



Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa

St. Kevin's Primary School

Gleann dá Loch, Co. Chill Mhantáin

Glendalough, Co. Wicklow

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Introduction

With this policy we aim to help our school community, to develop a positive lifelong attitude towards healthy eating. We wish to foster 'the personal development and well-being of the child and to provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects'. (SPHE Guidelines)

Healthy eating begins at home and is supported and built upon by the encouragement of healthy eating habits at school. This policy is designed to ensure that Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa can support the work of parents in relation to encouraging students to eat healthily thereby creating a healthy happy school for our children.

Rationale

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, we at Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa encourage our children to become more aware of the need for healthy foods in their lives.

Healthy eating:

- Can improve concentration and performance in class and at play
- Is essential for optimal growth, development and health potential
- Can improve physical and mental health and fitness
- Enables our children to grow into healthy adults with good eating habits

Aims & Objectives

- To promote healthy eating across school life, consistent with national healthy eating guidelines and school curriculum
- Support and encourage healthy eating habits in children, which is hoped will become lifelong habits
- To encourage a positive attitude to food
- To educate about different foods
- To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing, developing and staying healthy.
- To inform the adults of the school community about healthy eating in school and outside school
- To have a healthy school community

Guidelines

'Good food habits set early in childhood can last a lifetime. Lunches provide around one third of our daily nutritional needs, so it's important to put some thought and planning into them. Here are some tips on how to prepare a healthy lunchbox that your child will enjoy.' (HSE, Safe Food Guidelines)

Lunchboxes should contain:

- At least one portion from the fruit and vegetables food group
- One portion from the meat and meat alternatives food group
- One portion from the bread and cereals group
- One portion from the dairy products food group


Here are some useful examples from each food group that you could choose:


<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Vegetables, salad and fruit</u></p> <p>At least one portion from the fruit and vegetables food group...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 medium apple, orange, banana, pear or similar size fruit• 2 small fruits – plums, kiwis, mandarins or similar size fruit• A small glass (150ml) of unsweetened fruit juice• Half a tin (3 tablespoons or 4 dessertspoons) of fruit in its own juice• 1 small bunch of grapes (10 grapes)• 1 small salad (for example, dessert bowl sized salad of lettuce, tomato, cucumber and celery sticks)• 3 tablespoons or 4 dessertspoons of vegetables (for example, chopped or grated carrots)• A bowl of homemade vegetable soup in a thermos flask for older children• A small pot of fruit salad• A small salad box	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts</u></p> <p>One portion from the meat and meat alternatives food group...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 slices (50–75g) of cooked meat• 1–2 eggs (hard-boiled, sliced or mashed)• A small can (100g) of tuna, salmon, mackerel or sardines• 4 tablespoons of hummus - try out as a dip with carrots or celery
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice</u></p> <p>One portion from the bread and cereals group which would be...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 thin slices of wholemeal bread• 1 small wholemeal bread roll• 1 wholemeal tortilla wrap• 1 wholemeal pitta bread• 4–6 wholemeal crackers or breadsticks• 1 cup of cooked brown rice, pasta or couscous• 1 small wholemeal bagel	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Milk, yoghurt and cheese</u></p> <p>One portion from the dairy products food group...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 glass or mini-carton of milk (200ml)• A pot of natural or low-fat yoghurt (125ml)• 2 cheese triangles• 2 thumbs (25g) of cheese such as cheddar, edam or gouda varieties


Suitable drinks for children – HSE guide

- It is important that children take in enough fluids during the day. If they do not drink enough, they may become dehydrated, thirsty, tired and weak.
- Drinks should always be included for break-time and lunch.
- Plain water and milk are the most suitable drinks for children.
- Because of its natural sugar content, unsweetened fruit juice should only be consumed with meals and ideally diluted (one part juice to ten parts water).
- If you are unsure about whether a drink contains added sugar, check the ingredients list. Less common terms for sugar that may appear on the ingredients list are sucrose, fructose, glucose, maltose, dextrose and syrup.

See below a HSE guide table for suitable drinks.

 • Milk (low-fat preferably)
• Plain water
Plain water and milk are the best choice at any time.













