**Rationale:**

This healthy eating policy was developed in consultation with staff, parents and the Board of Management of Assumption Junior School to help promote healthy eating habits in our school. As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum we encourage children to become aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

**Aims & Objectives:**

* To promote healthy eating across school life, consistent with national healthy eating guidelines and school curriculum.
* To promote the personal development and well-being of the child.
* To develop an awareness of the importance of food for growth and development.
* To help the children understand the link between a healthy diet and a healthy, active lifestyle.
* To ensure that food provision in school reflects the ethical and medical requirements of staff and pupils, e.g. religious, ethnic, vegetarian, vegan, medical and allergenic needs.
* To make the provision and consumption of food an enjoyable and safe experience.
* To encourage learning and discussion around food and nutrition in the classroom.

**What does a healthy lunch look like?**

The following are suggestions for quick and nutritious lunches:

**Drinks**: water, milk, sugar free squash

**Bread and alternatives**: bread, rolls, wraps, pitta bread, pasta, potato salad, wholemeal scones, breadsticks, crackers, rice cakes

**Fruit and vegetables**: fruit, berries, cucumber, sweetcorn, tomatoes, carrot sticks, coleslaw

**Savouries**: lean meat, chicken, turkey, tinned fish, cheese, yoghurt, vegetarian/vegan sausage, hummus, beans

The HSE’s **“Healthy Lunchboxes**” leaflet offers helpful information and practical tips on how to prepare a healthy lunchbox. See their website for details

**Children with medical conditions/allergies**

Due to allergies in the school, **nuts or foods that contain nuts (e.g. Nutella) should never be brought into school.**

Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet **or**whose child has a food allergy should contact the school in writing with details.

A record (including photographs) of all children with underlying medical conditions and food allergies is kept at the school. This record is reviewed annually.

**What other foods should not be brought to school?**

Parents/guardians can support our healthy eating policy by not including these items in lunches:

* Sugary drinks, e.g. fizzy drinks and energy drinks
* Crisps
* Chocolate (or anything containing chocolate).
* Sweets or lollipops
* Biscuits/chocolate or candy bars

If such food or drinks are brought to school, children will be asked to bring them home and encouraged to eat alternative items from their lunchbox

**Treat Days**

Certain days during the school year may be designated as ‘Treat Days’. On a Treat Day children may bring a treat to school. These may be special occasions such as:

* End-of-term parties
* Halloween
* Christmas
* Other specific occasions or events deemed appropriate by the class teacher or principal

**Green Schools**

As Assumption Junior School is a Green School, we ask that packaging on lunch items be kept to a minimum.

* Children are asked to use reusable lunchboxes that they can open and close themselves and to bring wrappers, empty cartons, uneaten food etc. home
* Drinks should be brought to school in a reusable beaker/drink container

This policy was drafted between September 2021 to February 2022 and will come into effect from March 2022.

This policy was ratified by the B.O.M. on 08/02/2022

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Signed: Chairperson, Board of Management.