

**Scoil Mhuire
Droichead an Chláirín
Co. na Gaillimhe
H91D7P3**



**Scoil Mhuire
Clarinbridge
Co. Galway
H91D7P3**

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Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at Scoil Mhuire Clarinbridge, we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes. What people eat is known to be a key factor influencing health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance (e.g. a low sugar intake promotes concentration, lessens hyperactivity, protects teeth, and lessens the risk of diabetes. A low salt intake reduces the risk of heart disease in later life).

To promote healthy eating habits in our school, we have reviewed our healthy eating policy.

Aims

- To promote the personal development and well-being of the child.
- To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation of healthy living in all its aspects.

Objectives

1. To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy, physically and mentally
2. To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.
3. To develop and maintain a shared philosophy on all aspects of food and drink.
4. To develop consistent messages about healthy eating across the curriculum.
5. To ensure consistency between the messages within the curriculum and food available in the school.
6. To ensure food provision at school is in line with healthy eating guidelines e.g. school lunches, water consumption.
7. To create a positive eating environment, both social and physical, at mealtimes.

Guidelines & Recommendations

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre (roughage).

Please see FOOD PYRAMID AND RECOMMENDATIONS attached. Children and their parents should be aware of the sugar content in foods/drinks. Parents and children should read food labels themselves and be aware of the recommended daily intake values. These values are guidelines and actual values will vary depending on the age of the child, activity level etc.

- **The traditional packed lunch of water/ milk and sandwiches is recommended. Convenience foods are not permitted (see list below).**
- We ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start. Our Healthy Eating Policy will align with our School's Code of Behaviour in relation to rewards. **Treats will not be given to children as rewards by any staff member.** Exceptions will be made on Celebratory Days i.e **Hallowe'en/ Easter/ Christmas** and **Summer holidays** and on these occasions, each child may bring in **one small treat from home (the size of the palm of their hand).**
- The children are not allowed to share treats.
- At the discretion of the Board of Management, the principal may provide a small treat for a special occasion.
- Children are given 10 minutes to eat a small snack and are given 10-15 minutes to eat their lunch **after** yard.
- Children should be able to unwrap and eat their lunches by themselves. It is not possible for teachers to open lunches in a classroom full of children. Please help by not giving products that they cannot open themselves e.g. foods with wrappers, unpeeled oranges etc. To save time, please ensure all food is well prepared (e.g. **fruit peeled** and chopped if necessary and sandwiches cut).
- Parents must ensure that lunch boxes contain whatever **utensils** are required eg spoon/fork. As we are a Green School we try to reduce the amount of waste in the school, parents are encouraged to reduce the amount of packaging in their child's lunch box.
- **Unfinished lunches are taken home.** Children will be asked not to swap lunches or share food utensils/ drink containers

Promotion of Policy

- Throughout the year, the principal will visit the various classes to remind children of the **school's healthy eating policy, and** to encourage them to eat healthily both at school, and at home.
- All families will be provided with a copy of the **Food Pyramid during September.**

- Teachers will focus on a suite of Healthy Eating Lessons across different subject areas during the first term of school as part of their S.P.H.E

Dairy

Primary school children aged up to 8 years should choose any three servings each day from the dairy shelf of the food pyramid. Children aged 9-18 years need five servings a day. Depending on the age of the child, 1 serving is for example:

- 1 large glass (200ml) low fat or low fat fortified milk
- 1 small carton yogurt (125ml)
- 1 small carton fromage frais 25g/1oz (matchbox size piece) of low fat cheddar
- 1 portion of milk pudding made with a large glass low fat milk

This ensures that they get enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth. If your child does not drink milk at lunch, encourage him/ her to have a carton of healthy yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead. Milk is a rich source of protein, calcium, vitamins and minerals.

Water

Water/milk are the only drinks permitted in school and on school tours.

Drinking Plenty of Water Water is essential for life. Through perspiration (sweating), the body uses water to lower body temperature when it is warm. Regular drinks are necessary to replace fluid lost during the day. Without enough water or fluid in the short-term, the dehydration that results causes tiredness. Water is a tooth-friendly drink. The more active a person is, the more fluid is needed to replace fluid lost as sweat. In hot weather, or if playing sports, children should bring extra water to school.

