



Scoil Naomh Feichín

Termonfeckin

Roll No. 16208N

Healthy Eating Policy

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Introduction:

Our school's existing Healthy Eating Policy was reviewed and revised by the school staff of *Scoil Naomh Feichín* at the start of the school year 2017/18.

Through this policy the school aims to help all those 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.

Nutrition is known to be one of the key factors influencing their health and well-being. All children bring a packed lunch to school in addition to a snack for the morning break. Food is also a feature of school celebrations. The taught curriculum provides an opportunity to teach about food and healthy lifestyles.

Mission Statement:

1. *Scoil Naomh Feichín*, through these guidelines, aims to help all those in our school community, children, staff and parents, to develop positive attitudes to eating and healthy living. We wish to promote 'the personal development and well-being of the child and to provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects'. (SPHE Guidelines)
2. To help achieve this, our guidelines will reflect good eating habits. These should be established at an early age, as children have a right to learn about different foods so that they may make informed choices throughout their life.
3. The purpose of making healthy food choices enables children to attain their optimum growth, development and health potential.
4. Recent research (Department of Health and Children) has highlighted disturbing trends, including an increase in childhood obesity and diabetes, so therefore our policy and guidelines are both timely and critical for the health and development of children.
5. Through a whole school approach, and within the context of SPHE, the children, parents and staff will learn about nutrition, healthy eating and healthy living. The Food Dudes programme is an example of this.
6. Our healthy eating guidelines hope to enable the children to develop an understanding of healthy living, and an ability to implement healthy behaviour and willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health. This includes physical activity.
7. We feel that, in developing the policy, parents, children, teachers, school staff and the BOM should be involved in a collaborative way. We also intend to review these guidelines every two years.
8. All classes will receive lessons on healthy eating each school year.
9. School staff will provide supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.
10. Parents will be supported in their role as primary educators by providing them with up-to-date information on healthy eating habits from the Department of Health.

Rationale:

Our school setting provides an excellent health promotion avenue for reaching a large section of the community: children, families and teachers. This policy is intended to be a guide to healthy and safe eating for the school. The focus of this policy is to support parents in encouraging their children to develop healthy eating habits at an early age. A knowledge of what constitutes a nutritionally balanced diet is acknowledged as being of importance for pupils. In support of this rationale, nutrition education is considered to be an important element of the curriculum in *Scoil Naomh Feichín*.

SPHE: Primary School Curriculum: • Strand Unit: Taking Care of my Body; Food and Nutrition (Curriculum: J.Infants-6th Class) • Making Choices (see Teacher Guidelines p 11-13)

SCIENCE: • Strand: Living Things ; Strand Unit: Myself: Human life Processes (Curriculum: J.Infants - 6th class) (see Teacher Guidelines p 10-11)

Guidelines

Roles:

- Responsibility lies with parents to ensure that their child comes to school with a healthy lunch.
- The role of the teacher is to educate the children through the new curriculum on what healthy eating entails.
- The role of the child is to bring home the message of healthy eating.

A healthy lunch box includes:

- At least two portions from the bread, cereals group.
- One portion from the meat and the meat alternatives group.
- Two/Three portions from fruits and vegetables.
- One portion from the dairy products.

The following foods **do not support** a healthy lunch policy and should be **excluded** from your child's lunch box:

- Crisps
- Chewing Gum
- Sweets
- Cakes & Buns
- Cereal Bars
- Frubes
- Lollipops
- Fizzy Drinks / Juice Drinks (*pupils should bring water or milk to school*)
- Winders
- Biscuits
- Chocolate & Chocolate Spreads
- All nuts and Nut Spreads

