Scoil Bhríde

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Healthy Eating Policy

**Introductory Statement:**

Our policy on healthy lunch boxes was formulated in 2004 as a result of a visit from the school nurse, who explained the benefits of becoming a Health Promoting School. Subsequently a ballot of all the parents was held to ascertain their willingness to participate in the Healthy Eating initiative. The Board of Management was informed.

**Rationale:**

We focused on this policy to support parents and pupils around developing healthy eating habits at an early age. This policy is linked to:

1. SPHE: Taking Care of My Body: Food & Nutrition and Making Choices
2. Science: Myself: Human Life Processes
3. We are also part of the HSE “Health Promoting Schools”

**Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School:**

At Scoil Bhríde we cherish all the pupils equally and to aid them in achieving their true potential we propose to introduce the healthy eating option as the brain needs a number of different nutrients that work synergistically to help it function optimally.

**Aims:**

At Scoil Bhríde we hope that by introducing this healthy eating policy we will:

* Heighten an awareness of the importance of a balanced diet.
* Encourage the children to make wise choices about food and nutrition.
* Encourage pupils to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems caused by junk food, pre-prepared food, juice cartons etc to support our ‘Green Schools’ initiative
* To help children improve concentration, learning and energy levels
* To support parents and children make healthy enjoyable decisions around food

**Guidelines:**

* A healthy lunch should have some foods from each of the four food groups –
1. *Carbohydrate food* – bread (wholemeal if possible), wraps, pitta bread, rice cakes, crackers, rolls and baps.
2. *Protein group* – cold meats or fish such as ham, turkey, chicken, tuna.
3. *Vitamins & minerals* – any fresh fruit: mini boxes of raisins, dried fruit such as mango, apricots or dates, carrot sticks, salads and vegetables.
4. *Calcium* – Yoghurt drinks, yoghurt pots, cheese.
* Cans & glasses are discouraged for safety and litter reasons. Healthier choices of drink include water, milk, and unsweetened juice.
* Foods which have wrappers are to be kept to a minimum and disposed of properly to reduce litter and protect our school environment.
* All classes will receive lessons on healthy eating through the SPHE and Science curriculum.
* School staff will provide positive modelling and supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.
* Crisps, fizzy drinks, sweets, cakes, buns, muffins, breakfast bars, biscuits, chewing gum and chocolate bars are not permitted.
* Due to a child with severe nut allergies, nuts, spreads containing nuts e.g. peanut butter, Nutella etc. are not permitted.
* Parents are made aware of our healthy eating policy in our school prospectus upon enrolment. This policy is available for perusal in the office by parents on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays during term time and available on the school website.
* This policy will be promoted in each classroom by the class teacher. If children bring discouraged food/drink to school they will be asked not to eat it and to take it home.

**Exceptions:**

* End of term parties, school trips, matches and use of sweets as treats during the first few days of induction class
* Celebration days

**Roles & Responsibility**

The staff will co-ordinate the progress of the policy. Teachers give good example through their own healthy eating habits. The following have particular responsibilities for implementing and upholding the policy:

 Board of Management

 Principal

 All staff members

**Implementation Date**

The Board of Management were in full support of this policy since its implementation in 2004.

**Timeframe for Review**

This healthy eating policy was reviewed in February 2009 and will be reviewed again in February 2010.

**Ratification & Communication**

This policy was officially ratified by the Board of Management on …………………

This healthy eating policy will be distributed and communicated to all staff members.

Once ratified parents will be notified of its existence and invited to look over and comment on the policy, which will be available in the office on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays during school term.

Signed:

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Ms Maura O’Brien - Chairperson B.O.M. Date

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Ms Miriam Burke - Principal Date