

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated by members of the teaching staff in consultation with other staff members, pupils and parents.

A survey of parents was undertaken by the Parents' Association in 2006 to seek their views/suggestions. As a result of this, it was decided that we should undertake a healthy eating policy.

Rationale

It was decided to focus on this area for development in order to improve the pupils' health.

Our SPHE & Science programmes endorse this view:

- **SPHE Strand Unit:**
 - Taking Care of My Body: Food and Nutrition (Curriculum J. Infants – 6th Class Making choices (See Teacher Guidelines pp 11-13)
- **Science Strand Living Things: Strand Unit: Myself:**
 - Human Life Processes (Curriculum J. Infants – 6th Class) (See Teacher Guidelines p.10-11)

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

In accordance with our aim to develop the pupils to the best of their ability, we see ourselves as having a role in the process of enabling pupils to increase control over and improve their health. The Food and Nutrition strand in our SPHE plan helps us promote this policy in our school.

Aims

- **Ideally we hope:**
 - To heighten an awareness of the importance of a balanced diet
 - To encourage the children to make wise choices about food and nutrition
 - To raise levels of concentration within class by way of consumption of healthy food
 - To encourage pupils to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems caused by junk food, pre- prepared food, juice cartons etc.
 - To enable the children to develop a healthy eating habit for life
- The current practice is- Healthy eating Monday through Thursday- a treat is allowed on Fridays. Crisps are banned at all times. The children are allowed to sip water during class but not fizzy drinks or juices. No food is allowed during class (unless as needed by children with particular dietary requirements).

- This practice began in 2005 following a Healthy Food Day organised by the Parents' Association. Children were allowed to sample several healthy food and drink options. Parents were informed of the programme through letter and they adhere to the contents.
- **Definition**
 - A healthy lunch is a recommended mix of items from the food pyramid. Children study this in SPHE in Fifth Class.
 - Food/drinks encouraged include fruit, vegetables, sandwiches, yogurts, milk, water, juice. Food/drinks tolerated but not encouraged include biscuits.
 - Food/drinks strictly banned – crisps, chewing/bubble gum, fizzy drinks
- **Promotion of the Policy:**
 - All members of the teaching staff promote this policy through regular verbal reminders and good example to the children.
 - ***If children bring" discouraged" food / drinks to school:*** – They will be allowed to eat/drink them but warned not to bring them on other days. If they persist in bringing unhealthy food to school, the teacher will inform parents re healthy eating Policy throughout the school
 - The school will not apply further sanctions.
- **Exceptions**
 - Exceptions are allowed:
 - End of term parties
 - School trips
 - School events – concerts, matches etc.
 - Teachers may give children a treat on Fridays.

Success Criteria

We will know that the policy is effective when healthy eating has become a habit for all pupils. Children observed around the school will be eating only healthy food/drinks (except on Fridays).

Roles and Responsibility

This policy was developed by senior staff members. It is implemented by parents and supported by the teaching staff.

Teachers give good example through their own healthy eating habits.

Timeframe for Implementation

This policy has been in operation since 2006.

Timeframe for Review

The policy was reviewed in Oct 2008 and was reviewed again in Oct 2010.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Senior Staff Members

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management initially in 2005 and again following a review in 2008. The policy was presented to the Parents' Association in Oct 2008.