



Healthy Eating Policy – Infant and Junior

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v2.0	January 2019	Minor changes
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HEALTHY EATING POLICY INFANT & JUNIOR SCHOOLS

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Contents

1 Rationale	2
2 Aims	3
3 Objectives	3
4 The Importance of Nutrition for Children	3
5 Being Healthy	3
6 The Role of Parents and Communication with the School	4
7 Eating Habits	4
8 Returning Lunchboxes	4
9 Availability of Water	4
10 Special Dietary Needs and Food Allergies	4
11 Food Hygiene	5
12 Social Skills	5
13 Themed Days / Special Events	5
14 Birthday Celebrations	5
15 Items That Are Not Allowed in St Christopher’s Snack Boxes	5
16 Appendix A: A Balanced Diet	5
16.1 How to eat a balanced diet	5
16.2 Maintaining a healthy, balanced diet	5
17 Appendix B: The ‘Eatwell Plate’	6



1 Rationale

Healthy eating is essential for good health and contributes to positive wellbeing. Many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society – such as obesity, coronary heart disease and diabetes – are associated with poor nutritional choices.

Nutrition is a significant factor in the growth, development and overall functioning of a child. Good nutrition provides the energy and nutrients essential to sustain life and promotes physical, emotional and cognitive development.

The development of healthy eating practices and physical activity can prevent disease and support a lifetime of good health. Good nutrition is critical to optimising each child's potential for success.

Meeting nutritional requirements throughout childhood is essential to full intellectual development. Research documents tell us that malnutrition impacts on children's behaviour, performance and overall quality of development. Children require sufficient energy and essential nutrients each day to concentrate on learning tasks. Even mild malnutrition and short-term hunger are barriers to learning. Meals and snacks should meet children's nutritional needs, provide models of healthy eating patterns, and help children establish good eating patterns at an early age.

Healthy eating does not mean NO treats but it does mean having them at appropriate times and not too often.

2 Aims

To work in partnership with parents to support children in developing healthy eating practices which will become embedded for life.

3 Objectives

- To provide children with positive healthy eating experiences in order to promote their well being
- To respect the different dietary, cultural, religious and health needs of all our children
- To encourage children to develop positive attitudes towards food through the curriculum and all the other learning opportunities that are provided in the School
- To promote an understanding of a balanced diet in which some foods play a greater role than others
- To develop children's understanding of the importance of the social context in which eating takes place.
- To raise awareness with children, parents and carers in developing a positive approach to food, nutrition and oral education
- To encourage responsibility and accountability of all parents and carers in offering healthy choices to children

4 The Importance of Nutrition for Children

A nutritionally balanced diet is important in childhood to ensure optimum development at a time of rapid growth. A balanced diet in childhood is not only important for growth but for learning and promoting positive habits towards healthy eating. An inadequate or unbalanced nutritional intake may not only affect growth and development in childhood but may also impact on health problems, such as heart disease and obesity in later in life. It is the types and varieties of food eaten at this time that ensure nutrient requirements are met and that



the diet is nutritionally balanced. Children's diet must include an appropriate intake of foods from the four main food groups:

- Bread, other cereals and potatoes
- Fruit and vegetables
- Milk and dairy foods
- Meat, fish and alternatives

5 Being Healthy

We encourage all pupils to:

- Eat breakfast every day
- Eat fruit and vegetables daily
- Choose snacks that will provide nutrients to compliment meals
- Avoid snacks and drinks with a high sugar or salt content between meals
- Drink plenty of fluids to avoid becoming dehydrated
- Be physically active every day
- Brush teeth twice a day and visit your dentist regularly

6 The Role of Parents and Communication with the School

All snacks provided to eat at school should be nutritious, avoiding items high in sugar, salt, saturated fats, additives, preservatives and colourings. Snacks provided in lunchboxes should be fresh, wholesome and balanced. At an age appropriate level, staff monitor children at snacktime and use positive encouragement and peer support to encourage poor eaters to make healthy choices. Feedback is also given to parents if it is ascertained that a child's lunchbox is consistently lacking in healthy items or the child has too much or too little food.

