

Inch National School

Policy on Healthy Eating

Approval Date	March 2018	Responsibility for Implementation	Board Of Management/Staff/Parents Guardians
Next Review Date	March 2021		
Approved by Chairperson Board of Management			
Date			

1.0 Policy Statement:

Inch National School, through this policy, aim to help all in our school community, children, staff and parents/guardians to develop positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to understand and appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health. We wish to promote 'the personal development and wellbeing of the child and to provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects'. (SPHE Guidelines)

2.0 Aim

The aim of this policy is to

- To develop and support healthy eating in the school
- To encourage the children to understand the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and remaining healthy.
- To make the "healthier choice the easier choice"
- To promote nutritional awareness e.g. looking at the ingredients in food- what are the healthier options?
- To ensure levels of concentration and energy within class through the consumption of healthy food.
- To support and encourage healthy eating habits in children which it is hoped will become lifelong eating habits
- To provide members of staff, parents and those involved in school activities with clear information
- To protect the health and safety of children with nutrition related disease (e.g. Type 1 Diabetes or Coeliac), adverse food sensory issues (e.g. autism) and serious food intolerance and allergy
- To support the school's environmental policy in insisting on reusable containers, minimum use of wrappers etc.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities:

- Parents/Guardians have a responsibility to provide lunches that support children's' continuing health by including a variety of food and drinks.
- Children have a responsibility to eat their own lunch, and not to share or trade food or drink with others.
- Teachers/Staff and Parents/Guardians have a shared responsibility to provide a good example to children through their own health eating habits.
- The whole school community- staff parents/guardians, children will work together to promote the progress of this policy.
- All are encouraged to discuss and provide feedback on this policy and this will reported back as appropriate to the Staff/ Principal/Parents & Board of Management.
- The overall performance of the policy will be regularly monitored and evaluated by the Board of Management Principal/Staff and parent body.

5.0 Guidelines.

A healthy lunch box includes:

1. At least 2 portions from the bread, cereals, rice, pasta and potato group.
2. One portion from the meat and the meat alternatives group.
3. 2/3 portions from fruits, vegetables and salad.

4. One to two (for older children from 9 years+) portions from the dairy products.
5. Due to the incidence of severe allergy to peanuts and mixed nuts amongst some pupils, we ask you to be vigilant in the following:
 - Avoid peanuts or any other type of nut in school lunches.
 - Avoid giving peanut butter sandwiches, chocolate spreads containing nuts such as Nutella, nut based breads and cereal/health bars containing nuts.
 - Ask children not to share their lunches.
 - If your child has eaten peanuts/nuts before coming to school, please be sure your child's hands and face have been thoroughly washed before entering the school.

Occasional foods such as sweets, crisps and fizzy drinks should not be included in your child's lunchbox.

Here are some tasty lunchbox suggestions:

- Fruit (for example, an apple (chopped for younger children) or banana, handful of grapes (cut correctly to prevent choking)
- Washed, raw vegetable pieces (for example, sticks of carrot, celery, pepper and cucumber.
- Washed, raw vegetables (for example, cherry tomatoes)
- Half a tin of fruit (in its own juice)
- Plain breadsticks, unsalted plain or wholewheat crackers, crispbreads or water biscuits served with fruit or cheese.
- Plain rice cakes (not chocolate flavoured)
- Natural or low fat yogurt with fresh fruit (fresh, frozen or tinned in its own juice)
- Wholemeal, fruit or plain scones.
- Sugar-free jelly pots or fruit jelly.
- Pots of custard or rice pudding.
- Pasta or rice
- Cheese – cut into cubes or 'fingers'
- Hummus
- Olives

Healthy choices of drink include water, milk and unsweetened natural juice. Children should be encouraged to use re-useable containers for safety and litter reasons. Cans and glass bottles are not permitted for issues of safety.

According to the HSE; "there are no recommendations for the amount of water or other fluids children need. However, like adults, to stay healthy it is important for children to replace the water they lose to prevent dehydration.

6.0 Special Considerations

One treat size bar or equivalent is allowed on a Friday; to help promote a healthy attitude towards food.

Treats may be allowed with prior permission of Staff on special occasions.

7.0 Special Dietary Requirements

Parents/Guardians to inform class Teacher of any special dietary requirements.

8.0 Implementation:

Pupils are encouraged to bring healthy lunches. Pupils, who bring healthy lunches are praised and encouraged. Healthy lunches are made of a variety of foods from the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid. Food and drink from the top shelf of the food pyramid are not encouraged.

It is very difficult to implement the policy successfully if all children do not adhere to the guidelines. It is also not fair on the children who comply with our Healthy Eating Policy to see children who clearly do not obey the rules.

Timeframe for implementation:

Phase 1: Draft policy developed by parent body at request of Principal September 2017.

Phase 2: Draft to be reviewed by Principal/Staff and possibly students.

Phase 3: Final Draft for submission to Board of Management.

Phase 4:

1. The focus is to be on praising and encouraging healthy eating in the school.
2. The Healthy Eating Policy will be published on the school website.
3. The Healthy Eating Policy will be included in the new parents information pack.
4. The P.A. will organise health eating workshops with a dietician if there is sufficient interest among the parent body.
5. Healthy eating lessons, activities and awareness will be incorporated into Active Schools Week.
6. Healthy Eating will be taught and promoted and part of the school's SPHE curriculum.

9.0 Review

Policy to be reviewed in March 2021.