks are allowed, **(except in Junior Infants)** but please ensure that your child is able to store, open and eat yoghurts carefully and properly.
- Soup - stored in a flask for children in 5th and 6th Class only.

## Please do not send in

- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water)
- Juice
- Drinks in glass bottles
- Hot drinks
- Diluted cordial drinks and juices

**\*\* On special occasions your child's teacher will tell you if a treat is allowed!\*\***

## Food Pyramid:

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