It is the parents' responsibility to provide nutritious snacks in lunchboxes in accordance with this policy. The School will occasionally monitor the content of lunchboxes and communicate with parents about the amount their child has eaten, likes and dislikes and content when appropriate.

If a child's lunchbox is insufficient, the School will provide an appropriate substitute or additional lunch. Parents will be contacted to inform them and the child's lunchbox will be monitored over the next week in school.

7 Eating Habits

We promote healthy eating habits by encouraging the children to eat savoury and dairy items and salad/vegetable or fruit items before other items of food. We also encourage the children to eat dairy items, such as cheese and yoghurt before 'treat' items.

8 Returning Lunchboxes

In all year groups lunchboxes are returned home with all the contents (including items partially eaten) included. This is so that parents can see what their child is eating at school.



9 Availability of Water

We have fresh drinking water readily available for children and staff. We support the children in recognising that they need to drink water when they are thirsty, hot or tired, or feeling unwell. All children are encouraged to bring labelled water flasks or plastic bottles of water to school.

10 Special Dietary Needs and Food Allergies

We are sensitive to the needs of children with specific dietary needs, including religious considerations. Parents will be asked about any special dietary requirements their child has before their child starts school. Parents of children who have special diets (for example a gluten-free diet or a peanut allergy) or who have food intolerances are responsible for providing the School with information about their diet and choices available to the child. We update our records regularly.

Classrooms and eating areas are nut free zones.

11 Food Hygiene

All children wash their hands before snack time or use hand sanitizer. Children in Nursery and Reception are supervised when doing so. When cooking at school as part of the curriculum or in an after school club, the children are taught food hygiene rules.

12 Social Skills

Snack time can be times of pleasant social sharing and opportunities to talk quietly with friends. Year 6 'Here to Help' children help younger children at snack time and join in conversations with them. This provides an opportunity for pupils to learn good social skills, manners and behaviour associated with eating and drinking. Sharing of food is not allowed.

13 Themed Days / Special Events

We ask that children do not bring in treats to give out to other members of the school community. We are a healthy eating school and are strictly nut free, due to children's allergies.

14 Birthday Celebrations

On a child's birthday, we do not permit a cake/cakes to be brought in. Instead, pupils wear a special birthday badge to acknowledge the birthday and share the celebrations.

15 Items That Are Not Allowed in St Christopher's Snack Boxes

- Glass bottled drinks
- Fizzy drinks
- Nuts or products containing nuts e.g. Peanut Butter or Nutella
- Chewing gum or other sweets



16 Appendix A: A Balanced Diet

16.1 How to eat a balanced diet

- Eat a variety of foods to obtain all of the essential nutrients
- Too much as well as too little can be bad for you – balance is required

16.2 Maintaining a healthy, balanced diet

16.2.1 The Food Standards Agency's eight tips for eating well are:

- Base meals on starchy foods
- Eat lots of fruit and vegetables
- Eat more fish
- Cut down on saturated fat and sugar
- Try to eat less salt - no more than 6g a day
- Get active and try to be a healthy weight
- Drink plenty of water
- Do not skip breakfast

16.2.2 What about snacks?

It is fine to snack - as long as a healthy balance of foods is maintained. If you feel hungry between meals, or you know it will be a while before you eat your next meal, choose snacks that provide energy (preferably in the form of starchy carbohydrate), vitamins and minerals and not too much fat, sugar or salt.

- Choose snacks that will provide nutrients to complement meals and choose a snack from a food group you may not have already had. For example if you had toast and fruit juice for breakfast, a yoghurt would make a good morning snack. If you ate cereal and milk for breakfast, a banana would be a good morning snack choice.
- Avoid snacks and drinks with a high sugar content between meals.

16.2.3 Portion Size

In recent years, portions have been gradually getting bigger with the introduction of king-size chocolate bars, bigger bags of crisps and super-sized meals.

Larger packets and plates can encourage us to eat greater quantities of food, which increases our energy intake. Studies have found that consuming additional food does not increase your sense of fullness, so think of 'down-sizing' rather than 'super-sizing' for most foods, except fruit and vegetables.