Foods not permitted

- ***ALL FOODS CONTAINING ANY TRACE OF NUT OR CHOCOLATE ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES.***
- *Biscuits, cakes and buns (unless homemade and plain)*
- *Sweets*
- *Dessert yoghurts (with sides of sugary treats)*
- *Fruit winders*
- *Crisps, chewing gum and fizzy drinks*
- *Chocolate spread*
- *Frubes (not permitted from Juniors - 1st Class)*
- *Cereal bars with high sugar content*

In the event of

- ❖ children bringing in items from the list above to school, they will not be allowed to eat them while in school.
- ❖ a child having no lunch box, the class teacher should call the child's parents to provide lunch. If the parent cannot be contacted and therefore unable to provide lunch, the class teacher will check to see if there are siblings in the school who may be able to provide the child with some lunch.
- ❖ exceptional circumstances the child may be provided with food by the class teacher.

Parents please note:

If a child presents at school without lunch consistently, then the class teacher will record dates, send a message on Aladdin to the parent and **inform the principal.**

Special Dietary/ Medical Requirements

Parents of children with special dietary requirements should make the teacher aware of these requirements.

Roles and Responsibility

Each class teacher will coordinate the progress of this policy and can encourage the children to bring healthy lunches but ultimately the responsibility for ensuring that children eat healthily lies with the Parent /Guardian of each child.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the BoM in November 2023. Every teacher will be provided with a copy of this policy for their files.

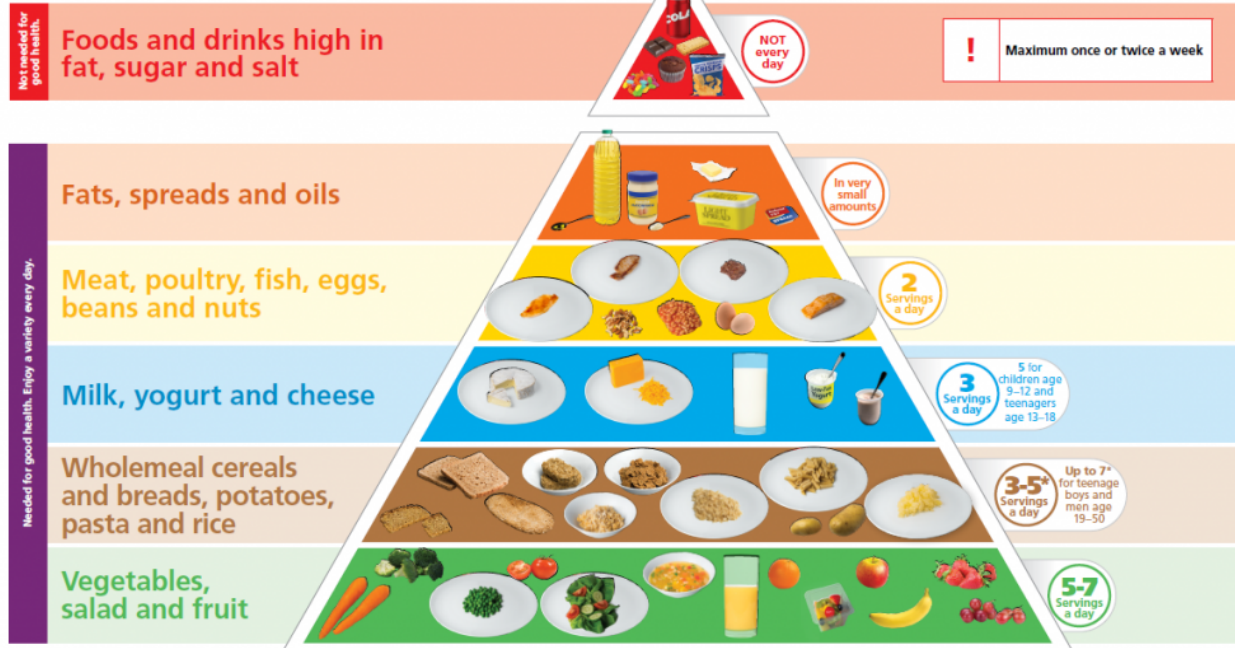
Signed on Behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson: _____

Date: _____

The Food Pyramid

For adults, teenagers and children aged five and over



***Daily Servings Guide – wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice**

Active	Child (5-12)	Teenager (13-18)	Adult (19-50)	Adult (51+)	Inactive	Teenager (13-18)	Adult (19-50)	Adult (51+)
	3-4	4	4-5	3-4		3	3-4	3
	3-5	5-7	5-7	4-5		4-5	4-6	4

There is no guideline for inactive children as it is essential that all children are active.

Drink at least 8 cups of fluid a day – water is best

Get Active
 To maintain a healthy weight adults need at least 30 minutes a day of moderate activity on 5 days a week (or 150 minutes a week); children need to be active at a moderate to vigorous level for at least 60 minutes every day.

Source: Department of Health, December 2016.