



### Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at *St Vincent's Special School* we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

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).

To promote healthy eating habits in our school, we introduced a healthy eating policy.

#### 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 fiber (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.

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

#### Bread & Alternatives

#### Savories

Bread or rolls, preferably wholemeal

Lean Meat

Rice – wholegrain

Chicken/Turkey

Pasta – wholegrain

Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines

Potato Salad

Cheese

WholemealScones

Quiche

Bread sticksPizza

Crackers



Pitta bread

**Fruit & Vegetables**

Apples, Banana, Peach  
Mandarins, Orange segments,  
Fruit Salad, dried fruit,  
Plum, Pineapple cubes  
Grapes,  
Cucumber, Sweetcorn  
Tomato,  
Coleslaw.

**Drinks**

Milk  
Fruit juices  
Squashes, i.e. low sugar  
Yoghurt

**A word about Milk**

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 encourage 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:

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)
- Fizzy drinks(including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc)
- Sweets
- Chocolate biscuits/bars
- Cereal bars
- Chewing gum
- Fruit winders
- Popcorn

So as to take a proactive approach to healthy lunches, teachers will from time to time, reward children who can show a piece of fruit or other healthy foods in their lunchboxes.

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

Fats	
Sugar Sweets etc.	Sparingly
Meat, Fish	2 portions per day
Peas/Beans	



## St Vincent's Special National School



Milk, Cheese 3+ portions per day

Yoghurt

Fruit & Vegetables 4+ portions per day

Bread, Cereals & Potatoes 6+ portions per day

### **Green Flag School**

Our green school motto is:

**'GET GREEN, KEEP GREEN, MAKE IT INTO A REGULAR ROUTINE!'**

With this in mind, children are also asked to:

- Take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons
- Put only fruit peel into the compost bins
- 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.**

### **Ratification, Communication and Review:**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and communicated to the school community thereafter. This policy will be reviewed in 2 years' time and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.