



# ST. BRIGID'S NATIONAL SCHOOL KILLYGARRY



## HEALTHY EATING POLICY

At St. Brigid's National School we believe that proper nutrition and fluid intake are essential to all members of the school community if they are to fulfil their potential in life. Proper nutrition is essential for good health and effective teaching and learning. We believe that all messages about food and drink within the school should be consistent.

As a school we want to play our role in establishing and maintaining life-long healthy and environmentally sustainable eating and drinking habits.

### Purpose of the policy:

- To encourage children to have a healthy diet.
- To inform the adults of the school community about healthy eating in school.
- To have a healthy school community.

### Aims:

- To further develop and maintain an ethos within school in which a healthy choice is the easy choice
- To provide cross-curricular education that enables pupils to make an informed choice
- To involve the whole community in developing and maintaining healthy eating and drinking habits
- To have a pleasant and sociable dining experience which enhances the social development of all children
- To encourage foods that are rich in vitamins, iron and calcium
- To encourage a balanced diet
- To offer milk and water to drink for all pupils in the school
- To encourage fluid intake with an easily accessible water supply throughout the day

- To take into account and accommodate dietary requirements
- To ensure high standards of hygiene amongst the children
- To develop healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime

### **Values that inform this Policy**

- We believe that every adult at St. Brigid's National School can play a part in making sure that the children develop positive attitudes to food, make informed choices and enjoy eating healthily.
- We want the children to understand that good, nutritious food is essential to their ability to learn as well as to their long-term health.
- We want the children to apply their knowledge about food and make healthy choices both in and out of school.
- We believe that food has a role in developing young people's social skills.

### **Healthy Eating Guidelines:**

- We eat fruit or vegetables or gorp (made from seeds and dried fruit) for tuck each day.
- We should drink lots of water throughout the day. Chilled water is available from the taps in the school which are linked to a spring well. Each child to bring in their own water bottle.
- Milk is another healthy drink and is available in school for those who order it.
- Packed lunches should include mainly unrefined carbohydrates e.g. bread, pasta, fruit and vegetables.
- We should have less than four foods that include sugar a day.
- On special occasions we are allowed treats such as cakes or biscuits.
- Parents of children new to the school should be given a copy of this policy and our Information Booklet for Parents.

### **We do not allow:**

- Sweets or chewing gum

- Fizzy drinks
- Nuts due to some pupils being allergic to them.

### **Breakfast**

Recognising parental responsibility and school/parent partnership, children are encouraged to have breakfast before leaving home. This will be done through discussion at snack time and PSHE.

### **Morning break**

- All children are encouraged to bring fruit or vegetables as part of their morning snack.
- Milk or water is on offer for snack time in St. Brigid's National School.

### **Drinks**

Like plants people wilt. We recognise that low fluid intake can lead to reduced academic performance through poor concentration and lethargy, reduced physical performance and health problems including headaches and urine infections.

All children and staff have free access to water throughout the day, drinks will be taken from the tap and poured into the pupils' individual bottle.

### **Sweets**

Parents are asked not to give their child sweets or snacks as part of their packed lunch. On special occasions, determined by the class teacher, such treats may be allowed.

### **Water in the school**

Children have access to free and fresh water throughout the school day.

Children are encouraged to bring their own water bottles into their classrooms and are allowed to drink water whenever they feel thirsty.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Staff will sit with children during snack and meal times to provide a good role model, encourage good manners and lead conversation.

Food and cooking activities are used in a variety of ways to teach children and widen their experience of food. They are given the opportunity to touch, taste, smell and feel a variety of foods. Pupils will get the opportunity to make pancakes on Shrove Tuesday.

As part of the behaviour programme run throughout the school, teachers may, on occasions, reward good behaviour/work with a small sweet/chocolate.

### **Parental involvement**

A copy of the Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy can be found in the Parents Information Booklet.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The healthy eating and drinking systems and strategies in our school will be accessible to all children and staff regardless of race, gender and SEN.

### **Health and Safety**

Food will be stored according to instructions on packaging and common sense. Advice will be sought from the catering staff and Environmental Health if necessary.

### **Monitoring the Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy**

The teachers will monitor provision for healthy eating and drinking through the school.

## TIPS AND IDEAS

Children need lots of energy and nutrients from food, particularly when they are growing. Try to encourage them to eat lots of fruit and veg (you should aim for **5 portions** a day) to help ensure they have the required amount of vitamin and minerals.

Variety is one of the keys to a healthy balanced diet and this applies just as much to the fruit and veg you eat. The more types of fruit and veg included the better, because different fruit/veg contain different nutrients. Including a range of **colours, flavours and textures** can help make food more interesting and enjoyable. But it can sometimes be difficult to make packed lunches that are varied, interesting and healthy. We hope you find the information given below helpful.

- Sandwiches are a popular choice for packed lunches and can be easily filled with a variety of salads. A mixed salad could be put in the veg tub, to be eaten with the usual sandwich.
- Use fruit and veg in different forms, whether cooked or raw.
- Some vegetables taste good grated (e.g. carrots) and some (e.g. carrots, celery, peppers) can be cut into sticks, and perhaps eaten with a dip.
- Have a variety of fruit and veg in a pot and create a “salad”. You might like to try a fruit salad of banana, orange, pineapple slices with a sprinkling of raisins and a veg salad of lettuce, sweetcorn, grated carrot, peas or tomato.
- Stir-fries can include fruit and/or vegetables. Save some from the previous evening meal and put in one of the lunchbox tubs.
- Mix cheese (cubes or grated) with a portion of fruit and/or any of the above vegetable items.
- Pack fruit juice in your child’s lunchbox instead of cordial or fizzy drinks. Make sure it’s 100% pure juice with no added sugar. Smoothies (made mostly of fruit) are also a healthy fruit drink.
- Ideas of the kinds of fruit/veg that could be included in lunch box.

FRUIT		VEGETABLES	
Apples	Grapes	Cucumber	Broccoli
Satsuma	Strawberries	Cherry Tomatoes	Peppers
Bananas	Oranges	Sweetcorn	Carrots
Fruit salad	Kiwi Fruit	Cauliflower	Mixed Beans
Raisins	Peaches	Mushrooms	Lettuce
Pineapple chunks	Cherries	Mixed veg	Celery
Dates	Melon	Coleslaw	Green Beans
Pears	Plums		

\* Keep encouraging your child to try new foods - you never know, they might like it!