



Healthy Eating Policy

For many years Naíscoil Íde has been actively raising the awareness of pupils in the school on the importance of healthy eating. This policy is a natural progression from this and was drawn up by a dedicated working group along with the whole staff and a representative group from the Parent's Association. We approach this policy with the understanding that ultimately children's appetites and tastes differ and it is their parent's responsibility to make decisions about their nutrition and exercise.

Rationale

Naíscoil Íde, through these guidelines, aims to help all those involved in our school community; children, staff and parents, develop positive and responsible attitudes to food and nutrition and to appreciate the benefits that healthy eating and drinking habits make to our overall health and wellbeing. Our SPHE, AISTEAR, Science & PE programmes endorse the view that children need to feel valued, respected, empowered, cared for, and included. And our primary aim is to help children to make healthy choices about nutrition, hygiene and exercise so that they can be as healthy and fit as they can be (page 17 [Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework](#)).

The following areas of the Curriculum will be useful to inform our teaching the children:

❖ SPHE

Strand Unit: Taking care of My Body (learning about food & nutrition)

Strand Unit: Self-identity (making decisions)

❖ AISTEAR

Themes: Wellbeing, Identity and Belonging, Exploring and Thinking and Communicating

Supports children's psychological and physical well-being and independence by helping them to make decisions and to have choices regarding routines, hygiene, nutrition and exercise

❖ Science

Broadening children's experience of the environment and fostering awareness of the interconnection and balance of living things. Encouraging the development of responsible attitudes and care for their environment and themselves.

Strands: Living Things and Environmental Awareness and Care

Strand Units: Myself: Variety and characteristics of humans, Human Life Processes and Caring for my locality

❖ PE

General: Exploration and development of health-related fitness through play pedagogy

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

In accordance with our aim to develop pupils to the best of their ability, we see ourselves as having a role in the process of enabling pupils to learn about a variety of foods and ways they can become more familiar with types of foods and ways of playing that are beneficial to their overall wellbeing and exercise.

Aims:

- to encourage the personal development and well being of the child

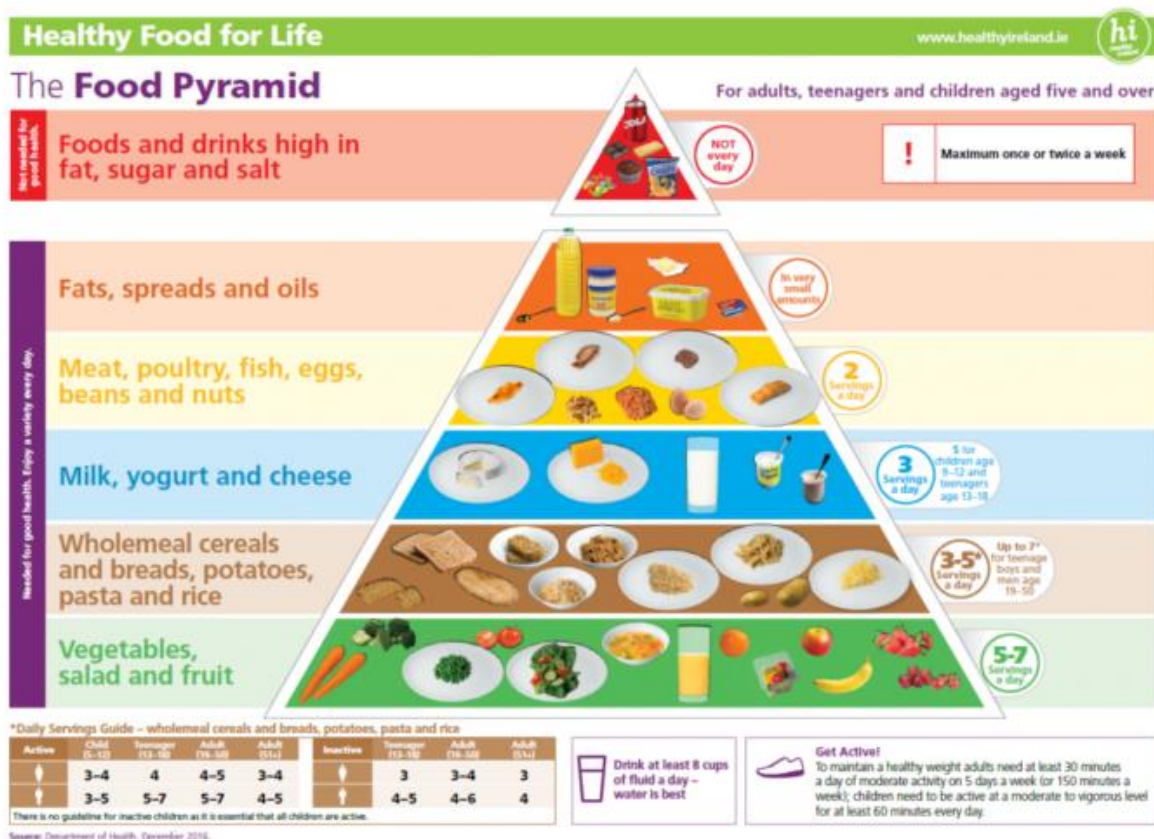
- to emphasise the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living
- to demonstrate healthy eating habits

