**BALLINABRANNA NATIONAL SCHOOL**

Milford

Co. Carlow

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**Healthy Eating Policy**

**Rationale**

This policy has been developed to further the promotion of health in Ballinabranna NS.  Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance. A healthy diet promotes concentration, protects teeth, lessens hyperactivity and reduces health risks in later life.

Our SPHE & Science programmes endorse this view and aims to encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food at lunch time:

SPHE – Strand: Myself

Strand Unit: Taking Care of My Body: Food and Nutrition/Making Choices/Health and Well Being

*(Curriculum J. Infants – 6th Class) (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)*

**Aims**

The aims of the policy are to:

* Promote nutritional awareness and the importance of a balanced diet
* Positively affect healthy eating among school age children
* To encourage the children to make wise choices about food and nutrition
* Raise levels of concentration within class through the consumption of healthy food
* Support and encourage long-term healthy eating habits in children

**Current Practice**

Healthy eating is encouraged Monday to Thursday. A healthy lunch is a recommended mix of items from the food pyramid. Parents are encouraged to provide lunches that have good variety and that are nutritional. Information leaflets about healthy eating are distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year.

The children are allowed to sip water during class. No food is allowed during class (unless as needed by children with particular dietary requirements). **N.B:  Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition/food allergy which requires a special diet should inform the school immediately in writing.**

**Food/drinks which are encouraged -**

Bread/Cereals – brown bread is recommended

Fruit and Vegetables

Milk, cheese and yoghurt

Meat, chicken or fish (e.g. tuna)

Water or milk.

**Foods that are not allowed -**

* Chewing gum
* Fizzy Drinks
* Drinks in glass bottles
* High Sugar Foods
* Sweetened Drinks
* Cereal Bars

On treat days (Fridays), parents may give a sweet or savoury treat to their children. One small treat which fits into the pupils hand is allowed.

Teachers may give treats to their own class on occasions such as:

* End of the week on a Friday/assembly
* End of term
* Halloween
* School events and tours

As part of our healthy eating policy, no cakes or treats should be sent into school to celebrate children’s birthdays.

If children do bring prohibited food or drink into school they will be asked by the class teacher to bring it home in their lunch box that day. If they persist in bringing unhealthy food to school, the teacher will remind the parents of the school’s healthy eating policy. Parents can arrange to view the healthy eating policy of Ballinabranna NS if they so wish.

If children forget their lunch, their parent will be contacted to arrange for a lunch to be left into the school. If available, staff will provide the child with an alternative healthy snack/drink, if there is a long time period until the parent arrives or if a lunch cannot be provided. Staff can check with a child’s siblings to see if they can share a piece of lunch also.

**Implementation**

All members of the teaching staff promote this policy through –

* teaching the relevant sections of the SPHE and Science curriculum
* encouraging the children to participate in the ’Food Dudes’ healthy eating programme
* giving regular verbal reminders and setting good example to the children

**Time frame for Review**

This policy will be reviewed after an initial 12 month period. The policy may also be reviewed should a need arise. Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments made.

**Ratification and Communication**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Principal