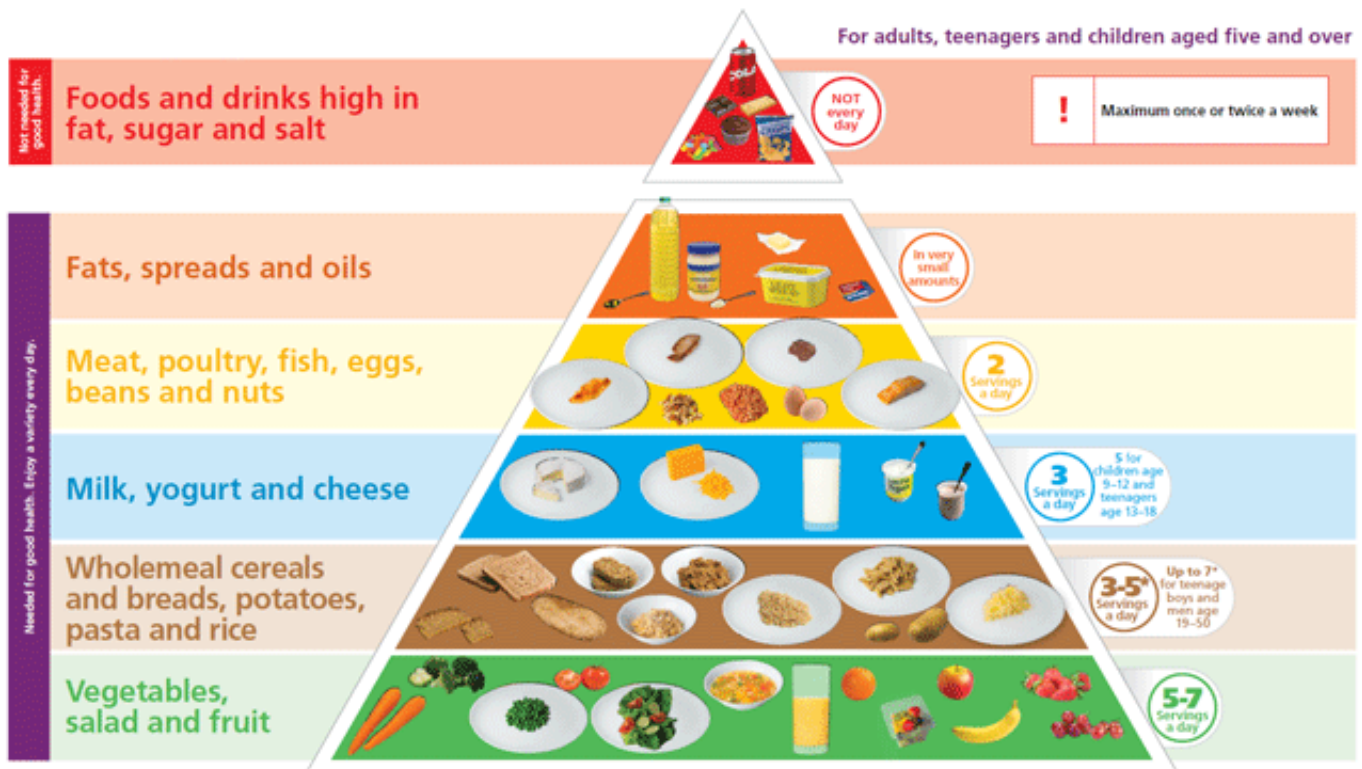
Due to the incidence of severe allergy to peanuts and mixed nuts amongst some pupils, we ask you to be vigilant in the following:

- Avoid peanuts or any other type of nut in school lunches.
- Avoid giving peanut butter sandwiches, chocolate spreads containing nuts such as Nutella, nut based breads and cereal/health bars containing nuts or labelled "may contain nut traces" in school lunches.
- Please ask your children not to share their lunches.
- If your child has eaten peanuts/nuts before coming to school, please ensure your child's hands and face have been thoroughly washed before entering the school.

➤ **What will happen if the children bring any of these food items for their lunch?**

They will not be permitted to eat them and they will be returned home in their lunch box.

Healthy snack options (lower in sugar and fat)



Foods from the top tier of the food pyramid should not be included in your child's lunchbox.

Sometimes it can be difficult to think of alternatives to these. Here are some tasty alternatives.

- Fruit (for example, an apple or banana, handful of grapes)
- Washed, raw vegetable pieces (for example, sticks of carrot, celery, pepper, cherry tomatoes and cucumber)
- Half a tin of fruit (in its own juice)
- Plain breadsticks, unsalted plain or whole-wheat crackers or crispbreads served with fruit or cheese.
- Plain rice cakes (not chocolate flavoured)
- Natural or low fat yogurt with fresh fruit (fresh, frozen or tinned in its own juice)
- Wholemeal or plain scones.
- Sugar-free jelly pots or fruit jelly.
- Pasta or rice
- Cheese
- Hummus
- Olives

Healthy choices of drink include water and milk.

Children should use re-useable containers for safety and litter reasons in line with our Green Schools Policy. Cans and glass bottles are not permitted. According to the HSE: “there are no recommendations for the amount of water or other fluids children need. However, like adults, to stay healthy it is important for children to replace the water they lose to prevent dehydration. It is also important to remember that children will lose more water in hotter climates and when they have been physically active.” <http://www.hse.ie/eng/health/az/D/Dehydration/>

Should we make exceptions for special occasions?

- Yes - For treats & special occasions.
- Yes - For school parties or reward days.
- No - We cannot have children's birthday parties in school.