



Healthy Eating Policy

At the request of the Principal and Board of Management, a sub-committee of the Parent Association set about reviewing the school's Healthy Eating Policy as part of Social, Personal and Health Education and Physical Education. Our Lady's Grove Healthy Eating Policy outlines how the school supports healthy eating practices through the promotion of healthy lunches and healthy snacks and by other means. The SPHE Guidelines aim to promote the personal development and wellbeing of the student to provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.

Our Lady's Grove is committed to facilitating the children's development of skills and attitudes to allow them to make informed decisions about their food intake. There will be a whole school approach, involving teachers, parents and children to ensure that healthy eating messages are a part of every aspect of school life. The children will continue to receive consistent messages regarding healthy eating both at home and at school.

Aims of our Healthy Eating Policy

- To promote a whole school approach to healthy eating and nutrition
- To understand the benefit of a healthy well balanced diet
- To develop an awareness that good eating habits formed in early childhood influence health and wellbeing throughout our lives
- To develop awareness of the importance of food for growth and development
- To explore food preferences in a balanced diet

Benefits of a good diet

- Ensures the development of healthy hair, skin, teeth, muscles and strong bones
- Provides energy and aids concentrate
- Strengthens the immune system

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.

Small Break

The children have an exercise break from 10.15am to 10.30am. Food at this break should be easy to eat.

Ideally a small sandwich or piece of fruit. Fruit should be of a manageable size, peeled/chopped if necessary.

Lunch Break

Children have approximately 10 minutes to eat at this break. Ideally, children's lunches should be varied and include:

- Two portions from the bread/cereal group
- One portion of meat or meat alternative
- At least one portion from the fruit and vegetable group
- One portion from the dairy product
- Water, milk (Children can avail of the school milk scheme at an additional cost)

For further ideas and suggestion for healthy lunch box ideas, please go to our school website www.ourladysgrove.ie and download a copy of the "Safe Food – Healthy Lunch Box" brochure.

Special Treats

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

- End of term parties
- School Trips

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, lettuce, spinach, cucumber, tomato, onion, peppers, coleslaw, salad or banana
- Hot leftovers in a flask – curry, pasta (with or without sauce), soup/chowder, baked beans, rice, stew, lasagne or noodles
- Cold leftovers
- 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

Food items not permitted in school:

- Nuts (including peanut butter)
- Fizzy drinks, sports drinks and drinks/juices with high sugar content
- Chewing gum
- Chocolate (including chocolate spread)
- Sweets & winders
- Crisps & popcorn
- Biscuits/cakes/muffins/traybakes (including homemade)
- Cereal Bars

Best Practice

- Ensure your child starts the day with a good breakfast
- Eat small regular meals, not one big meal each day
- Children who take physical exercise each day will have a better appetite for healthy food
- Serve brown bread instead of white
- Cut large rolls/wraps/sandwiches into more manageable sizes

The children will bring home uneaten lunch.

Roles and Responsibilities in implementing our policy:

Parents are responsible for providing a healthy school lunch for their child(ren).

Children are encouraged to participate in making their own healthy school lunch.

Teachers will explicitly teach about healthy eating as part of the SPHE curriculum.

Our Lady's Grove will review our Healthy Eating Policy every two years.

Our Lady's Grove Healthy Eating Policy is available on our website at www.ourladysgrove.ie as a hard copy from the office and by post if requested.

The Board of Management will review this policy every second year.

This policy was reviewed in May 2017

Signed: 

Date: 7th May 2017

Chairperson