**Scoil Naomh Mhuire, Staplestown, Co. Kildare.**

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| **Healthy Eating Policy**    This policy is an update of the existing policy which was reviewed following a survey of parents in March 2010. After discussion, it was decided to update our policy.  A questionnaire was sent to all parents and guardians to seek their views and suggestions on the existing policy.  A sub-committee made up of members of the Parents Association and the Principal formulated this draft policy.    **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School**:    Scoil Naomh Mhuire strives to utilise the full school community resources to create a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of our pupils are identified and developed. (Mission Statement).  To aid the children achieve their true potential we endeavour to develop a positive attitude to eating healthy foods.  **Rationale**:  These guidelines aim to help all those involved in our school community, children, staff and parents, in developing positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health.    **Aims**:   * 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 through the consumption of healthy food. * To encourage pupils to be aware of litter problems caused by junk food, prepared food, juice cartons etc.   **Relevance to the Curriculum**  These guidelines also relate to the following curricular areas:  *S.P.H.E.:*   Strand:  Myself:   Strand Unit: Taking Care of My Body: Food and Nutrition.   Strand Unit: Self Identity: Making Decisions.  *SESE Science*   Strand: Living Things:   Strand Unit: Myself: Human Life Processes.  *SESE Science and Geography*: Environmental Awareness and Care  **Guidelines**:    Lunch is one of a child’s three main meals and as such should be nutritionally balanced.  A healthy lunch includes a piece of food from the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid.  (Carbohydrates;  Fruit / Vegetable; Protein; and Milk / Dairy product)  Healthier choices of drink include water, milk and unsweetened juices.  Children should be provided with sufficient water to keep them hydrated throughout the day.  The amount required will increase in hot weather and on PE days.    The following foods and drinks are **not permitted** on any day:   * Fizzy Drinks and High Energy Drinks * Canned Drinks * Drinks in Glass Bottles * Crisps * Hard sweets or lollypops * Chewy / Sticky Bars * Chewing Gum * Nuts and any products containing nuts; these include chocolate spreads, cereal bars,     peanut butter. (This list is not exhaustive)     **Foods to be discouraged**  Processed foods and some yoghurt products are usually high in sugar or salt content and are not encouraged.  **Exceptions**:     * Friday is ‘Treat Day’, children are permitted to bring in one treat which may be eaten after their main lunch. * Children will be allowed to bring in a treat at end of term parties and on school tours. * If parents send in treats for the class they must conform to the Guidelines. * Special dietary requirements of individual children will always be facilitated.   **Implementation**  Children will be praised and encouraged in their efforts to comply with guidelines.  It is a parent’s/guardian’s  responsibility to provide a healthy lunch, children will not be reprimanded for not complying with the guildelines.  Should a child have a treat on any day other than Friday, they will be asked to keep it until they go home.  The teacher will explain to the    child that it would be unfair on the other children if he/she were to eat a treat on a day other than ‘Treat Day’.    The Principal will be available to discuss rationale behind guidelines with parents / guardians.   All pupils will be taught the Food and Nutrition lessons from the S.P.H.E. curriculum.  As part of SPHE children will be taught to look at the information contained on food packaging and to use this information to make healthy choices.  School staff will provide positive modeling and supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.    In early September the Healthy Eating Guidelines will be reviewed and a Healthy Eating Awareness week will be held every November (see SPHE policy).    A copy of the Food Pyramid will be displayed in each classroom.    The Student Council will be consulted each year and will participate in raising awareness of healthy eating and healthy choices for lunch.  The PA will be encouraged to bring in guest speakers to speak to parents on nutrition and healthy eating.    **Roles and Responsibility**:   The policy will be co-ordinated by the teachers and feedback is encouraged from staff, pupils and parents / guardians.    **Implementation**:   This policy will be implemented immediately after ratification by the Board of Management.    **Review**:   The Healthy Eating Guidelines will be reviewed annually, in early September.   The following are involved in reviewing this policy:    Principal  Staff  Parents / Guardians  School Council  Pupils  Board of Management    **Ratification and Communication**:  The Board of Management will ratify the policy and each year the policy will be given to parents.  The guidelines will be communicated to pupils in a positive way.  The Student Council will be part of the communication process. |
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