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Healthy Eating Policy

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 Saint Michael's N.S.:

- Children should be encouraged to eat a healthy breakfast before coming to school. This will help both concentration and energy levels.
- 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.
- Children are NOT allowed to share their lunches with their friends.
- In school, we learn about the Food Pyramid and encourage children to consult this when deciding what to eat.
- A healthy lunchbox includes a piece of food from each of the following shelves of the food pyramid.
 - o Meat, poultry, fish, beans
 - o Milk, yogurt, cheese
 - o Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice.
 - o Vegetables, salad and fruit.



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Saint Michael's National School, 11, Barrington Street, Limerick V94 A0K7

- Any food from the top shelf of the pyramid is actively discouraged during school hours.
- Crisps, salted or flavoured popcorn, sweets and chewing gum are not permitted.
- To assist parents with making healthy lunches for their children we have provided a list of healthy lunch ideas. (See Appendix 1)

Drinks:

- Children are allowed to drink water (plain and unflavoured fizzy water) and milk during the school day.
- Water may be flavoured with some lemon, lime or cucumber.
- Flavoured fizzy water, energy drinks and other fizzy drinks are not allowed.

Exemptions:

- While teachers usually give stickers, no homework, extra play time, extra iPad time and extra PE time as a reward, they may continue to occasionally give children a sweet treat on occasions in recognition of work done, improvements in work or behaviour and at end of term class parties.

Allergies:

- In Saint Michael's N.S there are children who are allergic to certain foods. For this reason and following consultation with parents of the child with allergies, we may at times ask that lunches do not contain certain allergens. In situations where this arises, the class teacher will work with all parents to ensure the classroom is a safe environment for those with allergies.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Role of Parents:

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children.
- Encourage healthy eating.
- Inform the school in writing of a child's special dietary needs e.g. allergies.
- To implement school policy by not allowing their children to bring sweets, chocolate, biscuits, chewing gum, nuts or fizzy/energy drinks to school.

Role of Children:

- To eat their lunch.
- To bring home any uneaten lunch.
- Not to bring chewing gum, sweets, chocolate, biscuits, 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 at assembly about healthy eating at the start of each school year.
- Inviting outside speakers to talk to the children/parents about a balanced diet, where possible.
- To remind children throughout the year of our healthy eating policy and to request that any treats brought in lunch boxes are kept for home.
- Promoting healthy eating through SPHE.
- Displaying healthy eating posters eg. Food/Exercise Pyramid.

Formulation:

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

Implementation:

This policy will be implemented at the start of term three 2022 and reviewed as needed.

Signature:  (Chairperson)
Date: 29th MARCH 2022

Appendix 1: 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
- 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
- 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
- Hummus sandwich + Banana + water

Mix-and-Match Strategy: Kid-Friendly Mediterranean

Just buy.....

- Plain Greek yoghurt
- Mozzarella balls
- Mini-whole wheat pita pockets
- Tomatoes
- Cucumber
- Canned tuna

Then make...

- Monday: Tuna Pockets
 - Mix ¼ 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 ½ cup yogurt, 2 Tbs. chopped cucumber, and dill; pack in a container for dipping.
- Wednesday: Stuffed Tomatoes and Grilled Cheese

- o Hollow out a few small tomatoes. Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ 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
 - o Thread cucumbers, mozzarella balls, and tomatoes on three 6-inch skewers. Cut off the pointy end.
- Friday: Repeat a lunch