 • Unsweetened fruit juice (fruit juice from concentrate is suitable also if it does not contain added sugar)
• Flavoured milk*
• Diluted sugar-free squash
• Yoghurt or milk drinks*
• Smoothies**
• Fruit juice drink (unsweetened)
Limit to a small glass once a day and its best to have it at mealtimes.

 • Fruit Juice drink (sweetened)
• Fizzy drinks (including diet versions)
Don't provide important nutrients and are not tooth friendly.

* Compare brands and choose those that are lower in sugar

** Homemade smoothies using whole fruit are best

The following planner shows you some examples of snacks and lunch items.

Monday								
1 medium wholemeal bread roll with tomato and cheese	+		+	Handful of carrot sticks	+	Pot of low-fat yoghurt	+	
Tuesday								
Small wholemeal pitta bread with tuna and sweetcorn	+		+	½ wholemeal scone	+		+	
Wednesday								
2 tablespoons of wholemeal pasta with 1 tablespoon of tomatoes and vegetables	+		+	2 wholemeal crackers with low-fat cheddar cheese	+		+	
Thursday								
2 slices of wholemeal bread with cooked ham and lettuce	+	Slices of pepper, cucumber, sugar snap peas or mangetout	+		+	Pot of low-fat yoghurt	+	
Friday								
Wholemeal tortilla wrap with chicken, sliced peppers and lettuce	+		+	Small tub of stewed fruit	+	6 cherry tomatoes	+	

Treat Days, Special Days and Celebrations

- Friday will be our treat day. On treat days pupils are allowed a small portion from the top shelf of the food pyramid e.g. fun size chocolate bar/small iced bun/biscuits.
- Foods with artificial additives and colours e.g. Smarties, M & M's, boiled sweets, cereal bars etc. should be avoided.
- For special events and celebrations e.g. food festivals, food demonstrations, end of term parties treat foods may be allowed. Staff will remind the children that this is an "occasional" treat and not "every day food".

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

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

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks), salted nuts, popcorn
- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc.)
- Sweets, bars, jellies
- Cake/s, pastries, doughnuts
- Chocolate biscuits/bars
- Cereal bars (these can often contain as much sugar as chocolate bars)
- Chewing gum
- Fruit winders
- Lollipops

If such foods are brought to school, children will be asked to bring them home in their lunchboxes.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

School staff will develop student understandings of healthy eating and nutrition within the curriculum program.

Formal and informal lessons will address nutrition, digestion, good health habits, hygiene, the food pyramid etc. through SPHE, PE and Science.

Our Healthy Lunch initiative is an ongoing, habit forming process, whereby the children accept that certain foods are more suitable than others at lunch time.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of Parents

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children
- Encourage healthy eating
- Inform the school of any child's special dietary needs
- To implement school policy

Role of Children

- To eat their lunch
- To bring home any uneaten lunch
- To help make their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Eating Policy
- Not to bring chewing gum, crisps, chocolate bars, sweets etc. to school except on treat days

Role of School Staff

- To promote and encourage healthy eating
- To educate children by teaching the appropriate content from the curriculum
- To encourage and monitor the class to ensure all aspects of policy are implemented and upheld

Healthy Eating at Home

We cannot stress enough the importance of the children developing healthy eating habits throughout their day both at home and in school.

Getting a good breakfast each morning before they come to school and a healthy dinner in the evenings is vital for their health and development.

‘The Department of Health keeps dietary recommendations under review as part of its role in promoting evidence based public health. As part of this review, the **Healthy Food for Life** – the Healthy Eating Guidelines and Food Pyramid have been developed by the Department working in partnership with other experts in nutrition in Ireland. Healthy Food for Life is a toolkit which includes the updated Food Pyramid and guidance materials to help people make choices to maintain a healthy, balanced diet. The resources reflect best national and international evidence and advice. The guidance applies for everyone from 5 years of age upwards.’

The key messages are:

- Eat more fruit, salad and vegetables, at least 5 to 7 servings a day
- Use the Pyramid as a guide for serving sizes and remember that portion size matters
- Limit intake of high fat, sugar, salt (HFSS) food and drinks
- Increase your physical activity levels
- Small changes can make a big difference.

Please click here for further details:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/health/healthy-eating-guidelines/>

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and amended as deemed necessary.

Communication and Ratification

This Healthy Eating policy was made available to parents/guardians, and school staff for consultation before being ratified by the Board of Management. The policy will be published on the school website.