

Healthy

Eating

Policy

Title **Healthy Eating Policy**

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated in January, 2010, and reviewed in 2016. It was based on extracts from the school plans on healthy eating, parental input on the importance of establishing healthy eating values in the school and the views of teachers expressed at staff meetings.

Rationale

A healthy eating policy was considered essential by all members of the school community and particularly by teachers and parents. What people eat and how much they exercise are known to be key factors influencing the health of children. It was considered important to outline foods to be encouraged and discouraged at lunch breaks and also to examine how healthy eating values could be developed within the school.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

In order for all our children to achieve their potential and maximise their strengths within the educational system, it is of the greatest importance that healthy eating is promoted within the school. Our school motto, “Ar aghaidh le chéile” underlines this philosophy, encouraging the development of positive and responsible attitudes to eating and the appreciation of the contribution that good food makes to health.

1.

Aims

- To promote a culture of healthy eating within the school community.
- To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition as a key factor in a healthy lifestyle.
- To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy balance diet.
- To ensure that children eat a healthy, well-balanced lunch and develop a healthy lifestyle.
- To promote the eating of fruit and/or vegetables on a regular basis.

- To develop an awareness of the different food values in a variety of different foods.
- To encourage children to taste a wide variety of foods.

Guidelines*

Steps to a Healthy Lunch:

- Encourage wholemeal or wholegrain varieties of breads, rolls, scones and crackers
- Use butter or spreads sparingly and use those low in saturated fat
- Include salad vegetables in sandwiches and salad boxes, e.g. lettuce, tomato, cucumber, carrot and use vegetable sticks
- Include at least one piece of fruit at lunch e.g. apple, orange, banana
- Encourage low fat milk or yoghurt with every lunch
- Ensure that meat, chicken, fish, egg or cheese is included as part of lunch
- Include a drink at lunch e.g. low fat milk, water, unsweetened pure fruit juice or diluted sugar free squash
- Using low fat dressings, sauces and relish can add variety and taste to sandwiches, rolls and salads

Lunchbox ideas:

- Wholemeal bread with cheese slice and tomato + 1 banana + sugar free squash
- Pitta bread with cooked ham, low-fat mayonnaise lettuce and

- cucumber + orange segments + milk to drink
- Burger bun with chicken, relish, lettuce and grated carrot + dried fruit + yoghurt + water to drink
 - Toasted wholemeal bread with cooked beef, tomato and cucumber + small apple + milk to drink
 - Cooked pasta with tuna, lettuce, tomato and carrot + 2 mandarins + yoghurt + unsweetened pure fruit juice
 - Salad box with cooked rice, lettuce, tomato, cheese cubes, celery sticks, carrot sticks + dried fruit + water to drink
 - drink
 - White roll with mashed hard boiled egg, lettuce and cucumber + handful of grapes + sugar free squash/milk to drink.
 - Wholemeal bap with lean grilled bacon, tomato and sweetcorn + peach + milk to drink
 - Crackers with cheese slices, sliced peppers, grated carrot + apple and orange segments + water to drink
 - Cooked rice with cooked peas, carrot and chicken pieces + dried fruit + unsweetened fruit juice
 - Hummus sandwich + Banana + unsweetened fruit juice

Actively discouraged:	Because:
Nuts	they represent a choking hazard and a number of pupils are allergic to them
Sweets Biscuits Chocolate Bars Crisps & similar snacks Fizzy Drinks Sugar based cereal bars	they are not a healthy choice

Chewing Gum	it represents a litter problem
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If an item from the above list inadvertently appears in a child's lunchbox the child may be instructed to leave it in their bag for after school.

* Guidelines are taken from Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Primary Schools.

Action Plan

The presence of a fruit only small break and fruit and vegetable tastings encourages the development of healthier lifestyles amongst our children. Parents and teachers will organise activities during healthy eating week i.e. a visit from a local chef, food tastings, talks from parents/health professionals on the benefits of exercise, a sponsored walk, attendance of parents at a healthy eating seminar. Teachers will organise a variety of activities during healthy eating week i.e. lunchbox surveys, examination of the sugar content of foods and where food comes from, food from different countries. Teachers will promote healthy eating within the classroom and actively discourage the foods agreed upon in this policy.

The following strategies are recommended in order to develop a healthy eating awareness within the school.

1. Crisps and fizzy drinks are banned in lunchboxes.
2. The first break is a fruit break only.
3. A Healthy Eating Week should be held once a year.
4. Milk and Water are the only recommended drinks for children.
5. Teachers to plan healthy eating lessons during Healthy Eating Week. e.g. fruit and vegetable tastings, what a balanced meal consists of.
6. The promotion of healthy eating should be displayed around the school.

7. Sweets and bars should be kept to a minimum.
8. Emphasis on activity at break-times and during the school day.

Success Criteria

This policy should enhance teaching and learning by improving the eating of healthy, well-balanced lunches in the school, by improving the children's appreciation of how important good food and exercise are, and by developing an awareness of healthy lifestyles.

The effectiveness of this policy can be assessed by communication with staff members and parents.

Roles and responsibilities

Role of Parents:

Parents can promote healthy eating by providing healthy lunches for their children and by supporting the school ban on crisps and fizzy drinks. They can support the school by involvement in the organisation on activities during Healthy Eating Week and by attendance at healthy eating seminars.

3.

Role of Teachers

Teachers can promote healthy eating by developing an appreciation of a healthy lifestyle during class lessons on healthy eating, different nutritional values in food, an awareness of the variety of food and the importance of exercise. Regularly monitor children's lunchboxes to promote healthy eating. Foster a culture of healthy eating within the classroom.

Role of the Principal The Principal will promote and encourage healthy eating within the school.

Timeframe for Implementation

This policy should be fully implemented by Summer 2016.

Findings and feedback may take place at the end of the year.

Timeframe for Review

This policy should be reviewed when deemed necessary.

Responsibility for Review

Involved in this review will be the Principal, teaching staff, pupils and parents and the Board of Management.

Ratification and Communication

The above has been ratified by the Board of Management, Scoil Mhuire N. S., Howth, 18080A.

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date:

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