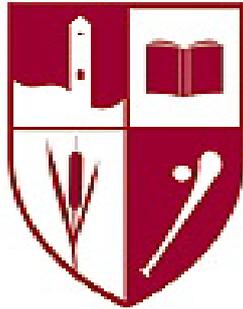


# St Kevin's Primary School



## ST. KEVIN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL Healthy Eating Policy

### MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Governors and staff of St. Kevin's Primary School, believe the school to be a vital part of St. John's Parish community. We are firmly committed to:

- the aims of Catholic Education;
- providing appropriate and effective learning opportunities for all our children;
- developing positive pastoral care systems in our school;
- establishing close links with the home, parish and wider community; and
- developing all members of the school community to enable them to fulfil their role within the school.

**Date of publication: Nov 2012**  
**Date of review: Nov 2015**

## **RATIONALE**

As a Health Promoting School, the governors and staff of St Kevin's Primary School are committed to encouraging and developing positive attitudes towards food and a healthy diet. In accordance with the **Every Child Matters Agenda** 2004/2005, and to support the five outcomes for children, promoting a healthy life style is integral to our curriculum and we recognise the importance of offering children the opportunity to make informed choices about what, when, where and why they eat.

As a school we know that food is fundamental to the quality of a child's life, not just in providing essential nutrition but in communicating and sharing positive values, attitudes and experiences with each other.

We believe that adults (staff, parents and carers) should be good role models and should support the children in understanding how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and general well-being.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:**

- to improve the health of pupils, staff and the whole school community by helping to influence eating habits through increasing knowledge and awareness of food issues including what constitutes a healthy diet;
- to ensure pupils are well nourished at school and that every pupil has access to safe, tasty and nutritious food and a safe, easily available water supply during the school day;
- to ensure that food provision in the school acknowledges the ethical and medical requirements of staff and pupils e.g. religious, vegetarian, medical and allergenic needs;
- to introduce and promote practices within the school to reinforce these aims and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

## **ORGANISATION - CURRICULUM**

We regard healthy eating education as a whole-school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum.

Healthy eating education forms an important part of our school's curriculum. The importance of balanced nutrition and healthy food choices is explicitly taught through the The World Around Us and PDMU curriculum.

All pupils should have the opportunity to learn about safe food preparation and to learn about where food has come from. Pupils learn about the requirements for plant growth, the food chain and the components of a healthy diet through The World Around Us curriculum.

## ORGANISATION – MANAGEMENT OF EATING

At St Kevin's Primary School we have agreed the following statements:

- All children are welcome to attend the daily Breakfast Club which offers a healthy breakfast.
- All children will be encouraged to eat only fruit or vegetables at break time.
- All children are encouraged to bring in a water bottle so they can have access to water throughout the day.
- Chocolate, sweets, biscuits, crisps, and cakes are actively discouraged as everyday snacks in school or as part of lunch boxes. Chewing gum and fizzy drinks are not permitted on the school premises or while the children are representing the school. Cereal bars are also discouraged because these can often contain as much sugar as chocolate bars.
- Children's lunch boxes should offer balanced nutrition. Parents are encouraged to offer a variety of healthy foods in accordance with the '**Guide to Healthy Eating**' (*Appendix 1*) which is made available to parents. The guidance recommends a balanced selection of foods which should be available to the children in their lunch box.
- Because we recognise that there is no such thing as "bad food", we teach the children to enjoy treats in moderation.
- Birthdays, and special events such as Christmas parties in class are also times where food contributes to a sense of celebration and sharing. On these occasions foods other than fruit or vegetables may be offered, but the staff should remind the children that this is an occasional treat and not every day food.
- The school community is aware of the possibility of food allergies within the school population, particularly nut allergies. Parents or carers of children who are on special diets for medical or religious reasons, or who have allergies, will be asked to provide as much information as possible about which foods are suitable or foods which must be avoided. This information should be displayed in the staff room, school office and in the school dining area.
- Pupils are taught not to share packed lunches and parents are reminded about the need to avoid sending in packed lunches containing nuts. This is communicated through the school newsletter / website.
- St Kevin's can not guarantee that all parents will comply with this request and for that reason the school does not purport to be a "nut free school".
- Portion size– no child is made to finish all the food that they are offered because we know that appetites vary from person to person. However, we do actively encourage the children to 'try a little bit more' if they can to ensure that they are not hungry later on in the day.

## **SCHOOL MEALS**

The school meals service is offered through the Belfast Education and Library Board. We work closely with the school cook and with the BELB Catering Services to ensure the healthiest possible meals.

There are strict guidelines determining the meals that are available throughout the course of the week and these are in accordance with the new **Healthy Food Standards in Schools** which came into force in 2006.

The weekly school lunch menu is displayed in the front entrance for parents, the dining hall and in each classroom. The weekly lunch menu is also available to parents to take home to discuss meal choices with their children.

The principal and vice principal should monitor the quality of the meals on a regular basis.

## **DINING ROOM CODE OF CONDUCT**

We will:

- respect the children at all times;
- give the children time and space to eat in a calm and attractive environment;
- help the children to see that enjoying food and eating meals with others contributes to a happy lifestyle;
- encourage the children to find out more about achieving a healthy balance;
- encourage the children to try new foods and flavours in a supportive environment;
- promote school food to children and parents;
- listen to and accept constructive feedback and respond accordingly.

The dining room is well staffed with midday supervisors who assist the children in a variety of ways such as keeping table surfaces clean and tidy and assisting the children with their meals.

The tables and chairs are bright and attractive and allow for the pupils to sit in friendship groups promoting the idea that lunch times are a happy, social occasion.

Children should be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners at lunch time and should be given plenty of time to eat. This may be achieved by:

- sitting freely with their friends;
- being encouraged to try a wide range of foods at lunchtimes to develop a taste for a greater variety of foods and achieve a balanced diet;
- entering and leaving the dining hall in an orderly way; to show respect for other diners;
- parents or carers will be advised if their child is not eating well;
- demonstrating good manners in the hall e.g. using quiet partner voices and saying “please” and “thank you”;
- seeking permission from a Supervisor before leaving the dining / lunch area.

## **THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL**

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that staff and parents are informed about the Healthy Eating Policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively.

It is the school's role to ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively.

The school should liaise with external agencies regarding the healthy eating education programme and ensure that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy and work within this framework.

## **THE ROLE OF PARENTS**

The school is aware that the primary role model in children's healthy eating education lies with parents. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we should:

- inform parents about the school healthy eating education policy and practice;
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing school policy and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to healthy eating so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school.

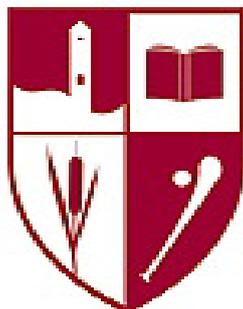
## **ROLE OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

The Board of Governors is responsible for monitoring the Healthy Eating Policy. The governors will support the principal in following guidelines from external agencies. Governors will inform and consult with parents about the healthy eating policy as required.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATING**

As part of the school's monitoring and evaluation process, we continually keep abreast of new and effective initiatives and adapt our practice accordingly. Therefore this policy should be reviewed by the Vice Principal, Pastoral Care Team and the Senior Leadership Team in 2015.

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**Date of review: Jan 2015**