Objectives:

- to heighten awareness of the importance of a balanced diet
- to encourage the children to make wise choices about food and nutrition
- to foster the ability of the children to make a connection between nutrition and wellness
- to encourage pupils to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems

Guidelines

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. Lunch should also provide dietary fibre (roughage). A copy of the updated food pyramid will be displayed in every classroom.



Definition

A healthy lunch is a recommended mix of items from the food pyramid. The pyramid is divided into six shelves, each representing a different food group. Choosing a variety of foods from each shelf ensures that children have a balanced and healthy diet. Most of children’s foods should be chosen from the bottom two shelves of the Healthy Food Pyramid. Smaller amounts of food should be chosen from the next two shelves. Foods near the top of the pyramid should be used sparingly and foods from the very top shelf should not be taken everyday. Children eat their lunch each day at 12:00. There is also a three-minute fruit/vegetable break during the morning when the children are encouraged to eat a small piece of prepared fruit/vegetable.

Promotion.

All members of the teaching staff will promote this policy with regular verbal reminders and with setting a good example to the children. A copy of the food pyramid will be displayed in every classroom. Information on healthy eating will be taught in all classes as part of the SPHE programme. Each September our Healthy Eating Policy will

be promoted during Healthy Eating Awareness Week. Plain healthy foods with a strong emphasis on sandwiches, dairy products and fruit are encouraged. Water and milk are the preferred drinks (milk is available in school). Children will be encouraged to bring uneaten food home. In an effort to reduce litter in our school, children are encouraged to keep food wrappings to a minimum and to bring home their rubbish. We will ask the Parents Association to host an Information Evening on the topic of "Nutrition" once a year.

Exceptions

Staff do not give children sweets or chocolate as a reward, in general. However, occasionally treats may be given in school at the teacher's discretion depending on individual behaviour plans, special educational needs, etc. In these situations, parents will be involved in the planning. Occasionally the teacher may hold an end of term party in the classroom. As these situations are not a regular occurrence in classes, an exception is made to the policy. There may be children on the school who have particular dietary requirements and the school recognises this and will cooperate fully with parents should the occasion arise.

Success criteria

We will know that the policy is effective when healthy eating has become a habit for all pupils and children can be observed around the school eating healthy food and drinks.

Roles and Responsibility

Staff, parents and pupils will ensure that the policy is implemented and will feed back to the Board of Management through the Principal. The Board of Management will monitor the progress of the policy, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation.

Timeframe for Implementation

This policy was ratified by the B.O.M. on Monday 11th November 2013. It was reviewed on 27th June 2022.

Timeframe for Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2026 or earlier if deemed necessary.

John Swords Chairperson BOM

Clare Ring Principal

Links:

[Food Pyramid](#)

[Bord Bia Information for Primary School Children](#)

[Bord Bia Information for Schools](#)

[Safe Food Information for Schools](#)

[Irish Heart Foundation Information for Primary Schools](#)

[ScoilNet Healthy Eating](#)

<https://www.curriculumonline.ie/Primary/Curriculum-Areas/Social,-Personal-and-Health-Education/Junior-and-Senior-Infants/>