

Healthy Eating Policy



St Benignus NS, Balscadden

1.0 Introductory Statement

Good nutrition is essential for school children. Physical activity is integral to any healthy eating programme and hence should also be promoted and encouraged.

In consultation with the Principal and staff, a sub-committee of the Parents' Association reviewed and updated the school's healthy eating policy. The involvement of teachers, parents and older children (each important role models) in drawing up the policy ensures that children receive consistent messages both at home and at school.

2.0 Rationale

2.1 Healthy eating is an essential component of the overall health of children and as such is part of the holistic education that St. Benignus advocates in its education philosophy and mission statement. The adoption of a whole school approach ensures that healthy eating messages are part of every aspect of school life.

2.2 Healthy eating is part of the SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) food and nutrition curriculum programme for each primary school class. Research suggests that the provision of nutritious school food enhances not only the child's health but also allows the child to take full advantage of the education provided by improving attention levels and concentration spans.

2.3 Key healthy eating messages that are consistent and fact based assist children in decision making and forming of attitudes and beliefs around healthy eating.

3.0 Aims

3.1 To assist all involved in our school community, children, parents and staff, to develop positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to appreciate the contribution that good foods make to health.

3.2 To improve the opportunities for our children to grow into healthy adults and to

heighten an awareness of the importance of a balanced diet.

3.3 To raise levels of concentration within class due to consumption of healthy food.

3.4 To encourage children to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems caused by junk food, pre-prepared food, juice cartons etc.

4.0 Healthy Eating Guidelines

4.1 A healthy lunchbox includes food from each of the first four shelves of the food pyramid. The children will learn about the food pyramid and healthy lunch boxes in September and will be reminded of this during Active Week. Information on the food pyramid can be accessed by visiting www.safefood.eu

4.2 A healthy choice of **drink** includes water, milk and fruit juices. No fizzy drinks allowed. Yoghurts/yoghurt drinks not recommended in infant classes for practical reasons.

4.3 We ask that the children do not bring the following to school: Sweets, chocolate bars, biscuits, chocolate spread, cereal bars, crisps, popcorn, chewing gum, lollipops, fizzy drink, energy drinks.

4.4 Please try to include some crunchy food, such as carrot sticks, as the jaw exercise helps the children to develop clear speech.

4.5 Parents should inform the school if a child is on a special diet or has an allergy i.e. nuts, egg etc. Once teachers are aware of a child's special needs they can advise against swapping and sharing of food.

4.6 Milk is provided in the school at a subsidised rate.

4.7 Parents' Association will endeavour to provide a fruit and vegetable tasting experience for the children during Active Week.

5.0 Green Schools Initiative

At St. Benignus, we have worked very hard to acquire and retain our Green School flags. With this in mind, the children are asked to take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, fruit peel, wrappings, containers and cartons.

Five-day lunch suggestions:

Monday: 1 medium roll with lettuce and chicken + banana + handful of carrot sticks + pot of yoghurt + bottle of water.

Tuesday: Small pitta bread with cheese and salad + orange + wholemeal scone + portion of melon + carton of milk.

Wednesday: 3 tablespoons of cous-cous/pasta with tuna and sweet corn + grapes + yoghurt + carton of unsweetened fruit juice.

Thursday: 2 slices of wholegrain bread with unprocessed cooked ham and lettuce + small container of fruit in own juices + apple + portion of + bottle of water.

Friday: Tortilla wrap with chicken, sliced peppers and lettuce + kiwi + small tub of stewed fruit + 1 rice-cake + carton of milk.

6.0 Review and evaluation procedures.

We will keep this policy under review and revise it according to its success in encouraging healthy eating and promoting good health in the school.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ (date)

Signed: _____
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____