

Healthy Eating Policy of Knockminna N.S.

Following attendance by a staff member at a 'Healthy Eating in Schools' inservice day, it was decided to formulate an official Healthy Eating policy in Knockminna N.S.

To help inform our policy decisions, a survey of our parents was carried out and they were asked if our current policy of allowing children to have a treat on Fridays should continue? There were 45 responses and the result was conclusive; 86.7% of them said 'yes'.

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme at Knockminna N.S., we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

What people eat is known to be a key factor influencing health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance (e.g. a low sugar intake promotes concentration, lessens hyperactivity, protects teeth, and lessens the risk of diabetes. A low salt intake reduces the risk of heart disease in later life).

Healthy eating has always been promoted in Knockminna N.S. but in recent times we have noticed an increase in the number and size of treats in some lunch boxes. To promote healthy eating habits in our school, we introduced a healthy eating policy starting from __September 2017_____.

Aims

1. To promote the personal development and well-being of the child
2. To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.

Objectives

1. To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy
2. To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

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. It should also provide dietary fibre (roughage).

In this school we have tried to promote this by distributing at least one piece of fruit to each child on Thursdays and Fridays. (Funded by Social Welfare Services under the School Meals Local Project Scheme)

The traditional packed lunch of milk and sandwiches is under attack from a range of convenience foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, chocolate and soft drinks. Parents and teachers are concerned about this trend but some find it difficult to come up with popular healthy alternatives. We ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start.

The following guide is designed to help you provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for your children

Bread & Alternatives

Bread, rolls or wraps preferably wholemeal
Rice – wholegrain
Pasta – wholegrain
Potato Salad
Wholemeal Scones
Bread sticks
Crackers
Pitta bread

Fruit & Vegetables

Apples, Bananas, Peaches,
Mandarins, Orange segments,
Fruit Salad, dried fruit,
Plums, Pineapple cubes,
Grapes (cut in half vertically),
Cucumber, Sweetcorn,
Tomato,
Coleslaw.

A word about Milk

Growing children should get approximately one pint of milk a day, or its equivalent as cheese, yoghurt or milk pudding. This ensures that they get enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth. If a child does not drink a glass of milk at lunch, encourage him to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead.

The school operates a milk scheme of which you will be informed at various times throughout the school year.

Savouries

Lean Meat
Chicken/Turkey
Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines
Cheese
Quiche
Pizza (Homemade)

Drinks

Milk
Fruit juices (check sugar content)
Squashes (check sugar content)
Yoghurt (check sugar content)

From Monday to Thursday we ask that children do not bring the following to school:

Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including the following:

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)
- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc.)
- Sweets
- Chocolate biscuits/bars
- Cereal bars e.g. Rice Krispie bars etc.
- Fruit winders
- Chocolate spread
- Buns, cakes, pastries
- Lollipops

A very simple approach to healthy eating is to use the Food Pyramid:

| | | |
|--|-------|----------------------|
| Food and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt | ----- | Not every day |
| Fats, spreads and oils | ----- | Sparingly |
| Meat, Poultry, Fish, Eggs, Beans and Nuts | ----- | 2 portions per day |
| Milk, Cheese and Yoghurt | ----- | 3 portions per day |
| Wholemeal cereals and breads potatoes, pasta and rice | ----- | 3-5 portions per day |
| Vegetables, Salad and Fruit | ----- | 5-7 portions per day |

Treat Day

Friday will remain a treat day. On this day, children can include **ONE** food item **only** from the **'do not bring'** list.

Green Flag School

Bearing in mind that we are a green flag school, children are also asked to:

- take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food and silver paper. Other wrappings, containers and cartons will be recycled at the school where possible.
- put only fruit peel into the compost bins
- not bring in cans and glass – for safety reasons.

N.B. Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____.
It will be reviewed as the need arises.