

HEALTHY EATING POLICY

Scoil Eoin Naofa, Ballyclough

Introductory Statement:

This document is a statement of the aims and objectives, principals and strategies for implementing a Healthy Eating Policy in Scoil Eoin Naofa, Ballyclough. It was originally formulated by the Health Committee in February 2006 and reviewed in 2009 and again in May 2014. Contributions were included from parents, pupils and teachers including the ISM team (In-School Management) and the Health Committee and Students Council.

Rationale:

This policy was devised to ensure

- That the children would benefit from a healthy diet during school hours, in accordance with the Government's National Health Promotion strategy 2000/2005.

That they would appreciate the value of Healthy Lunches in relation to their overall health. Our policy is in line with the Food & Nutrition Guidelines for Primary Schools in www.dohc.ie/publications/foodnutrition.html produced by Dept of Health and Children.

Aims:

- To promote healthy eating habits and a healthy body image among our pupils.
- To facilitate the implementation of Health Education and Health Promotion Programmes, in partnership with the Dept. of Education and Science in the implementation of SPHE consistent with the Health Promoting Schools concept.
- To enable the children to make informed decisions and choices about healthy eating now and in the future.
- To give the children the opportunity to sample fruit and vegetable options each term eg. Spooky Soup at Halloween, Smoothies and tasting of unusual fruits in terms 2 and 3.

CONTENT:

What we eat at school

- The children eat their lunch in the classroom. They bring in a packed lunch. Fizzy drinks, isotonic drinks, chewing –gum, lollipops and crisps are not permitted. Biscuits, wrapped cereals bars and Capri Sun are discouraged due to the high sugar content. (Capri Sun contains 10 spoonfuls of sugar!!)
- Fruit juices are to be kept to a minimum. Preferably they should be had at breakfast time as the Vitamin C helps to absorb the iron in breakfast cereals.
- Healthy Options are encouraged for students. They receive a leaflet from Safefood from time to time re Healthy Lunches during Healthy Eating Week in May. They also receive a copy of page 10 from *Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Primary Schools* i.e. The Healthy Lunchbox
- The children may bring in a treat sized bar on Friday.

- **How we use food at school**

- The teachers refrain from giving treats e.g. sweets as rewards.
- Treats are allowed on days of holidays e.g. Christmas & Easter & Summer
- Parental discretion is the norm on these days.
- Fizzy drinks are not allowed but they can have them on celebration days e.g. Holy Communion Saturday (It is the Parents' Assoc. who organize these events usually)
- Children are allowed drink water throughout the day. (They bring in their own.)
- **Messages:** Water and Milk are good choices.

Fruit drinks are NOT TOOTH FRIENDLY. Unsweetened fruit juice at breakfast time only.

- The staff like to have a bowl of fruit on staff-room table from time to time.

Our Healthy school Environment

- The Healthy Eating Policy is given to new pupils on their inception day.
- It is on the school web-site.
- Teachers have their own copy in their classrooms.
- Children sign up to a Charter of Healthy Choices whereby they agree to abide by the policy.(new in 2014)
- From September children will go to play and then eat their lunch when they come in.
- They have access to a wash-hand basin and towel.
- They take home their wrappers etc and fruit waste is put in compost bin by senior pupils at 2.30
- The children have a fruit break at 2pm. Infants have theirs at 12.
- Children only watch DVD's at lunchtime on very wet days.
- All teachers teach lessons on healthy eating e.g. the food pyramid as part of SPHE.

What we learn about food

- The teachers have a lot of resources which they use throughout the year in their SPHE lessons e.g. The North Western Health Board Books, Prim-Ed, Safe-food and Agri-aware, Incredible Edibles and more----
 - Healthy Behaviours are encouraged. Children are advised that there are no 'good' or 'bad' foods but there are good and bad eating habits. Portion sizes are investigated in senior classes and the reading of food labels is encouraged.
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2. What will happen if students/staff/parents don't support the policy?

- If children bring in discouraged foods they will be spoken to by the teacher on yard duty and cautioned and reminded about the contract.
 - If the same children continue to bring in 'oversized' treats they will have them confiscated and returned at 3pm.
 - Substitute teachers will be informed about the practice by the Health Promoting teacher.
 - Parents may have to be contacted by the teacher if a child continues to ignore the policy, in the interests of all children.
 - Exceptions may have to be made, on occasion, if a child doesn't have anything else to eat.
 - *To implement this policy effectively we are depending on the support and goodwill of parents and parents' association .The recommendation is to have no more than 1 serving per day from foods/drinks high in fat and sugar and ideally NOT every day.*
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Implementation.

The new policy will be put in place in last term of 2013-2014 yr.

Roles and Responsibilities.

Everyone in the school environment i.e. students, staff, parents, has a responsibility to make the policy work.

The Health Committee / Nutrition Policy team will continue to co-ordinate the policy but members will change from year to year and new students will be included. The Health Promoting teacher will continue to oversee the policy.

Responsibility for Review.

The Health Committee /Nutrition team and the In-School Management Team in consultation with the parents and teachers will review this policy in March 2017.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Eoin Naofa

on _____ Signed _____

(Chairperson B.O.M)

It was communicated to the staff and the Parents Association of Scoil Eoin Naofa.
