
HEALTHY EATING POLICY – 16921K

DEVELOPED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HEALTH SERVICE EXECUTIVE (HSE) AS PART OF THE HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS INITIATIVE



SEPTEMBER 2024

Healthy Lunch Policy

Introduction

This policy was introduced to provide clarity in relation to healthy eating in the school and to support pupils, parents and staff in ensuring that St. Felim's N.S is a health promoting school. The policy was developed in conjunction with the Health Service Executive (HSE) who facilitated several sessions in the school with a healthy eating committee. The committee consisted of two teacher representatives, the school principal, children representatives, two parent's representatives and Monica Mc Rory, Senior Health Promotion Officer, HSE. A questionnaire was distributed to parents with almost 53% of parents responding. Questionnaires were also completed by all staff and by pupils from 2nd to 6th class. All responses have contributed to the guidelines below.

This policy has been updated in September 2024 in consultation with the Parents' Association.

Aims of this policy

- To promote the personal development and well-being of the child.
- To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.
- To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy.
- To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy balanced diet.

Rationale

The primary school curriculum provides an opportunity to learn and explore about food and healthy lifestyles. As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) Programme we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes. In the Physical Education program we support the physical development and fitness of the children. The Science curriculum also looks at the development of the body and deepens the children's understanding of how the body grows and develops. Through these guidelines St. Felim's, N.S aims to help all those involved in our school community, children, staff and parents, in developing positive and responsible attitudes toward our health.

Guidelines

- Parents should ensure that children have a balanced breakfast to help them learn and concentrate in school.

- The children should be provided with a healthy snack for their first break e.g. fresh fruit, vegetables, cheese, standard yoghurts (not desert type with chocolate balls etc. which are high in sugar), plain rice cakes and crackers.
- Please ensure, that for young children, fruit is peeled and cut up if necessary.
- Pupils are encouraged to drink water only in school. If children do not drink enough water they may become dehydrated, thirsty, tired and weak. Bottled water is provided for all children in class. They are required to bring their own drink bottle.
- Cans and glass containers, chewing gum, fizzy drinks, lollipops, sweets and crisps are not permitted for health and safety and litter reasons. Foods which have wrappers are to be kept to a minimum and disposed of to protect our school environment.
- When refreshments are provided at school related events, the school will ensure that healthy choices are on offer.
- Sweet treats for birthdays such as cakes, buns, sweets, party bags etc. should not be brought into school, as in the school setting there may be so many birthdays that sweet treats are available nearly every day. Sweet treats will be limited to special occasions (decided on by the school). Some children in the school are allergic to certain foods and for this reason also we do not wish to have treats sent in on birthdays which can be very tempting for all children.
- Teachers and staff will provide positive modelling and support attitudes to encourage healthy eating including providing non-food related rewards.
- Healthy eating awareness days will be held each term as an incentive to encourage healthy eating at school and at home.
- A healthy balanced meal is provided daily in school. This meal meets nutritional standards and follows the healthy eating guidelines, including two services of vegetables and one serving of meat.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents to ensure that guidelines are followed.

Staff to ensure that healthy eating is taught in conjunction with the S.P.H.E curriculum at each class level and that sweet treats are minimized.

Pupils to take responsibility for their food choices as they get older.

BOM to ensure that the school is supported in further developing St. Felim's as a health promoting school and to facilitate staff in-service in this area.

Ratification and Review

- This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Felim's N.S. on 30th September 2024.

A copy of the policy will be on our website www.stfelimsns.ie . A copy will also be made available to parents of Junior Infants and to any parents who request a hard copy. The policy will be available to view in the school .

The healthy eating guidelines will be reviewed every two years and the policy updated.

Signed: Marie Fox

Marie Fox
Chairperson BOM

Brian Doyle

Brian Doyle
Acting Principal

Date: 30/9/2024