



Healthy Eating Policy.

Introduction.

Health education is important in that it enables people to obtain information and skills that will help them in making good decisions in relation to their health. When education is combined with appropriate policies, structures and support systems, the healthy choice becomes easier choice. (Dept of Health and Children. A Health Promotion strategy 1995 government Publications.)

St. James' National School is committed to developing an understanding of healthy living, an ability to implement healthy behaviour and a willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health. We believe that this is most effective if based on a consistency in approach and where responsibility is shared by parents, teachers, children, Board of Management, health professionals and relevant members of the community.

Education about healthy eating is provided in the broader context of the S.P.H.E. curriculum, which is spiral in nature and delivered with the support of a health promoting school ethos.

Rationale

This policy is a response to the fact that we accept that one of the aims of education as outlined in the White Paper is

“To promote physical and emotional health and well-being”

We take cognisance of reports of growing concerns over childhood illnesses related to poor diet and the acknowledgement of the link between healthy

eating and learning. Our school aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly learning environment where all partners are valued and facilitated to reach their full potential. A balanced diet provides the nourishment and energy to maximise life's opportunities.

Health habits adopted in early childhood will influence health and well-being both now and in the future. Developing health-promoting practises throughout his/her time in school can encourage the child to take increasing control over his/her own health and help to establish and maintain healthy behaviour from an early age. (Primary School Curriculum S.P.H.E. teacher Guidelines p.3) Our school ethos is central to this eating policy.

Content.

This policy is delivered in the context of the S.P.H.E. curriculum.

- Curriculum resources include the Walk Tall Programme and charts and literature provided by the Health Board and outside agencies.
- Lunch and break timetabling is adequate to allow children to eat lunches provided.
- A short break is scheduled from 11am-11.10am. Children have a small snack at this time.
- Lunch break/eating time is from 12.30 – 1.00pm. Children have their packed lunch at this time.
- The school acknowledges the special dietary needs of some children and strives to support them in any way possible. Staff are made aware of pupils that may have specific allergies and we do our best look after these pupils.
- Fizzy drinks, chewing gum, crisps, confectionery, sweets, bars and biscuits are not allowed. They may be given by class teachers on occasions as special treats.
- The importance of a wholesome breakfast in relation to memory and concentration is acknowledged.

Packed Lunches

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 (roughage).

The traditional packed lunch of milk and sandwiches is under attack from a range of convenience foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, chocolate and soft drinks. Parents and teachers are concerned about this trend but some find it difficult to come up with popular healthy alternatives.

We will ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start. Also, please, only give your child something you feel he/she can easily manage to eat.

The following guide is designed to help you provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for your children.

Bread & Alternatives

Bread or rolls.

Rice.

Pasta.

Potato Salad.

Scones.

Savouries

Meat.

Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines.

Cheese.

Quiche, Pizza.

Fruit & Vegetables

Apples, Banana, Peach, Plum, Pineapple cubes, , Orange segments, Grapes, Fruit Salad, Dried fruit, Tomato, Cucumber, Sweetcorn, Coleslaw, Celery.

Drinks

Milk.

Fruit juices.

Soup

Yoghurt (frubes are discouraged as they tend to be messy).



Start with the Basics

A healthy packed lunch should contain bread or an alternative, a savoury filling which provides protein, a suitable drink and some fruit and/or vegetables.

Peanuts/Nuts

We have children in the school with an allergic reaction to peanuts/nuts. We try to avoid giving children peanuts in their lunches. If a child does have a bar with nuts/nut based spread please do ask them to tell the teacher so that safe provisions can be made.

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers will be responsible for delivery of formal lessons and informal guidance in the area of health and nutrition.

Parents of St. James' National School as partners in education are asked to support and encourage this healthy eating policy. Suggestions and comments in relation to this policy are encouraged in the spirit of democracy and ownership.

Timeframe for Implementation

This policy was updated in June 2020 and will be reviewed in June 2023 or when necessary.

Ratified by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson B.O.M.

Principal