



Our Lady's National School
Nurney
Co. Carlow

Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) programme we encourage the children to become more aware of the need to eat healthily.

As a Primary school we are also encouraged by the D.E.S. and the Department of Health and children in the light of increasing incidence of type two diabetes and obesity to promote healthy attitudes to food and eating in our school. We endeavour to do this by means of a healthy eating policy which is taught formally as part of the S.P.H.E. programme and in a practical manner by encouraging the children to bring healthy food for lunch.

Our school participates in the following healthy eating/lunch initiatives

- Agri Aware's Incredible Edibles
- The Food Dudes Programme (Board Bia)

Ideas for healthy lunches and leaflets with regard to same from safefood.eu and the H.S.E. Health Promotion Unit are disseminated to parents annually.

We encourage and acknowledge the support and co-operation of parents in this work and we fully acknowledge the right of every parent to provide for their children as they consider best.

Aims:

1. To promote the personal development and well-being of the child.
2. To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.
3. To inculcate healthy attitudes to food and eating at an early age.
4. To acknowledge the proven link between good nutrition and good learning.

Objectives:

1. To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy.
2. To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

Apart from the well-known health and dental reasons for healthy lunches, research has shown that much of poor concentration and hyperactivity in children is caused by nutritional imbalances. Imbalances in blood sugar levels, caused by eating sweet foods, also impair learning and concentration.

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre. We ask parents to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start.

Healthy Lunch Guidelines

The following guide is designed to help provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for children. They are suggestions and are by no means exhaustive. If any parent has any good ideas they would like to share we are always willing to take new ideas on board.

What could be in a healthy lunch?

- Sandwiches or rolls with cheese, meat or other fillings
- Pitta bread, crackers
- Fruit (peeled and chopped for small children)
- Raisins
- Vegetables (washed and chopped)
- Pasta
- Salad
- Small, plain biscuits (no chocolate)
- Yoghurt (easy to open)

What drinks could we include in a healthy lunch?

- Water
- Fruit juices
- Diluted drinks
- Milk
- Actimel
- Smoothies

Why children should drink milk in school...

Growing children should get approximately one pint of milk a day or its equivalent as cheese, yoghurt or milk pudding. This ensures that they get enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth. If a child does not drink a glass of milk at lunch, encourage him/her to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead.

Why drink water?

We need to drink water throughout the day to replace water used through metabolic activity and exercise. Studies have shown that children who had a drink of water at midday had improved concentration throughout the afternoon period.

Our pupils are encouraged to keep a bottle of water on their desk and to drink from it throughout the day.

Foods not allowed in school.

- Crisps
- Fizzy drinks
- Sweets
- Chocolate biscuits/bars
- Hot fast food
- Chewing Gum

Success criteria

We will adjudge this to policy to be a success if

1. The children enjoy healthy food in school.
2. The children realise the contribution a good diet makes to their overall development, growth and general well being.
3. If the policy wins general support from all the partners in Education involved in our school
4. If the children develop healthy attitudes toward food and eating.

We acknowledge the contribution and co-operation of all the partners in education in our school in the review of this policy.

Signed:

Ms. Genevieve Maher
Chairperson

Ms. Bríd Lalor
Principal

Date: _____
