



## Healthy Eating Policy

### Introduction:

Our Healthy Eating Policy outlines how the school supports healthy eating practices through the promotion of healthy snacks and healthy lunches. This focus on healthy eating will help the children to gain a greater understanding of the importance of balanced nutrition. The staff of Stratford NS are committed to facilitating our children's development of skills and attitudes to allow them to make informed decisions and to understand how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and general wellbeing.

The whole school approach to promoting healthy eating actively involves teachers, parents/guardians and children to ensure that healthy eating messages are part of every aspect of school life. The children receive consistent messages regarding healthy eating, both at home and at school.

### Aims & Rationale:

- To promote a whole school approach to healthy eating and nutrition
- To encourage the children to make healthy food choices.
- To develop positive and responsible attitudes to eating
- To enable the children to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growth, development and good health

### Linkage and Integration:

This policy is promoted within the school and is strongly integrated within the following curricular areas:

- SPHE: Taking Care of My Body- Food and Nutrition and Making Choices
- Science: Myself -Human Life Processes

### Hot School Lunches

The school provides hot school lunches for the children in the school, which are funded by the Department of Social Protection. These meals are kosher and alternatives are provided for children with specific dietary requirements. The meals follow the nutritional guidance for hot meals, as specified by the Department of Social Protection. All children are given the option to avail of hot meals, through a form at the beginning of the year. If children do not avail of the hot meals, their packed lunch should follow the guidance below.

### Healthy Lunches in Stratford NS

School lunches provide children with the energy and nutrients needed for a busy school day. A healthy breakfast and lunch provide the slow-release energy needed to help the children concentrate and learn. The school believes that if good eating habits are developed at an early age, these habits will continue as children grow up.



The children have two food breaks during the day and are given adequate time to eat. The children attending Jewish Studies also have a food break between the end of Jewish Studies and the start of the school day.

In school, the children learn about the Food Pyramid and the school encourages families to consult this when deciding what to bring in for lunch. Healthy snacks and lunches include foods from the following shelves of the food pyramid:

- Fish, beans
- Milk, yogurt, cheese
- Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice.
- Vegetables, salad and fruit.



Adapted to take into account the school's kosher food policy.

Foods from the top shelf of the pyramid are actively discouraged during school hours. Chewing gum are not permitted at any time. To assist parents with making healthy lunches for their children, a list of healthy lunch ideas has been provided. (See Appendix 1)

### Kosher Requirements:

As Stratford NS is run in line with Jewish dietary law, the staff and children are asked to observe the following guidance:

- Lunches must not include cooked meats nor poultry.
- Lunches provided by the school are made using kosher meat.
- Special Occasions:
  - With regard to both school lunches and "special occasions" e.g. last day of term, birthdays etc., parents are reminded that cakes, breads, biscuits or other foods cannot be brought into school for distribution to the other children due to kosher and dietary requirements for religious and medical reasons.

These kosher requirements are strictly enforced.



## Drinks:

Children are allowed to drink water (still and sparkling), low-sugar squash, fruit juice and milk during the school day. They are allowed to keep water bottles on their tables and drink water when desired. Energy drinks and other fizzy drinks are not allowed.

## Exemptions:

Friday is treat day. On this day, one treat size piece of food from the top shelf of the Food Pyramid may be included in the lunchbox. Examples of treats are mini bags of sweets, mini chocolate bars and single size bags of crisps and popcorn.

While teachers usually give stickers, no homework, extra play time, extra computer time and extra PE time as a reward, they may occasionally give children a sweet treat on occasions in recognition of work done, improvements in work or behaviour and at end of term class parties. Any treats provided must come from the list of approved kosher foods available in the staff room or using the links below:

- <https://www.chabadireland.org/kosher-guide>
- [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CGNr\\_f4xXSsPRfKzYJSiZU\\_-PX2r-VPXwDScrTl9rU/edit?tab=t.0](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CGNr_f4xXSsPRfKzYJSiZU_-PX2r-VPXwDScrTl9rU/edit?tab=t.0)

## Health and Safety:

In Stratford NS, some children are allergic to certain foods. The following procedures are in place, to minimise the potential for allergic reactions.

- Children are encouraged to wash their hands after before and after eating.
- Children are not allowed to share food and utensils.
- The children eat their lunches at their own tables and uneaten food is sent home, to raise parental awareness of what their child is eating during the school day.
- In the event that a child in the classroom has an allergy, parents of children in that classroom will be asked not to send in that food for lunch. The class teacher will notify all parents of any allergies or dietary restrictions.
- Depending the severity of the allergy, a complete school wide ban may be implemented.
- Bake Sales: Parents/ Guardians will be reminded of allergies in the school and asked to label any goods with ingredients which may cause an allergic reaction.

## Roles and Responsibilities:

### Role of Parents:

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children.
- Encourage healthy eating.
- Inform the school in writing of a child's special dietary needs e.g. allergies.
- To implement school policy by not allowing their children to bring chewing gum or fizzy/energy drinks to school.

### Role of Children:

- To eat their lunch.
- To bring home any uneaten lunch and all lunchtime waste



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- Not to bring chewing gum or fizzy/energy drinks to school.

**Role of School:**

To promote and encourage healthy eating by:

- Working with parents and children in supporting healthy eating.
- Informing children at assembly about healthy eating at the start of each school year.
- Inviting outside speakers to talk to the children/parents about a balanced diet.
- Promoting healthy eating through SPHE.
- Displaying healthy eating posters eg. Food/Exercise Pyramid.

**Formulation:**

This policy was formulated by the staff of Stratford NS, in consultation with parents, student council and the Board of Management.

**Implementation:**

This policy will be introduced during the academic year 2025-2026 and will be reviewed regularly after this.

DocuSigned by:

Signed: Elaine Meeey (Chairperson)  
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Date: 8/22/2025



## Appendix 1: Healthy lunch ideas

- Sandwiches containing fish, cheese or salad.
- Cheese and crackers
- Hummus and crackers
- Wraps containing fish, cheese or salad
- Pasta
- Rice salad
- Fruit salad
- Filled bagels
- Yoghurt and fruit (fresh and dried)
- Plain rice cakes with cheese spread or hummus
- Vegetable crudities and dip such as hummus
- Homemade lunchables including crackers and cheese
- Breadsticks and dips

## Sample lunch menus:

Lunch	Snack	Drink
Wholemeal bread with cheese slice and tomato	banana	sugar free squash
Pitta bread with cheese, lettuce and cucumber	orange segments	milk
Bread roll with tuna, relish, lettuce and grated carrot	dried fruit yoghurt	Water
Toasted wholemeal bread with hummus, tomato and cucumber	small apple	milk
Cooked pasta with tuna, lettuce, tomato and carrot	mandarins yoghurt	unsweetened pure fruit juice
Salad box with cooked rice, lettuce, tomato, cheese cubes, celery sticks, carrot sticks	dried fruit	water
White roll with cheese, lettuce and cucumber	handful of grapes	sugar free squash/ milk
Wholemeal bap with tuna, tomato and sweetcorn	peach	milk to drink
Crackers with cheese slices, sliced peppers, grated carrot	apple and orange segments	Water



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Cooked rice with cooked peas, carrot and peppers	dried fruit	unsweetened fruit juice
Hummus sandwich	banana	unsweetened fruit juice