

St. Peter Apostle Junior National School



Healthy Eating Policy

Policy Summary Details

Policy Title:	Healthy Eating Policy
Written/Reviewed:	October 2021
Ratified by the BOM	

Introduction

The staff in St. Peter Apostle JNS are committed to enhancing to the best of their abilities, the overall well-being of the pupil in our school. In this document we set out our healthy eating policy which serves to assist use reaching such goals. We outline how the school supports healthy eating practices through the promotion of healthy lunches and healthy snacks and by other means.

1. Vision and mission statement

We in St. Peter Apostle Junior school believe in the potential of each child. As a staff we seek to ensure that all children in our care have equality of opportunity to derive positive outcomes from their educational experience. In doing so, we endeavour to create a safe, happy, respectful, and inclusive learning environment, where the diverse needs of all different types of learners are catered for. It is envisioned that by providing an all-inclusive approach to education that the children in our school shall reach their academic potential whilst developing the confidence and courage to be fair, kind, moral, tolerant and respectful when acting in the world.

We strive to realise vision by seeking to:

- Craft a caring, supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment in which children's social, emotional, spiritual and intellectual development is catered for,
- Develop children's interests, talents and hobbies by providing a wide range of learning experiences,
- Harness the collective talents of all staff to ensure that all children, irrespective of their medical status and/or special educational needs feel cherished and thrive in in dynamic educational settings,
- Provide tailored learning experiences for children who present with special educational needs (gifted or otherwise) by meeting children where they are at and building upon their strengths,
- Collaborate with colleagues and outside agencies to ensure focused and effective supports are in place to advance the social, emotional, and cognitive development of all the children in our care,
- Build strong and collaborative relationships with parents with a view to fine tuning and augmenting the supports that children receive in both the home and school,
- Promote a culture of inclusivity by ensuring that children across the school settings integrate as appropriate during tuition time, yard breaks and school events,
- Create an environment where all have freedom and opportunity to reach their full potential.

2 Linkage of the healthy eating policy to the vision for the school

We see St Peter Apostle Junior National school as a place where pupils can flourish and thrive. Key to realising such goals is acting to enhance the physical well-being of the children in our school community. We therefore see a healthy diet as playing a key role in providing the nutrition and fuel that children need to grow and learn every day.

3 Aims of the policy

Through the implementation of this policy we seek as far as possible to:

- Promote a whole school approach to healthy eating and nutrition
- Understand the benefit of a healthy well-balanced diet

- Develop an awareness that good eating habits formed in early childhood influence health and wellbeing throughout our lives
- Develop awareness of the importance of food for growth and development

4 Breakfast

A nourishing breakfast is the best start to your child's day giving him/her the energy needed to concentrate and learn. Research has shown that children benefit both nutritionally and behaviourally by eating breakfast.

Parents can choose to avail of one of two options for school lunches. These options are detailed below.

5 Option 1: The “School meals” option

5.1 Hot meals

The children in St. Peter Apostle Junior National School can avail of the free hot meals programme. We encourage all families to avail of this. Glanmore is the provider of these meals and offer diverse, healthy menus with excellent choice for all pupils. Parents can pick a different hot meal from a menu, along with snacks for their child every day. All meals are designed to fall within recommended nutritional guidelines.

5.2 Examples of hot meals in the school meals option are:

- Meatballs
- Curry
- Lasagne
- Fishfingers, beans and mash
- Roast beef and mash
- Vegetarian options

5.3 Examples of snacks in the school meals option are:

- Jacobs Cream Crackers
- Soft cheese
- Fruit cups
- Apple slices
- Pineapple chunks
- Brown pancake
- Breadsticks
- Peppers
- Carrot sticks
- Yoghurt
- Plain rice cakes (not sugar/chocolate coated)
- Yoghurt rice cake

5.4 Drinks

- Filtered water is available to all children- please provide a reusable bottle for your child to drink from

6 Option 2 “Bring your own lunch” option

As we offer hot meals, we cannot provide cold lunch options to families. Parents who do not wish to avail of the hot meals may send in a **healthy** lunch along with **healthy** snacks for their child each day. Below we provide suggestions of what is considered healthy by the school:

6.1 Suggestions for your child’s school lunch:

- Breads – whole-grain breads, rolls, bagels, wraps, soda bread or pitta • Bread substitutes – oatcakes, plain rice cakes, pancakes or crackers
- Fillings – cheese, tuna, hummus, cold meats, pate, egg (please check that there is no egg allergy in the class), lettuce, spinach, cucumber, tomato, onion, peppers, coleslaw, salad, or banana

6.2 Suggestions for healthy snacks

- Fruit – apple, oranges, banana, grapes, pear, plum, peach, apricots, melon, grapefruit, pineapple, strawberries, raspberries, mango, blackberries or blueberries. Remember to peel and/or cut fruit and vegetables into bite-sized pieces for younger children.
- Raw vegetables – tomatoes, sweet corn, peppers, carrot sticks, celery sticks, broccoli, cabbage or cucumber
- Crackers and soft cheese
- Pancakes
- Rice cakes (not coated in icing/chocolate etc)
- Yoghurt
- Yoghurt rice cake

6.3 Drinks

Filtered water is available to all children- please provide a reusable bottle for your child to drink from

7 Food items not permitted in the school

The following food items are considered unhealthy. Additionally, allowing such foods is seen as unfair to the children to have healthy lunches. If any of the following items manage to find their way into school, they shall be sent home again that evening.

- Unhealthy deli foods – popcorn chicken, sausages, wedges etc.
- Egg if there is an egg allergy in the class – check with your child’s teacher
- Nuts (including peanut butter)
- Fizzy drinks, sports drinks, drinks/juices with high sugar content/flavoured water
- Chewing gum
- Chocolate (including chocolate spread)
- Sweets & winders
- Crisps & popcorn
- Biscuits/cakes/muffins/traybakes (including homemade)
- Cereal Bars as they can be high in sugar

Parents must choose to avail of either the school meals or the bring your own lunch option. You cannot avail of the two at the same time, as this would incur great waste. Please let school staff know which option you are availing of or if you plan to change the option you are availing of.

8 Special treats

On specific days during the school year the children will be permitted special treats:

- End of term parties
- School Trips
- As part of rewards systems in the school

9 Birthdays

While we understand that birthdays are a very exciting time in every child's life, we do not permit Birthday cakes to be sent in for the class to share. The main reason why we say no is because there is no accounting for the ingredients in a Birthday cake and the allergies that children may have in any given room.

10 Success criteria

- Awareness by the pupils of what constitutes as healthy foods.
- The practice of healthy eating

11 Roles and Responsibility

- We encourage all families to avail of the school meals option.
- Parents who avail of the "bring your own lunch option" are responsible for providing a healthy school lunch for their child(ren).
- Teachers will explicitly teach about healthy eating as part of the SPHE curriculum.

10 Timetable for Review

Every two years, or before then if circumstances dictate.

11 Ratified by the BOM

Vivion Powney
(Chairperson)

Date:

Laura Hannon
(Principal)

Date:

