**Rampark N.S. School Food Policy**

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| Date of Policy implemention: Date of review:  Rampark National School actively supports healthy eating and drinking throughout the school day. Good eating habits are best established at an early age. Making healthy food choices enables children to reach their optimum growth and health potential. Healthy eating and being adequately hydrated allows children to take full advantage of the opportunity to learn and play during the school day.  This policy aims to help the children to develop a positive and responsible attitude to food and an appreciation of the health benefits of a nutritious diet.  This policy document was produced in consultation with the entire school community, including pupils, parents, teachers and the Board of Management. |

1. Children are encouraged to bring a healthy lunch to school.

The best way to plan a healthy lunch is to include a selection of foods from the four main food groups of the Department of Health Food Pyramid:

**Breads and Cereals** e.g. wholegrain bap, thick sliced wholemeal bread, bagels, rolls, wholemeal pitta pockets, high fibre wraps, high fibre crackers, pasta or rice.

**Fruit and Vegetables** e.g. an apple, a portion of grapes, a mandarin orange, a banana, a pear, strawberries, blueberries, pineapple slices, kiwi fruit, a plum, a nectarine, a small box of raisins or a fruit salad, carrot sticks, pepper sticks, sugar snap peas, mange tout, cucumber slices, baby sweetcorn, smoothies or vegetable soup in a thermos flask.

**Dairy Foods** e.g. individual cheese portion, yoghurt, drinking yoghurt, yoghurt tubes.

**Meat and meat alternatives** e.g. ham, chicken, tuna, egg, cheese or hummus.

1. Children are encouraged to bring a healthy drink to school.

Healthier options include water and milk. **Water** will be promoted as the drink of choice throughout the school day.

1. Some of the healthy snacks that this school encourages for break time include fruit, vegetables, yoghurt, fromage frais, yoghurt drinks, popcorn (opt for low salt where possible), rice cakes, crackers and cheese.
2. Parents are **strongly discouraged** to include crisps, chocolate, chocolate spread, sweets, cakes, buns and biscuits in their children’s lunch boxes due to their high sugar, fat and salt content.
3. Children **may** bring in **one small** treat on a **Friday**.
4. School lunch boxes will not be kept in a warm place such as near radiators or in direct sunlight in the classroom.
5. For special occasions during the year such as Halloween, Christmas and Easter the children will have an opportunity to bring in some sweets and treats. The school will notify parents in advance of these occasions.
6. Sweets and other high sugar/fat foods will not be used as a reward for good behaviour in school.
7. Cans, glass bottles and chewing gum are not permitted. Wrappers, plastic bottles, tin foil and yoghurt cartons will be sent home to reduce litter.
8. Teachers and staff will provide positive modelling and support attitudes to encourage healthy eating.
9. Teachers and staff will assist the younger children with their lunch. Children will be encouraged to rake time to eat their lunch.
10. Nutrition and healthy eating will be included as part of the curriculum.
11. **Due to the incidence of allergy to peanuts and mixed nuts amongst some pupils, we ask you to be vigilant in the following**:

Avoid peanuts or any other type of nut in school lunches.

Avoid giving peanut butter sandwiches, chocolate spreads containing nuts such as Nutella, nut based breads and cereal/health bars containing nuts or labelled “may contain nut traces” in school lunches.

Ask children not to share their lunches.

If your child has eaten peanuts/nuts before coming to school, please be sure your child’s hands and face have been thoroughly washed before entering the school.

* *The School Food Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and will be displayed in a prominent position in the school.*