

# SCOIL SAN EOIN HEALTHY EATING POLICY



## RATIONALE

Scoil San Eoin aims to help those in our school community: children, staff and parents, to develop positive attitudes towards healthy eating and to learn how healthy eating may contribute to our overall health and well-being. It is our policy that healthy eating be encouraged by pursuing both education for pupils and guidance for parents. Research suggests that attention and concentration levels improve with the consumption of nutritious food. We approach this policy with the understanding that ultimately children's appetites and tastes differ, and it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that his/her child eats healthily at all times.

## AIMS

- To help children and parents make healthy food choices
- To improve the children's concentration and energy levels
- To develop an awareness of nutrition i.e. ingredients of food and heighten awareness of the importance of a balanced diet

## GUIDELINES

- A healthy lunch-box contains a piece of food from the lowest 4 levels of the Food Pyramid.
- Suggested snacks for small break include fruit, raw vegetables, seeds, flapjacks, fruit yoghurts, fromage frais, crackers and raisins, dried fruit, whole-meal muffins, scones, or wholegrain/ digestive biscuits.
- Chewing gum, fizzy drinks **or energy drinks** are not permitted for health and safety and/or litter reasons.
- Healthier choices of drinks include water and milk. Pure unsweetened juices or well diluted sugar free squashes may be included. Other drinks such as sweetened fruit juices, fruit drinks, squashes, fizzy drinks should be avoided due to their sugar and/or acid content, as these are also harmful to teeth.
- \*Parents/Guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet must disclose this on the enrolment form and, upon admission, fill out the Special Dietary Needs Form (Appendix 1).

- As part of our Green School Programme we are trying to reduce the amount of packaging and waste in our school. Children are asked to bring home all packaging/peels etc. from their lunch. **All pupils must use a reusable drink bottle as part of their lunch. Plastic bottles are to be reused also**
- For safety reasons, cans and glass are not permitted.
- Hot drinks are permitted in the senior room but they must be left beside the sink during class.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HEALTHY EATING PLAN**

The staff will implement the policy within the context and methodology of the SESE, SPHE (Food Groups, The consequences of a poor diet, The Food Pyramid) and P.E curriculum. The following whole school approach will also be adopted.

- Lunches are eaten indoors before going out to play. This habit encourages the children to focus on eating their food and enjoying it.
- Food hygiene is recognised as an integral part of developing a healthy eating habit and will also be explored within the SPHE curriculum. **Pupils are encouraged to sanitize/ wash hands before eating. This habit is embedded in September.**
- The school will provide information regarding healthy eating habits to staff, children and parents. This information will include literature/resources available from relevant professional bodies. The school booklet, newsletter and parental notes will be used as a means of promoting healthy eating within the school environment.
- A copy of *The Healthy Food Pyramid* will be on display in the school and will be referred to regularly
- As an active school the staff of Scoil San Eoin recognise that healthy eating and exercise are inextricably linked and will, therefore, be promoted side by side within the context and methodology of the SPHE/P.E curricula.
- This policy will be implemented throughout the school and during all school activities (e.g. sports day, school tours, etc.). At school celebrations the Parents Association will be encouraged to offer fruit and healthy treats and also fruit juices/water rather than unhealthy drinks options.

- During the seasonal holidays (Halloween, Christmas & Easter) home baking will be requested by the Parents Reps and bought treats will only be used when necessary. Parents Reps will, where applicable, give individual portions/ goodie bags for treats and will also, where applicable, give physical treats (stickers/balloons/ stationery) in lieu of food treats.
- Every Friday the children are permitted to bring in one 'treat' in their lunchbox whilst still keeping up their healthy eating. If 'treats' are brought in by a pupil Monday-Thursday or a 'treat' is brought in on a Friday which the class teacher deems goes against this Healthy Eating policy e.g. sharing bag of crisps, then they will discreetly ask the pupil to put the treat into their bag and bring it home and eat it at a later time.
- If pupils continue to bring in inappropriate treats or treats on at an inappropriate time, the class teacher will contact the pupils' parents/guardians to discuss the matter.
- Class teachers have discretion to allow treats on other occasions or change the treat day e.g. Christmas holidays falling on a Wednesday, school tour etc. Pupils will be made available of this in class.

## **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Role of Parents:**

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children and in doing so encourage healthy eating.
- To **adhere** to school policy by not allowing their children to bring fizzy drinks, **energy drinks**, chewing gum and hot drinks (junior room) to school. To also ensure they only provide their child with an appropriate treat on a Friday unless otherwise directed by the school/class teacher.
- To provide their children with a reusable drink bottle.
- Inform the school of any child's special dietary needs or allergies.

### **Role of Children:**

- To eat their lunch and to bring in reusable drink bottles and lunchboxes.
- To help make their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Lunch Policy.
- Not to bring sweets, chocolate and crisps to school. (Mon to Thurs.) If brought to school children will not be allowed to eat it and they will be asked to take it home.

## **Role of School:**

- Observation of lunches and ongoing praise and encouragement for healthy lunches.
- If children present at school without lunch then the class teacher will contact parents/guardians
- If children present at school without lunch consistently **or** lunches which are not adhering to this policy, then the class teacher should contact the parents to reiterate the healthy eating policy in the school. If the difficulty continues the Principal will contact parents/guardians to discuss the problem.

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

The staff and school will also be supported in participating in relevant health promotions and programmes offered by other professional bodies (e.g. Action for Life programme, Healthy Eating Week, Food Dudes etc.)

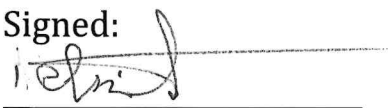
## **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

This policy will have been deemed effective if the children develop a habit of eating a healthy balanced lunch.

## **RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil San Eoin on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024. It will then be circulated to each teacher. It will then also be made available on the school website and parents will be notified that it was updated.

Signed:



Melanie Finnigan

Chairperson

Date: 18/1/24.



Linda Greene

Principal

Date: 18/1/24.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**PUPIL SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS**

**CHILD'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF BIRTH:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR CHILD'S DIETARY NEEDS:**

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**ACTION REQUIRED BY CLASS TEACHER/SCHOOL:**

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**PLEASE NOTE:**

1. Parents must inform the teacher/school in writing of any changes in the child's condition.
2. Where parents request that the school store or administer product/medication due to a child's dietary needs, the parents must comply with the school's Administration of Medicines Policy.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_