



St. Nessian's National School

Mungret

Co. Limerick

14409N

Healthy Eating Policy

St Nessian's N.S Healthy Eating Policy.

Introduction

There is a growing awareness of an obesity problem in Ireland, as highlighted in recent media reports. This arises from unhealthy eating habits and life style. Following consultations with teacher and parent reps., we introduced a Healthy Eating Policy in the school in September **2005**. This policy is based on Healthy Eating Guidelines outlined by the Health Promotion Unit of the Dept. of Health and Children and has been endorsed by the Health Board.

In December 2013 the parents on the Parents' Council were surveyed to seek their views and suggestions on this matter. 97% of the parents surveyed agreed that children should have a healthy lunch at school each day. In January 2014 a representative group from the Teaching Staff also looked at the existing Policy and at the results of the Parents' survey. The existing Policy was modified to reflect many of the suggestions and ideas put forward by both groups.

Rationale

The focus of this policy is to support parents and pupils in relation to fostering of healthy eating habits from an early age. This policy is linked to the following curriculum areas:

SPHE: Strand Units Taking Care of my body, Food and Nutrition and Making decisions.

Science- Strand Unit Myself- Human Life Processes.

Aims

To enable pupils to develop healthy eating habits for life.

To improve pupils' energy and concentration levels.

To make pupils aware of the importance of a balanced diet

Here are some suggestions for what to put in those lunchboxes

Drinks: ... water, unsweetened fruit juices, yoghurt drinks, vegetable drinks, or smoothies

Carbohydrates:

*Why not try...*oatcakes, crackers, pasta, rice, rice cakes, rolls, bagels, wraps, pitta bread, sandwiches made from whole-grain breads, with lots of tasty fillings such ascheese, tuna, hummus, cold meats, lettuce, cucumber, tomato, onion, peppers, coleslaw or salad.

Fruit:*chew on...* an apple, orange, banana, grape, pear, plum, kiwi, melon, grapefruit, pineapple and many more ...

Raw Vegetables:

Crunch On ... carrots, peppers, cucumber, broccoli, tomatoes, sweetcorn ...the list is endless.

Other ideas for Snacks.. seeds, dried fruit, scones, yoghurts, crackers, fromage frais.

Food / Drinks not permitted

We ask all parents to cooperate and not to give their children the following foods for lunch:

Sweets, crisps, chocolate or chocolate based products, biscuits, cakes, chewing gum, popcorn, bars of any kind including cereal bars, deep fried foods, fizzy drinks, "sports" drinks.

If children bring "discouraged" food / drinks to school: -

They will be allowed to eat/drink them on the day but warned not to bring them on other days. If they consistently bring unhealthy food to school, the food will be sent home and a reminder about the school's **Healthy Eating Policy** will be included in the child's lunchbox. Parents may also be contacted by the teacher by way or a note in the child's journal or by phone.

Exceptions:

Exceptions are allowed: End of term parties, School trips, School events – concerts, matches etc.

Roles and responsibilities

It is important that children are educated to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health. In implementing this policy, we are encouraging our young people to develop positive and responsible attitudes to eating. To ensure the continued success of the policy a concentrated effort by all parties is necessary. The teachers will promote this policy through regular verbal reminders and explicit lessons about food and nutrition.

Parents can play their part by ensuring that when they are preparing lunches they provide healthy food and drinks for their children to consume in school.

N.B.

If your child has any medical condition that makes this policy unsuitable please advise the class teacher. In certain classes, where a child has a food allergy all parents will be requested not to allow their child to bring that food or any product containing that ingredient, in their lunchbox.

Ratification and Review

This Policy was ratified by the B.O.M in March 2014. It will be reviewed in 2018 by again seeking the views of representatives of the Parent Body and the Teaching Staff.