

# St Mary's PS Killesher



## Healthy Eating Policy

Signature of Chair of BOG: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of School Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: June 2024

Review date: June 2027

***Article 24 of UNCRC "Every child has the right to the best possible health."***

A healthy diet is essential for maintaining and protecting children's health, for ensuring they perform to their full potential during the school day (both academically and physically) and for their growth and development. The seeds of good health are sown in childhood, and good nutrition is essential for good health.

## **Aim**

At St Mary's Primary School we aim to:

- Create an environment, which promotes the health and well-being of all staff and pupils.
- Deliver Healthy Eating Education within the curriculum in a way that is meaningful, and which complies with statutory requirements.
- Ensure that all aspects of school life promote positive healthy Eating messages.
- Encourage the active involvement of parents, community and health service agencies to advise, support and contribute to the promotion of good health.
- Deliver Health Education as a cross-curricular issue and take every opportunity to address the issue as an integral part of teaching.

## **Purpose**

- To ensure that pupils have the opportunity to choose healthy meals and snacks in school.
- To encourage a healthy lifestyle through the association of healthy food with exercise and the promotion of health-enhancing habits.
- To promote a positive outlook on life and an awareness of the consequences of healthy and unhealthy choices.

## **Benefits of Healthy Eating**

- Healthy Eating is essential if you are to lead a full and active life.
- Helps young people develop, grow and do well in school.
- Prevents childhood and adolescent health problems such as obesity, eating disorders, tooth decay and anaemia.
- May help prevent health problems later in life, including heart disease and cancer.
- Establishing healthy eating habits at a young age is critical because changing poor eating patterns in adulthood can be difficult. Sitting down to a meal with other children is an important part of a child's social education.

## **Consequences of Unhealthy Eating**

- Hungry children are more likely to have behavioural, emotional and academic problems at school.
- Research suggests that not having breakfast can affect children's intellectual performance.
- Poor eating habits and inactivity are the root cause of overweight and obesity. The percentage of young people who are overweight has almost doubled in the last twenty years.
- Eating disorders are extremely common among young people.

## **Policy and Recommendations**

Healthy Eating is covered across all year groups and is not only limited to classroom activities, but something which we enforce in all aspects of school life.

## **Curriculum**

Healthy Eating are clearly identified and addressed in the following areas:

World Around Us

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

Physical Education

## **Nutrition**

Pupils should be given the information and skills to enable them to make responsible decisions about their diet. They should know and understand the contribution of food to growth and health. Children will:

Learn about a healthy diet.

Explore relationships between diet and dental health.

Develop an understanding of and practise the safe handling of food.

Be encouraged to bring healthy food for break-time and lunch time.

They are encouraged to eat fruit and/or vegetables, bread-based snacks, milk or water for break-time.

Be encouraged to eat a balanced lunch, containing fruit or vegetables.

## **Break-time Policy**

We realise snacks can be an important part of a healthful diet. Well chosen snacks can help you manage weight, hunger, health and energy. See Healthy Break-time Snack Policy for details.

E.g. Fruit, yogurt, cereal bars or piece of bread.

## **Lunchtime**

Our overall aim is to provide a diet that contains:

**MORE** – bread, cereals and other starch foods

**MORE** – fruit and vegetables

**LESS** – fat, sugar and salty foods.

To ensure a BALANCED diet, we ensure that foods from each of the following food groups are included within the daily menu:

Bread, cereal and potatoes

Fruit and vegetables

Milk and dairy foods

Meat, fish and alternatives

Limited amounts of foods containing fat and sugar

Friday is treat day: Children can bring in crisps or chocolate on this day.

## **Our Key Message to our pupils is:**

Enjoy your food

Eat a variety of foods, from all the food groups each day

Don't skip meals

We are a NUT FREE school.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Staff**

All staff will actively support, contribute to and be involved in the promotion of healthy eating. All staff will participate in staff development as and when necessary.

### **Parents**

Parents are asked to support the school in the promotion of healthy eating; particularly in the provision of healthy snacks and lunches.

### **Governors**

The Governors will monitor the implementation of this policy and evaluate and review regularly.

Advice, information and guidance from the following agencies is used in the forming of this policy and the delivery of Healthy Eating:

Health Promotion Agency - EHSSEB

Dairy Council of Northern Ireland