



## Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at Sandpit N.S, we the student council under the guidance of Mr Reilly encourage all the children in Sandpit School to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

What people eat is known to be a key factor influencing health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance (e.g. a low sugar intake promotes concentration, lessens hyperactivity, protects teeth etc.

To promote healthy eating habits in our school, we have updated our existing healthy eating policy:

### **The aims of our Policy:**

**To take a whole school approach to healthy eating in school**

**To promote healthy eating across school life, consistent with healthy eating guidelines and school curriculum**

To ensure the food provisions in school reflect the ethical and medical requirements of staff and pupils e.g. religious, ethnic, vegetarian, medical and allergenic needs

To make the provision and consumption of food an enjoyable and safe experience.

To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.

#### **Objectives of our Policy:**

1. To enable the children in our school to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy.
2. To enable the children in our school to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre (roughage).

The traditional packed lunch of milk and sandwiches is under attack from a range of convenience foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, chocolate and soft drinks. Parents and teachers are concerned about this trend but some find it difficult to come up with popular healthy alternatives. We ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start.

#### **We ask that children do NOT bring the following to school:**

Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including the following:

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)

- Fizzy drinks (including fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc.)
- Sweets
- Chocolate biscuits/bars
- Chewing gum
- Fruit winders
- Take Away food
- Pancakes / Waffles

We also ask that pupils **NOT to** bring nuts or nut related products to school due to some children having severe nut allergies.

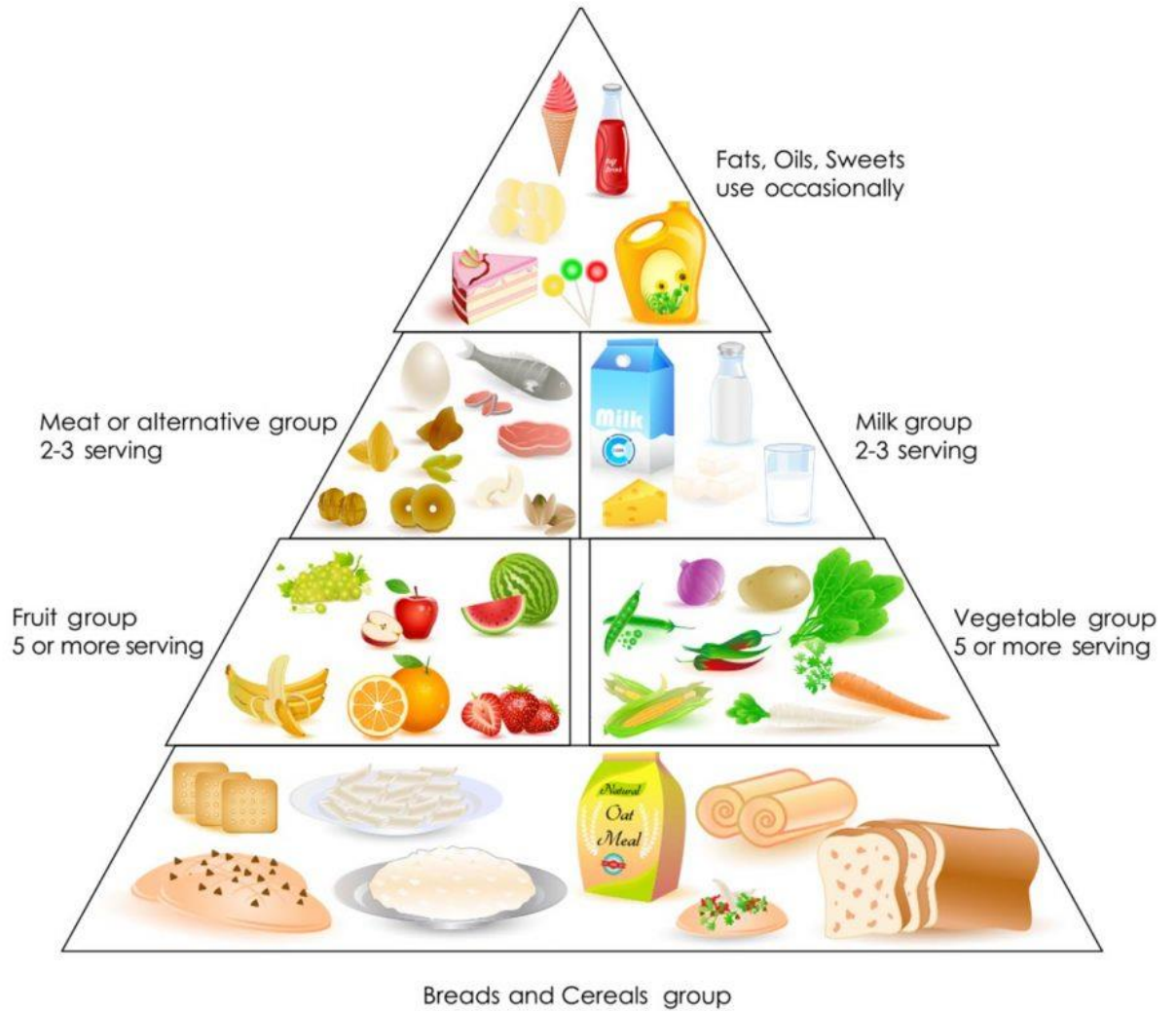
*We the student council decided that using food as a reward for good behaviour contradicts the message given as part of the curriculum and as part of our healthy eating policy. We ask all adults in the school not to give sweets as treats.*

Food rewards can also encourage children to eat when they are not hungry and food awards encourages eating outside if normal times and contribute to tooth decay.

*The student council have come up with alternatives to food rewards, these include*

- Certificates for healthy lunches
- Sticker for healthy lunches
- Privileges
- Homework Pass
- Show and tell time
- Breakfast at school
- Cushion for chairs
- Extra Playtime
- Use of Peter's Path
- Sit beside a friend
- Golden Time
- Listening to music during lunch time
- Eating lunch outdoors

A very simple approach to healthy eating is to use the Food Pyramid:



In the interest of a greener environment, children are asked to:

- Take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons, as litter in the school is a safety hazard for the children.
- Put only fruit peel into compost bins.
- Not bring in cans and glass - for safety reasons.

**N.B. Parents/Guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school.**

## **Ratification and Communication**

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Sandpit N. S 10/04/24 and is available to review on request from the school and on our website.