



Greystones Community National School
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GCNS Healthy Eating Policy

Introduction:

This policy was drafted by the school principal in consultation with the Board of Management and teachers at Greystones CNS. This policy is to inform children, parents and teachers of the types of food that are allowed/not allowed in Greystones CNS.

Aims:

This aims of this policy are to:

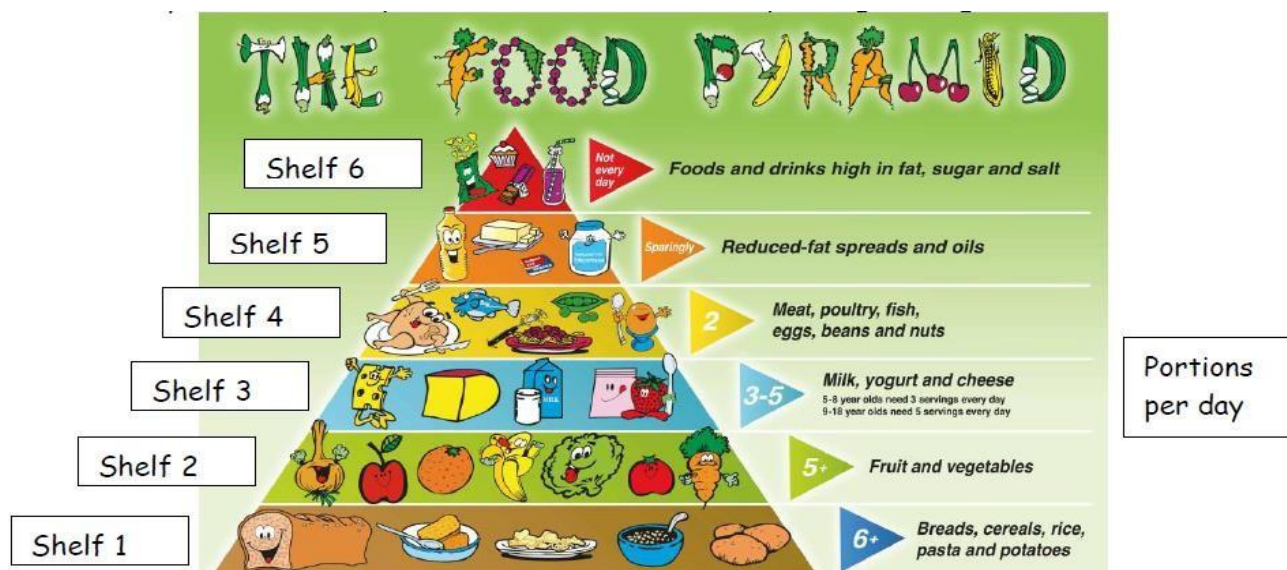
- Promote the personal development and well-being of the child.
- Promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living.
- To encourage children to eat sensibly so that they can derive maximum benefit from the teaching and learning opportunities provided in the course of the school day.
- To safeguard those children who may have serious allergies.

Objectives:

- To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and staying healthy.
- To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.
- To enable parents to make the right choices in helping their children to eat healthily at school.

Apart from the well-known health and dental reasons for healthy lunches, research has shown that poor concentration and hyperactivity in children can be caused by nutritional imbalances. Imbalances in blood sugar levels, caused by eating sweet foods also impair learning and concentration. 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.

The Food Pyramid:



- The food pyramid is a key tool in communicating healthy eating messages.
- It is very important for children's energy and concentration levels that they eat a healthy breakfast before coming to school.
- A healthy lunchbox includes pieces from each of the first four shelves of the food pyramid.
- Bottom shelf carbohydrates (energy) and fruit and vegetables (vitamin/minerals rich) are especially encouraged (to ensure recommended daily portions are met).
- Children will normally have two food breaks during the day and will be given 10 minutes at each break to eat their lunch.
- **Any food from the top shelf of the pyramid is not allowed in school. On Friday only, a fun-sized treat from these types of food may be allowed.**
- Staff will support the healthy eating policy and will not offer sweets to children as rewards or prizes except on special occasions.
- Cakes, buns or treats (sweets or chocolate) for birthdays will not be distributed. Invitations to birthday parties must be distributed outside of school hours and will not be facilitated in the classroom.

PLEASE NOTE: Some foods from the pyramid may not be allowed in school due to severe allergies and possibility of anaphylactic shock.

