

St Monica School

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Policy

Rationale

With the help of all stakeholders, we at St. Monica School, strive to make our school every day better, and provide our students with the best education possible. In order to do this, we cannot focus on the educational aspect only but we have to perceive the student as a person, including his health and well-being.

We are committed to provide a healthy eating school environment. We want our students to reduce their consumption of foods that are high in sugar, salt and fat while increasing their intake of wholegrain foods, fruit and vegetables. This will ensure that our students are eating high nutritional value foods while eliminating food with minimal nutritional value. We truly believe that this will leave a positive effect on both the physical and intellectual ability of our students. Eating the right amount of nutrients daily will help fuel up the students so that they will be able to concentrate and perform well during the school day.

Aims

- Foods and drinks consumed at school promote healthy eating
- SMT and teachers promote a healthy eating school environment to give a good example to the students
- Cooking lessons done at school, together with PE and sports lessons provide our students with a healthier lifestyle

Initiatives

Food consumed on school premises

The food sold in the vending machine is to be inspected regularly (as per Appendix 1). Only healthy food is allowed to be sold from these machines.

Lunches brought for home should also follow these rules. In order to do this, we have to keep in mind the Healthy Eating Plate, developed to assist in managing nutrient intake and food habits. A clear guideline of what foods are permissible can be seen in the attached appendix

(2). This will help all stakeholders, teachers, parents and students, make an informed choice and decision. We must keep in mind that our students spend a significant time at school and so the food eaten here provides a significant nutritional intake of what is eaten during the day. Because of this, those students who will be observed not to have a healthy lunch as per school policy, will be given a note to be signed by the parents to rectify this situation.

Cooking sessions

Cooking activities done during the scholastic year will reflect the healthy eating policy.

Birthday cakes

On the occasion of a child's birthday, they can get with them a plain muffin or a sliced cake. Cakes or muffins with icing or cream will not be permitted and may be sent home again.

Physical activity

Physical activity will not be limited to PE lessons but will be an important part in the school day to day routine. We have increased our PE lessons in both primary and secondary classes. Primary: On a roster basis each day, a grade will be walking one mile.

Secondary: Periodically a Zumba session is being held for all the secondary students during break time. Although participation is on a voluntary basis, lots of students participate and enjoy these sessions.

Appendix 1 – List of Permissible foods

HELP (Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan), Education Division, 2007

Savoury

- Bread (ideally wholegrain variety) with healthy filling– Maltese bread, sandwich, rolls, baguette, ftira, ciabatta, pocket bread, pitta.
Healthy filling can include one or more of the following: fresh or frozen vegetables, tuna, sardines, mackerel, salmon, chicken, tuna, ricotta, omelettes and patties, mozzarella, low/medium fat cheese, boiled egg, bigilla, beans, low fat spreads and low salt dressing.
- Hobz Malti – Maltese bread, preferably wholegrain filled with tuna, tomatoes, onions, lettuce, beans, capers, olives and fresh herbs.
- Selection of pizzas with healthy toppings, including tuna, sardines, mackerel, salmon, chicken, hard boiled eggs, fresh or frozen vegetables, cheese (mozzarella, ricotta, Edam, cheeselets).
- Hot dishes such as baked rice, pasta and vegetable lasagne.
- Couscous, bulgar wheat and pasta dishes.
- Quiches and pies with a healthy filling including ricotta, tuna, chicken, vegetables, beans, lentils and peas.
- Baked potatoes/ jacket potatoes with healthy filling such as ricotta, tuna or other medium/low fat cheese.
- 100% grilled or baked chicken/turkey/fish fillets
- Grilled/baked, not fried, fish patties made with healthy ingredients such as tuna, salmon, vegetables and potatoes.
- Boiled or poached egg
- Soups made with fresh or frozen ingredients low in added fats and salt. Soups should include a selection of vegetables or pulses.

Salads and Dips

- Pasta or vegetable salads with vinaigrette (using olive oil, balsamic vinegar, lemon juice) or with mustard.
- A selection of low fat/low salt dips-vegetable, tuna, ricotta, bean, bigilla, hummus.

Savoury snacks

- Galletti, water crackers, crackers, rice cakes and crispbreads, preferably wholegrain, low fat and low salt varieties.
- Nuts and seeds, not fried, without added salt or added sugars.
- Roasted /dried beans and roasted chickpeas, without added salt or added sugars.
- Plain air-popped popcorn without added butter, salt or sugar.

Fruit snacks

- Individual fresh fruits and fresh fruit salads.
- Stewed fruit with no added sugar.
- Baked fruit without pastry and no added sugar.
- Fresh fruit milkshake (with milk or yoghurt containing not more than 2.5% total fat, 1.5% saturated fat and 10% total sugars, and fresh fruit without added sugar).

Sweet snacks

- Fresh, frozen fruit yoghurts (containing not more than 2.5% total fat, 1.5% saturated fat and not more than 10% sugar).
- Plain *qaghaq tal-hmira*.
- Individually packed *buskuttelli*.
- Traditional bread pudding.

List of permissible drinks

- Still water.
- Fresh white milk, preferably local containing not more than 2.5% total fats.
- Oat, rice, barley and other cereal drinks with not more than 2.5% total fats, 1.5% saturated fat and 10% total sugars.
- Combinations of milk, yogurt and fruit with not more than 2.5% total fats, 1.5% saturated fats and 10% total sugars.
- Hot tea with no added sugar and served in an insulated cup with lid.

List of Prohibited Foods

- Fried foods.
- Potato chips.
- Salami, bacon, luncheon meat, mortadella and corned beef.
- Highly processed foods including all sausages, burgers, chicken nuggets, spring rolls, wontons, samosas, fish cakes/fingers and other battered, ready-made crumb-coated products.
- Pizzas with high fat/salt toppings such as sausages, salami, pepperoni and cheese.
- Pastizzi, sausage rolls and hot dogs.
- Salted or sweetened nuts
- Doughnuts, cream and jam cakes, iced cakes, sweet pastries, chocolate, gums, liquorice, mint and sweets, dried fruit, fudge, toffee, marshmallow and nougat, Turkish delight, cereal chewy bars, cereal crunchy bars, processed fruit bars, chewing gum, croissants, cookies, sponge cakes, wafers, marzipan, peanut butter, spreadable chocolate and other sweet sandwich toppings, iced lollies, sorbets and ice-cream.
- Chocolates, sweets and confectionery.
- Breakfast cereals and cereal bars.
- Bagged savoury snacks except nuts, pulses and seeds.
- Products manufacture and marketed with the intension of being used as part of a weight loss diet.
- Ready to use dips, ready to use salad dressings and sauces.

List of Prohibited Drinks

- Carbonated and flavoured water.
- Soft drinks.
- Iced tea.
- Energy/Sports drinks.
- Coffee and hot chocolate.
- Fruit juices.
- Milk containing more than 2.5% fat and/or milk with contain artificial additives.
- Oat, rice, barley and other cereals with more than 2.5% total fat, 1.5% saturated fat and more than 10% total sugars.
- Drinks containing a combination of milk, yoghurt and fruit with more than 2.5% total fat, 1.5% saturated fat and more than 10% total sugars.

Appendix 2 – The Healthy Eating Plate

The Healthy Plate

A guide for eating throughout life



Select a variety of nutritious foods from each food group every day. Drink plenty of water. Keep active. Enjoy your meals with family and friends.

