



St. Francis Xavier Senior National School

HEALTHY EATING Guidelines

At St. Francis Xavier Senior National School, we recognise that what children eat is a key factor influencing long-term health and wellbeing. The school day provides an important opportunity for children to have at least one balanced meal and to learn about healthy lifestyles. Food is also a feature of school celebrations.

Through these guidelines, our school aims to support all members of the school community including pupils, staff, and parents in developing positive attitudes to food and nutrition and understanding the contribution of healthy eating to overall health.

Importance of Breakfast

- Children should have a nutritious breakfast before coming to school to support concentration, attention, and learning.

Promoting Healthy Eating

- St. Francis Xavier S.N.S. prioritises the promotion of healthy eating across the school.
- A **balanced diet** supports learning, concentration, energy levels, and emotional wellbeing.
- Foods high in sugar or fat can negatively affect behaviour, concentration, and health.
- Pupils should bring a **healthy packed lunch** to school every day.

Supervision and Lunch

- Children are supervised while eating to ensure safety and encourage positive mealtime habits.
- **Healthy lunch options** may include:
 - **Main foods:** Bread, wraps, sandwiches, lean meats (beef, ham, chicken, turkey), tuna, cheese, cheese strings, boiled eggs, chopped vegetables, salads, wholegrain crackers, popcorn (unsalted), and yoghurt.
 - **Drinks:** Water (preferred), milk, and small portions of 100% fruit juice or yoghurt drinks.
 - **Calcium:** Children aged 9–18 require 5 servings of calcium-rich foods daily to support bone and teeth development.

Allergies and Safety

- Due to the increasing prevalence of nut allergies, **St. Francis Xavier S.N.S. aims to be a nut-free school**, as far as is practicable.
- Pupils and staff must avoid bringing nuts or nut-containing products to school.

Minimising Waste

- Foods with wrappers should be kept to a minimum.
- Wrappers and packaging should be disposed of at home to reduce litter and protect the school environment.

Treats and Special Occasions

- Treats should be **limited and consumed on special occasions only**.
- On approved days, children may bring **one small treat**, consistent with a balanced diet.
- **Fridays** may allow children to bring **one small individual portion treat**.
- Teachers and parents are encouraged to guide children in enjoying treats in moderation.

Curriculum Integration

- Nutrition and healthy eating are incorporated into the **SPHE, Science, SESE, and Wellbeing curriculum**.
- Children explore the benefits of healthy food, food origins, and sustainable choices.

Role Modelling

- Teachers, staff, and parents are encouraged to **model positive eating habits** and support pupils in making healthy choices.

Healthy Eating Awareness


- '**Healthy Eating Awareness Days**' will be held each term to reinforce healthy eating habits at school and at home. Healthy Eating Awareness Days will be implemented as part of Wellbeing Week.
- Pupils may participate in programmes such as **Food Dudes** or other HSE-endorsed initiatives.

Review of Guidelines

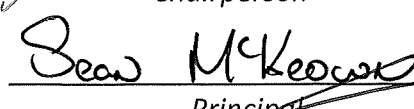
- These guidelines will be **reviewed every two years** to reflect current research, Department of Education policies, and best practice.
- The guidelines are available to staff via Aladdin and the shared Google Drive, and to parents on the school website.
- This policy will be reviewed once the Hot Meal Programme commences in the school at a date to be confirmed.

Ratification and Communication

- The Board of Management reviewed these guidelines on **December 2025**.
- Next review: **November 2028**.

Signed: 
Chairperson

Date: 3/12/2025

Signed: 
Principal

Date: 03.12.2025