Resources:

www.safefood.eu

www.healthpromotion.ie/health/healthy_eating

www.enjoyhealthyeating.info/

<http://www.netmums.com/family-food/food-for-kids/lunchbox-ideas>




Foods and drinks not allowed in school:

- **Egg, Nuts and Pulses** are strictly forbidden in Greystones CNS as we have children that have serious allergies to them.
 - Fizzy drinks/sweetened fruit juices/Energy Drinks (Including Prime Drinks or Prime Drink bottles)
 - Sweets (lollipops)
 - Crisps & Popcorn
 - Chocolate bars/biscuits
 - Any chocolate flavoured items
 - Cereal bars
 - Fast food (eg nuggets, pizza)
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- **Chewing gum is strictly forbidden**

If your child comes to school with an item that is not allowed in school, he/she will not be allowed to eat this item and it will be sent home with your child.

Is my Drink Tooth Friendly?

The following is a guide on the best drinks to give your children and when to ensure healthy teeth:

		
Any Time	Only At Mealtimes	Not Tooth Friendly
Water Milk	Unsweetened fruit juice Diluted sugar-free squash Flavoured milk Yoghurt or milk drinks smoothies	Sweetened Fruit juice Fizzy drinks(including diet versions)

Why children should drink milk in school:






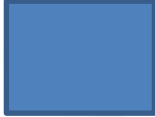




Growing children should get approximately one pint of milk a day, or its equivalent as cheese, yoghurt or other dairy products. This ensures that they get enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth. If a child does not drink milk at lunchtime, please encourage him/her to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead. (yoghurts will be allowed after the October mid-term for Junior Infants)

Milk is a rich source of protein, calcium, vitamins and minerals.

What could I give my child to eat for lunch?

The following guide is designed to help provide quick, appetising and nutritious lunches for children. They are suggestions and the list is by no means exhaustive. If any parent has any good ideas they would like to share, we are always willing to take new ideas on board.

Sample 5 day lunchbox planner from Safefood– Healthy Lunchboxes

MONDAY								
1 medium bread roll with chicken and lettuce	+		+	Handful of carrot sticks	+	Pot of low fat yoghurt	+	
TUESDAY								
Small pitta bread with tuna and sweetcorn	+		+	½ wholemeal scone	+		+	Carton of milk
WEDNESDAY								
2 tablespoons of cous-cous with 1 tablespoon of dried fruit	+		+	2 crackers with low fat cheddar cheese	+		+	Carton of unsweetened fruit juice
THURSDAY								
2 slices of bread with cooked ham and lettuce	+	Small container of fruit in its own juice	+		+	Yoghurt	+	
FRIDAY								
Tortilla wrap with chicken, sliced peppers and lettuce	+		+	Small tub of stewed fruit	+	Small slice of fruit cake	+	

Below is a list of possible foods you could pack for your child's lunch. This list is not exhaustive and only mentions samples of appropriate foods for the lunchbox.

Bread and Alternatives:	Fruit and Vegetables:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread or rolls (preferably wholemeal) • Pitta bread • Wraps • Crackers • Rice Salad • Pasta Salad • Wholemeal scones • Rice cakes (no chocolate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apples, banana, peach • Mandarins, oranges • Carrot sticks • Cucumbers • Melon slices • Pineapple cubes • Grapes • Sweetcorn • Tomato
Savouries:	Drinks:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lean meat • Chicken/ Turkey • Tinned fish – tuna etc. • Cheese • Quiche • Olives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk • Water • Fruit juices (un-sweetened) • Diluted sugar free squash • Yoghurt drinks • Flask of soup

Other Tips and Hints:

- Keep lunches in fridge if prepared the night before.
- Use a small insulated cool bag, especially in warmer weather.
- Cut sandwiches into small manageable pieces, especially for infants.
- **Peel fruit for younger children.**
- Avoid foods that children cannot eat without help.
- Make lunches as varied as possible. Children love comparing their lunches and talking about them so please make sure your child is excited about their lunch. **However, please remind your child not to share food with other children at any time due to the serious allergies that exist in our school.**
- Vary the types of bread in sandwiches (wholemeal, granary, high fibre rolls, bagels, pitta and sliced bread).
- If sending your child to school with a yoghurt, include a plastic bag to keep the empty packaging in.
- Encourage your child to bring their rubbish home in their lunchbox as this will inform you of what they have eaten and reduce our waste.

Review and Evaluation:

The success of this policy will be judged on:

- The children bringing healthy lunches to school.
 - The children becoming aware of healthy/unhealthy foods and drinks.
- This policy was ratified by the Board Of Management on 3rd May 2023
- This policy will be reviewed as required.

Signature of Chairperson: _____

Date:

Signature of Principal: _____

Date: