

Kinvara National School Healthy Eating Policy

Introduction

This policy was revised in 2019 by members of staff in consultation with other staff members, pupils and parents. It was decided at staff level that it was necessary to update previous policies to encourage pupils to become more aware of the need for healthy foods in their lunchboxes.

A healthy diet is crucial in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. It also plays a key role in school performance. For example, low intakes of sugar in the diet may promote concentration, lessen hyperactivity and general behaviour issues. Similarly, adequate nutrient intake will enable children to effectively participate in daily sport activities.

Findings of Irish adult and children nutrition surveys over the past ten years show that eating habits are not consistent with optimal health as excess consumption of fats, sugars and salt, and low consumption of fruits and vegetables are major problems in the Irish diet. There is therefore considerable room for improvement in eating habits in Ireland, and it is our aim to promote healthy eating in our school to encourage children to adopt this for life.

We believe that adults (staff, parents and carers) should be good role models and support the children in understanding how a balanced diet contributes to a person's health, happiness and general wellbeing.

Aims

The aims of our healthy eating policy are:

- To promote a whole school approach to healthy eating and nutrition
- To encourage a positive attitude towards food
- To understand the benefit of a healthy well-balanced diet

To develop an awareness that good eating habits formed in early childhood influence health and wellbeing throughout our lives

To explore food preferences in a balanced diet

To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy balanced diet

Objectives

Curriculum

There are many opportunities in the Primary School Curriculum for learning about food, nutrition and a healthy lifestyle.

The importance of balanced nutrition and healthy food choices are explicitly taught through the SPHE and Science curricula. Food and Nutrition is covered as part of the strand units: Taking Care of my Body (SPHE) and Myself (Science) at each class level.

Healthy Eating Week will be held annually in the school, where children will engage in activities to learn in greater detail about nutrition, healthy eating and wellbeing.

Breakfast

It is important for children's energy and concentration levels that they eat a nourishing breakfast before coming to school.

Healthy Lunch Guidelines

The Food Pyramid is an essential tool to communicate an understanding of healthy eating.

A healthy lunchbox includes a piece of food from each of the first four shelves of the food pyramid.

Food Pyramid-click to view

Bottom shelf carbohydrates and fruit/vegetables are especially encouraged.

Children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day from a non-spill bottle.

Foods from the top shelf of the pyramid are actively discouraged.

The following are some examples of quick, appetising and nutritious lunches for pupils:

- Apples, bananas, peaches, mandarins, plums, grapes, pineapple, kiwis
- Orange segments-Cucumber, sweetcorn, tomatoes, pepper slices, carrot/celery sticks
- Bread or rolls (preferably wholegrain or wholewheat varieties)
- Wraps, pitta breads, flatbreads-Rice, pasta-Plain rice cakes
- Wholemeal scones/crackers-Lean meat (e.g. chicken, turkey, ham etc.)
- Eggs (unless severe allergy in class)

-Tinned fish e.g. tuna

-Hummus, pesto, tapenade

-Milk

-Yoghurts

-Cheese

Water/milk
are the

ideal choices

It is encouraged that pupils have a role in preparing their lunches in order to promote responsibility of their own health and nutrition.

It is best practice that large wraps/rolls/sandwiches are cut into more manageable sizes for eating, particularly for children in younger classes.

We ask that children do not bring the following to school:

Foods known to be high in sugar, fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including the following:

Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)

Fizzy drinks or fruit juices

Sweets or bars
Cakes, doughnuts and sweet pastries/waffles
Chocolate spreads
Chocolate or sugary cereals
Chocolate biscuits/bars
Cereal bars (these can often contain as much sugar as chocolate bars)
Fruit winders
Chocolate or yogurt rice cakes
Chewing gum.
Fruity Friday
Children will be encouraged to bring a piece of fruit to eat on Fridays to promote an interest in eating fruits and vegetables and try different varieties.

Wholegrain Wednesday
Children will be encouraged to bring wholegrain foods in their lunches to promote a good intake of fibre.

Roles and Responsibilities in implementing our policy:

Role of Parents

To provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for their children
To encourage healthy eating
To inform the school of any child's special dietary needs/allergies
To implement the school's Healthy Eating Policy by not allowing their children to bring crisps, chocolate, sweets etc. to school

Role of Children

To eat their lunch
To bring home any uneaten lunch
To assist in the making of their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Eating Policy
To not bring crisps, chocolate, sweets etc. to school

Role of School Staff

To promote and encourage healthy eating
To educate children by teaching the appropriate curriculum content
To remind children of the school's Healthy Eating Policy

Green Schools

Being an Active Green School

Children are asked to bring home any lunch not eaten during the day.

Wrappers, tinfoil, plastic containers should be brought home and disposed of carefully.

Children are encouraged to use re-usable drinks bottles.

Allergies

Some children may have allergies to certain foods eg nuts, certain fruits etc. If your child has an allergy please inform the school. If it is a severe allergy this may determine what all the children in that class are permitted to include in their lunches. The school will ensure that the parents of the children in that class are informed.

Review

This document, completed in March 2019, was the result of a review of our original policy document which was first created in 2012 and now supersedes it. It will be reviewed again in 2021.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management by on the 11th of April 2019

Signed: Brian Connolly (Chairperson)

Signed: Dominic Gallagher (Principal)

Date: 1th of April 2019