

St Ronan's NS Healthy Eating Guidelines. October 2022

St Ronan's National School, Clondalkin is one of a number of schools nationwide to be part of the Government's 'Hot Meals Pilot Project'. We are very fortunate to have been chosen for this project which provides **free**, nutritious, healthy and hot meals for the children who attend St Ronan's. This costs the government and state a huge amount of money, approximately €25 per child each week. We are very grateful for this and appreciate the savings for our families in these financially challenging times.

The Hot Meals provided;

- are rated highly in terms of quality, choice, portion sizes, dietary requirements and nutritional value.
- have a positive impact on a child's diet.
- help children concentrate and improve their physical and mental wellbeing.
- help children take full advantage of the education provided and gives them a better chance of achieving their full potential.

What is Provided?

- Breakfast is provided in school for any child who needs it.

- At small break, each day, children can choose two snacks from a list including fruit, cheese, yoghurt, crackers, cereal bars, rice cakes etc.
- At lunchtime, each day, children can choose from an extensive **online menu**, giving each child a choice of up to 6 hot lunches. If parents do not have access to the internet they may order directly from the school office by filling in a lunch form. However, ordering online provides a wider choice of meals.

How are the meals delivered and prepared?

- The dinners are delivered during the early hours of each morning and are kept fresh in a fridge in the school. This fridge amazingly can be converted to an oven during the day, where the meals are heated and served hot to the children.

On the very small chance that a fussy child cannot find a hot meal they like, on one of the days, they may opt out on that particular day and bring their own lunch to school. If this occurs, parents must follow the healthy eating guidelines outlined below for the good of the children.

Children can still order their fruit and healthy snacks from the menu.

Food Allowed for Lunch;

- Plain, **homemade** sandwich, roll or wrap filled with healthy meat, fish, cheese or salad.

Unhealthy Food, not Allowed;

- **No take away foods** – burgers, hot dogs, chips, wedges, hash browns or fried chicken.
- **No chicken fillet rolls or any rolls or sandwiches from a shop.**
- No chocolate spread, Nutella or jam.
- No home baking allowed.
- No crisps/ corn chips.
- No popcorn.
- No fizzy drinks, flavoured water or diluted drinks.
- No chewing gum
- No biscuits
- No iced buns
- No cereal bars.
- No nuts or peanut butter.
- No fruit Winders etc
- No Birthday cakes or party packs.
- No sweets or chocolate bars.

The above list of prohibited foods is for the good of the health, wellbeing and educational progress of every child in our school. It is not an exhaustive list and may be added to going forward. We expect all parents will appreciate this.

How to Order and Avoid Food Waste;

- Any changes a child wants to make to the menu have to be submitted before 12pm on any Thursday.
- The changes will then apply from the following Monday.
- **Please do not send in sandwiches etc, until you have removed that day's main course from the menu, on the previous Thursday.** We want to avoid food waste.
- If a child changes their mind or if there is a menu update, parents can opt back in, any time.

Treats will of course, be allowed on special occasions organised by the teachers/staff.

Savings to you the Parents;

- The Hot Meals project provides huge savings for you, the parent. By your child availing of the 'Hot Meals Project' you are saving over €900 per child per year. For 2 children, this is a saving of over €1800 per year etc. We have some families with 5 children in the school and this amounts to a huge saving of over €4500 per year.

