



Dúnghaois d'Ithe Sláintiúil / Healthy Eating Policy

Rationale :

At Gaelscoil an Chaistil we recognize the importance of a healthy lifestyle and diet and understand that establishing a balanced diet in childhood helps establish healthy eating habits for life. In order for us all to meet our full potential we need to be healthy and fit – physically, mentally and socially. This policy states the ways in which our school community supports pupils to develop the skills and attitudes that will help them make informed healthy choices both in and out of school.

Aims of the Policy :

- To ensure pupils are well nourished at school.
- To increase pupils' knowledge of healthy eating and nutrition.
- To present consistent, informed messages about healthy eating within school through all school practices.
- To ensure that food provision in the school reflects the medical and ethical requirements of children and staff, for example, allergenic, medical, religious, ethnic and vegetarian needs.
- To discourage the consumption of food and drink that is viewed by nutritionists as unhealthy ie. fizzy drinks, sweets or chewing gum, crisps and chocolate bars/biscuits

The School hopes to work towards these aims in partnership with all parents and carers. The school is a NUT-FREE area.

Provision of food and drink across the school day :

Mid morning snack

A specific time is set aside each day so that children can avail of a small mid-morning snack. In Naíscoil an Chaistil, this is provided by staff. From Rang 1 to 7 a break is sent in by parents. This break should consist of one or two items, ie. fruit or a fruit yoghurt (not chocolate or dessert like yoghurt)

Packed Lunches

Parents who choose to send their children to school with a packed lunch are encouraged to support the school's healthy eating policy by providing a healthy, balanced packed lunch. All parents will be provided with a guide to healthy lunches. Children's lunches will be monitored on an on-going basis.

School Lunches

The Government introduced compulsory National Nutritional Standards for school lunches in April 2001 and have updated them yearly. These standards apply to the hot midday meals prepared for pupils.

Rewards

Praise and attention are used to help develop children's self esteem and to act as a positive reward for good behaviour and if other forms of rewards are used they do not conflict with our healthy eating principles.

Special Events

The school will ensure that healthy options are available when hosting large school events like Christmas parties or Sports Day and sweet and fatty foods will be limited. We will also ensure that we take into account children and parents with allergenic, medical, religious, ethnic and vegetarian needs. We permit parents to bring in cupcakes to distribute among classmates in the event of a birthday celebration.

Children with Special Needs

All staff are made aware of any medical/allergic conditions of individual children through staff meetings and discussion. Information relating to individual needs is discussed with all parents before their child's admission to School.

Food Hygiene

Children are always reminded about the importance of hand washing before eating or handling food.

Whenever children work with food in the classroom they are helped to follow basic hygiene routines including; wearing a food preparation apron, using clean equipment, always washing hands before and after working with the food, using an individual spoon etc. when tasting food.

Monitoring and Assessing the Policy

The school food and healthy eating policy is to be monitored by the co-ordinator and Headteacher. It will be reviewed on a planned two yearly cycle.