

Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at St Joseph's we encourage the children to become more aware of the need and benefits of having healthy food in their lunch boxes. From the start of the 2025/2026 academic year, we will be availing of the hot meals scheme initiated by the Government.

Aims

1. To promote the personal development and well-being of the child.
2. To promote healthy eating across school life.

Objectives

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

What people eat is known to be a key factor in influencing health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance (e.g. a low sugar intake promotes concentration, lessens hyperactivity, protects teeth). It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that children have a healthy lunch at school daily.

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. In addition, **we cannot stress enough the importance of the children getting a good breakfast each morning before they come to school**

We at St. Joseph’s BNS encourage you to use the following table when making a lunch for your child. This table is designed to help you provide quick, appetising and nutritious lunches for your children.

<p>Bread & Alternatives</p> <p>Bread or rolls, preferably wholemeal Rice – wholegrain Pasta – wholegrain Potato salad Wholemeal scones Bread sticks Crackers Pitta bread Wraps Rice cakes</p>	<p>Savouries</p> <p>Lean meat Chicken/ turkey Tinned fish Cheese Vegetarian sausage Beans chickpeas</p>
<p>Fruit & Vegetables</p> <p>Fruit & Berries Seedless grapes cut Cucumber, Sweetcorn Tomato, Coleslaw. Seeds (Sunflowers, pumpkin, sesame etc.)</p>	<p>Drinks</p> <p>Water Milk</p>

We ask that the following are NOT brought to school:

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

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)
- Sugary drinks (including fizzy, energy drinks and fruit juices.)
- Nutella and other chocolate spreads.
- Sweets
- Biscuits
- Chocolate
- Cereal bars
- Chewing gum
- Popcorn
- Lollipops
- Fast food
- Pastries

If such foods are brought to school, children will be asked to bring them home in their lunchboxes and no further sanction will be imposed.

Exceptions to the above list:

- Class treats/school treats
- School trips
- Special health considerations/conditions

A very simple approach to healthy eating is to use the Food Pyramid:



Understanding the food pyramid















For more information on healthy eating www.safefood.eu



5-day lunchbox planner

We often end up putting the same things in the lunchbox everyday. Keeping lunchbox contents varied makes lunch more enjoyable. The following planner shows you some examples of snacks and lunch items.

Monday								
1 medium wholemeal bread roll with tomato and cheese	+		+	Handful of carrot sticks	+	Pot of low-fat yoghurt	+	
Tuesday								
Small pitta bread with tuna and sweetcorn	+		+	½ wholemeal scone	+		+	
Wednesday								
2 tablespoons of pasta with 1 tablespoon of tomatoes and vegetables	+		+	2 crackers with low-fat cheddar cheese	+		+	
Thursday								
2 slices of wholemeal bread with cooked ham and lettuce	+	Slices of pepper, cucumber, sugar snap peas or mangetout	+		+	Yoghurt	+	
Friday								
Tortilla wrap with chicken, sliced peppers and lettuce	+		+	Small tub of stewed fruit	+	6 cherry tomatoes	+	

Remember:

1. Use low-fat spread, low-fat mayonnaise or relish instead of full-fat options
2. Smaller portions for smaller children

Packing the lunchbox

To save time, please ensure all food is well prepared (e.g. fruit peeled and chopped if necessary and sandwiches cut). Parents should ensure that lunchboxes contain whatever utensils are required.

Packaging

As we are trying to reduce the amount of waste, as promoted by the Green School Committee, parents are encouraged to reduce the amount of packaging in their child's lunchbox. All wrappings,

fruit peelings, silver paper, containers, cartons and uneaten food will be sent home in your child's lunchbox.

Treat Day

Friday will be our treat day. The children are encouraged to eat the treat **AFTER** their lunch is eaten at 12.40pm. On this day, children can, if they wish to, bring ONE of the following:

- Treat/ fun sized bar
- Treat/ fun size bag of sweets
- Small biscuit/ small cereal bar /crisps/pastries

Birthdays

St Joseph's asks parents/guardians not to send in cakes/sweets etc. with their child for the class. We acknowledge that this is a lovely gesture, but we are mindful that it creates a precedent.

Allergies

Children are encouraged not to share lunches as we may have a number of pupils with food allergies. In certain circumstances parents will be informed that their child's class may become "An allergy free-zone" for health and safety reasons.

N.B. Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school.

Promotion of Healthy Eating

We encourage your support in implementing this policy and realise the success of a Healthy Eating Policy largely depends on the willingness of parents/guardians to support it.

Generally, the children will abide by our Healthy Eating Policy especially when they see the health benefits.

Together we can have a happier and healthier school population when we work together for the benefits of the children.

Plan ratified on _____ 2025