

Our Lady of Victories Infant School

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Our Lady of Victories Infant School Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at *Our Lady of Victories Infant School* we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes. Nutrition and Healthy eating will be included as part of the school curriculum.

What people eat is 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, lessens hyperactivity, protects teeth, and lessens the risk of diabetes. A low salt intake reduces the risk of heart disease in later life).

Aims

1. To promote the personal development and well-being of the child
2. To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.

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.

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).

The traditional packed lunch of milk and sandwiches is under attack from a range of convenience foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, chocolate and soft drinks. Parents and teachers are concerned about this trend but some find it difficult to come up with popular healthy alternatives. We ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start.

'Healthy Eating Awareness Days' will be held each term as an incentive to encourage healthy eating at school and at home.

The following guide is designed to help you provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for your children

Bread & Alternatives- preferable wholegrain

Pasta
Potato Salad
Wholemeal Scones
Bread sticks
Crackers
Pitta bread
Savouries
Lean Meats
Chicken/Turkey
Tinned Fish (Tuna)
Potato Salad
Quiche
Hummus

Fruit & Vegetables-Ideas:-

Apples, Banana, Peaches, Berries,
Mandarins, Orange Segments, Fruit Salad,
Dried Fruits, Plum, Pineapple cubes,
Grapes, Cucumber, Sweetcorn, Tomato, Coleslaw, carrot /celery/cucumber sticks

Drinks

Water (filtered water is provided in each class)
Milk
Unsweetened Juices
Water (filtered water is provided in each class)
Non dessert Yoghurt drinks

A word about Milk

All students are encouraged to avail of the free School Milk Scheme. Growing children should get approximately one pint of milk a day, or its equivalent as cheese, yoghurt or milk pudding. This ensures that they get enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth. If a child does not drink a glass of milk at lunch, encourage him to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead.

We ask that children do not bring the following to school:

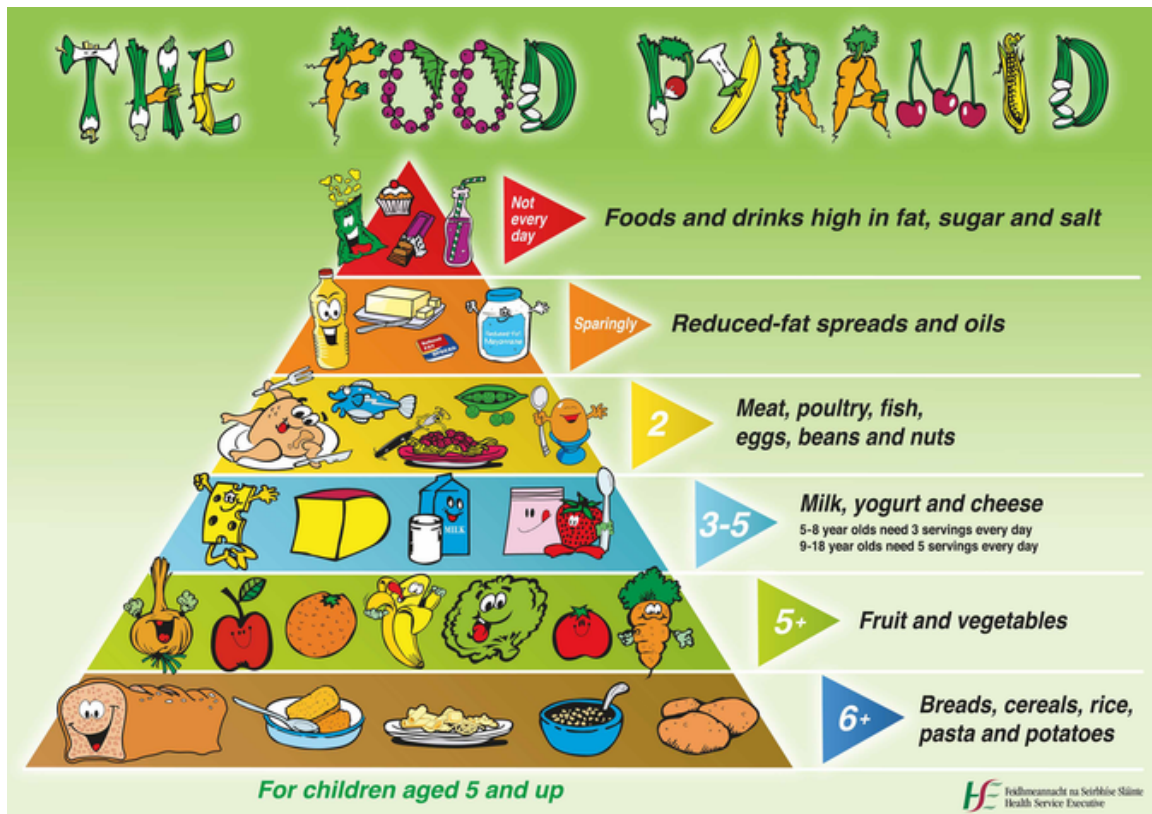
Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including the following:

- **Strictly NO NUTS (due to nut allergies in school)**
- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc)
- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)
- Sweets
- Chocolate biscuits/bars/spreads
- Chewing gum
- Sugar based Juice/Energy drinks

- Popcorn
- Foods with a wrapper are to be kept to a minimum to help reduce litter and protect our school environment

These rules apply to every child equally; if a child brings any of the above mentioned foods to school they will be asked to bring them home in their lunch boxes.

A very simple approach to healthy eating is to use the Food Pyramid. A healthy lunch box should include at least one of each of the bottom four groups.



Treat Day

On the days we close for holidays e.g. Christmas, Easter and summer and on school tours in summer term children are allowed to bring 1 small treat e.g. a small chocolate bar. This treat excludes nut based treats.

School Meals

Since September 2013 the school has taken part in the School Meals scheme. Children receive a menu with options such as those listed above. Parents fill in the menu with the children and return it to the school which forwards it to the company which provides the school lunches (Glanmore Foods is the present provider). Menus can be changed during the year (Gwen will share code). **Please note that uneaten lunches are returned home so that parents/guardians can monitor their child's food intake and also to reduce school waste.**

Green Flag School

We are a "Green School"

With this in mind, children are asked to:

- take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food (this also allows parents to know what and how much food their children are eating), paper wrappings, containers and cartons
- not bring in cans and glass – for safety reasons.

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

Birthday Celebrations

In recent years the number of requests from parents to celebrate their children's birthdays during the school day with cake and or other treats has increased. Children's birthdays have always been acknowledged in the school in a number of ways e.g. birthday greeting, singing Happy Birthday, birthday badge etc. This will continue as before.

While it is a nice practice on one level and parents are very generous there are problems around it e.g. danger of food allergies, hygiene, pressure on other parents and significant amount of teaching time lost when there are a number of celebrations in a class during the year.

Following discussion and consultation the Board of Management has decided that birthday cake and other treats will not be shared out in school time. *It has been further decided that birthday cards and birthday invitations will not be distributed in class. Where parents wish to invite children to parties this must be done before or after school, not in class. Teachers will not be involved.*

This policy was reviewed and amended on November 2nd, 2021 and is annually reviewed for the first board meeting.

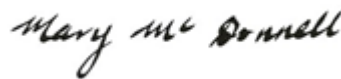
Reviewed with no amendments on 15th October 2024.

Chairperson Signature:



15th October 2024

Principal signature:



15th October 2024