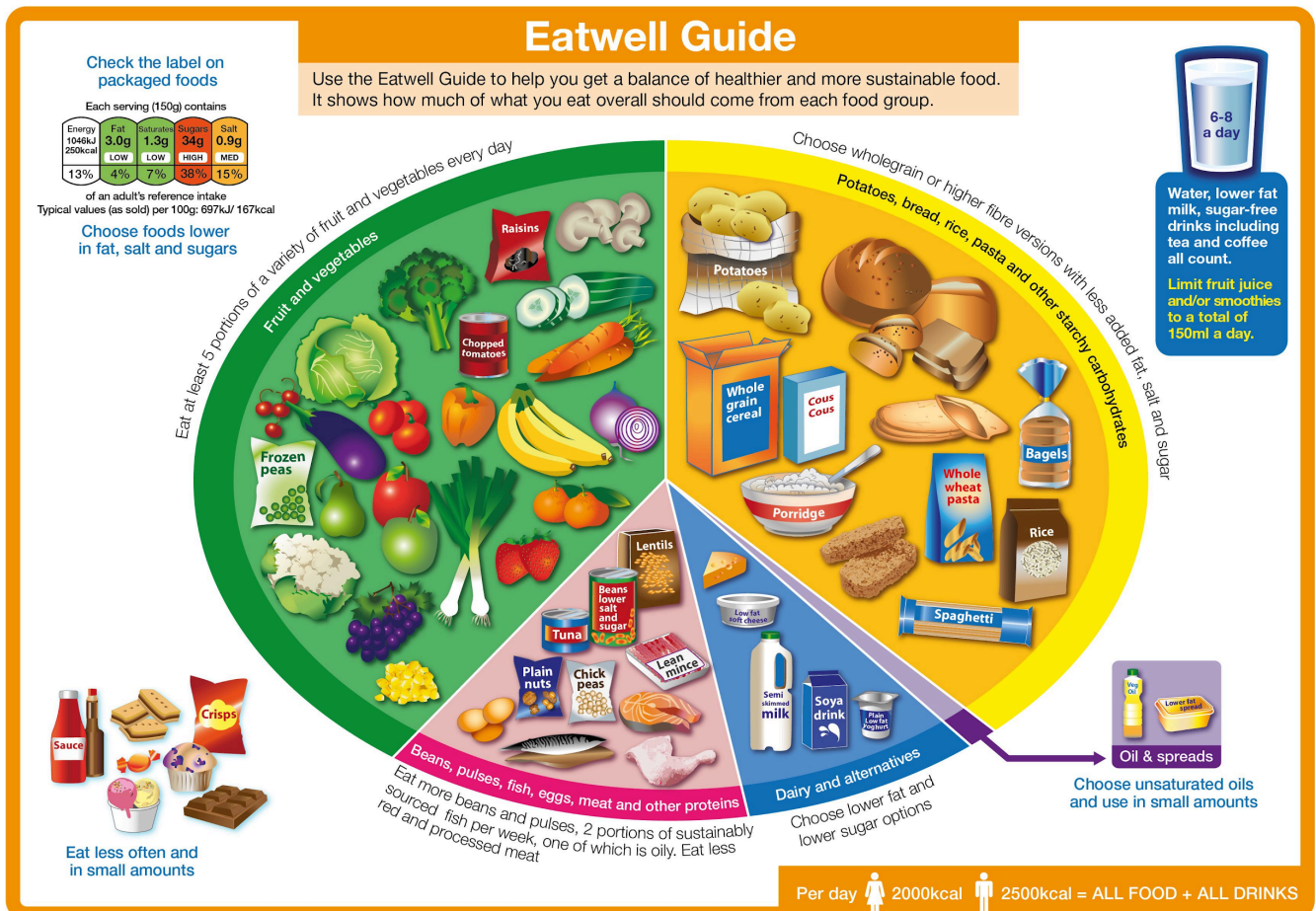


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17 Appendix B: The 'Eatwell Plate'

Use the 'eatwell plate' to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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