



HEALTHY EATING POLICY 2018

ST. JOSEPH SLIEMA (Junior Section)

Healthy Eating Lifestyle at School



Today, more than ever, we believe that schools can provide students with the skills they need to be confident about leading a healthy lifestyle. The core themes which schools need to address are healthy eating, physical activity, emotional health and well-being, and personal, social and health education.

Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan Document: 9

Mission Statement

Our School has taken the initiative to create an environment which supports a healthier lifestyle. By exposing children and encouraging healthy eating habits at school, we hope to make an impact on the children's lifelong relationship with food and give them the best opportunity to grow into healthy, confident adults.

Rationale

Our school ethos focuses on educating our pupils holistically. This includes promoting healthy eating patterns and this is why we have decided to opt for a Whole School Healthy Eating Policy.

Our policy follows the recommendations issued by the Department of Education through the HELP document in September 2007. This document can be downloaded from www.education.gov.mt.

The School Aims

To develop a whole school approach to healthy eating in order to enable and encourage the nutritional health and wellbeing of the school community by:

1. giving high priority to healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle on the school agenda;
2. providing a supportive school environment that encourages a healthy lifestyle and promotes healthy choices early in life;
3. raising awareness about the importance of a healthy and varied diet;
4. highlighting the importance of hygiene and to promote physical exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle;
5. ensuring that clear and consistent messages about food, drink and healthy eating are being delivered across the school day so as to reinforce the healthy lifestyle message.

Policy Objectives

1. To teach the importance of a healthy and varied diet;
2. To encourage children to eat healthily now in order to adopt a healthy lifestyle as they get older;
3. To encourage all who attend St. Joseph Junior School to be more sensitive to the fact that people around them could suffer from food allergies and expose them to ways of helping these, live safer lives.

Welfare Objectives

The school supports pupils with particular needs in relation to food and nutrition issues and is committed to care for those children at risk of dietary related conditions. Since St. Joseph Junior School is built on the foundation of respect for every pupil, we have chosen to make our school a nut-free zone. In our Junior Section, we have pupils with severe nut allergies and other food disorders we feel we need to cater for.

Foods sent in for breakfast break, lunch, or any class outings should be carefully checked to make sure they are nut-free. Families can help ensure that our school stays nut-free by reading packaging labels and reminding children not to share food with other children at school. We need to make sure that there is little opportunity for a child to be exposed to foods that could harm him/her.

All food that is to be consumed at school must contain no nuts of any kind. Food containing nuts or traces of nuts, including activities organised by the PTA or other organisations will be given to pupils at the end of the school day to be consumed at home.

Parents should understand that the implementation of a “nut-free” policy does not necessarily mean that there will never be food with nuts in the school setting, especially given that not all food items coming into the School are controlled. Despite the “nut-free” policy, the school makes no guarantee that the premises will be completely nut-free. The school disclaims any liability for violations of the “nut-free” policy. Due to the risk of an inadvertent exposure, it is important that parents of pupils with allergies to fill in the mandatory school form provided at the start of year and return it to the School at the start of each scholastic year.

School Initiatives

- As from October 2016, all pupils will be having a *fruit/vegetable break* at 09:00. All children are to bring a portion of fruit and/or vegetables to school with them. It is highly recommended that all children have their daily intake of fruit/vegetable with their peers.
- All birthday cakes brought to school must be as plain as possible and contain no nuts or cream.
- Regular checks by members of Staff to ensure children are bringing a healthy lunch to school.
- Introducing healthy eating lifestyles as a cross-curricular theme.

The Healthy Lunch Guidelines

All members of the School Pupil Council, which includes both pupils and Staff members, have worked in order to promote healthy eating at school and contribute to the implementation of this policy.

This is the perfect time for us to learn about healthy food, bodies and activity. We need a wide variety of foods for a well-balanced diet. The amount of play time and physical activity during the day will be an important part of how much we need to eat. Snacking is also important to keep our energy levels high. A healthy morning snack at break time and one after school are usually needed each day.

Our lunch box suggestions can include but are not limited to:

- Bread, couscous, pasta or rice salad.
- Cheese slices, crackers with spread, and fresh or dried fruits
- Washed and cut up raw vegetables or fresh fruits.
- Yoghurt
- Water bottle.

Limit the intake of processed meats such as salami, ham, pressed chicken and sausages.

Sugary drinks, chocolate, chocolate spread on bread, biscuits, sweets and packets of snacks as well chocolate sponges and chocolate cereal bars are not allowed. Products containing nuts must be avoided.

Refer to the ***Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan (HELP)*** for further details of what should/should not be consumed on the school premises. This document can be downloaded by following the link below:

<http://education.gov.mt/en/resources/documents/policy%20documents/healthy%20eating%20lifestyle%20plan.pdf>

The New School Scheme (Fruit and Vegetable Scheme/Milk Scheme)

Our school is involved in the New School Scheme which provides a free weekly fruit and vegetable portion.

This scheme aims to promote the sustainable consumption of fruit and vegetables in schools. The expected results would be an effective increase in the consumption of fruit and vegetables and the nurturing of healthy eating habits among school children that would be extended into the home. This would result in a long-term health benefit.

Malta's National Strategy: School Fruit & Vegetable Scheme 2011-14 (Pg. 5)

Different foods give us different nutrients. We need to eat a variety of foods in different amounts, to get a healthy balance.

The **Healthy Eating Plate** is your guide to healthy **balanced eating**.

HEALTHY EATING PLATE

