

**SCOIL PHÁDRAIG NAOFA**  
Tomard  
Athy,  
Co. Kildare.

# Healthy Eating Policy



## **Introduction**

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at Scoil Phádraig Naofa we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes and maintaining a healthy diet.

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).

## **Aim of Policy**

- To promote healthy eating habits among pupils, staff and parents;
- To encourage pupils to make good/healthy choices with regard to personal diet.
- To promote lifelong healthy eating and exercise habits through the Social, Personal and Health Education programme (SPHE) in our school and through our Physical Education programme (P.E.).

## **School Lunches Scheme**

Scoil Phádraig Naofa, as a DEIS school, avails of the School Lunches Scheme which is funded by the Department of Social Protection.

Under this scheme, students from our school receive their individually packed lunch on a daily basis. The lunches are both healthy and nutritional and provide our students with a sufficient snack for the day (See Lunch section). Students who wish to supplement this lunch may bring some extra food to school from home. Lunches brought from home must also be of a healthy and nutritional nature.

## **Signing up for School Lunch.**

School Lunches are currently provided by Bradbury's of Athy. Pupils sign up for their lunch through the school office and fill in an individual preference form online. Pupils can change lunch preferences at any stage online.

## **School Hot Meals.**

The school operates a Hot Lunch schedule. The schedule runs on a weekly basis and provides our students with hot meals at lunch time and a chance to dine together. Social skills, table manners and healthy eating, all form part of this time together.

Our Hot Meals scheme is also funded through the Department of Social Protection

## **Breakfast Club**

Since May 2022 our school has run a Breakfast Club for targeted children. The club provides the children with an opportunity to get the most important meal of the day in a healthy, pleasant and supervised environment.

The club is co-ordinated by our HSCL teacher Mr John Joe Costigan.

## **Lunch**

It is very important that parents/guardians provide their children with a healthy breakfast each morning. This helps concentration span and school performance.

Lunch is an important meal for children. If your son/daughter isn't availing of the 'School Lunch Scheme', for healthier lunches, we encourage up to 5 items, one from each of these:

1. Milk, cheese, yoghurt
2. Bread, rice, pasta
3. Fish, chicken, lean meat, egg, cheese
4. Fresh fruit, dried fruit, fresh vegetable
5. Water, milk.

Children will eat their lunch together in class before going out to play. Children will bring home any items left over which are unsuitable for compost or recycling.

## **After School Clubs**

Scoil Phádraig Naofa runs an extensive selection of After School Clubs throughout the year. All club members are provided with healthy snacks and drinks. This is an integral part of our Healthy Eating Policy and forms vital continuity between eating practices in school and after school.

## **Foods Not Allowed**

The school strongly requests parents not to give the following foods to children for eating in school:

- Bubble gum/chewing gum\*\*\*
- Sweets, chocolate,
- Sandwiches with chocolate spread.
- Fizzy drinks, diet drinks, fruit drinks and sports drinks.
- Biscuits, bars and cereal bars.
- Crisps/popcorn

## **Drinking Plenty of Water**

Water is essential for life. Through perspiration (sweating), the body uses water to lower body temperature when it is warm. Regular drinks are necessary to replace fluid lost during the day. Without enough water or fluid in the short-term, the dehydration that results causes tiredness. Water is a tooth-friendly drink. The more active a person is, the more fluid is needed to replace fluid lost as sweat. In hot weather, or if playing sports, children should bring extra water to school.

## **Treat Days and Treats as Part of PBS.**

Friday is our treat day. On Friday's children can include one item from the 'not allowed' list to be included with lunch.

Children may also avail of a treat as part of the school's positive behaviour process. Decisions on the inclusion of treats to celebrate such occasions are at the discretion of our PBS coordinating teachers.

**\*\*\* Bubble gum/chewing gum is never allowed in Scoil Phádraig Naofa**

## **Health Promotion**

The foods on offer from our School Lunches and Hot Meals must be both of high nutritional value and also acceptable to the children. Education about good nutrition will help provide the children with an understanding of the importance of a varied diet for growth, development and health. Our school embraces this message:

- in the classroom
- through SPHE by highlighting some healthy foods and teaching the food pyramid
- by encouraging children to try new healthy foods
- through our dealings with the wider community and using seminars for parents.
- through P.E and other sporting activities.
- through our selection of After School activities.

## **Healthy Eating as Part of an Active Lifestyle**

Scoil Phádraig Naofa promotes all aspects of living a healthy, sustainable and active lifestyle. Through the promotion of healthy eating and a healthy diet children are educated about the necessity to look after our bodies. Educating our pupils happens both through the curriculum and day to day activities.

### **Curriculum**

- S.P.H.E.
- P.E.
- Science
- Geography

### **Day to Day Activities**

- Yard/Break time activities
- Bizzy Breaks

- School Sports Clubs
- Walking/Cycling to and from school as part of Green Schools programme

### **Exceptions to Healthy Eating Policy and Children with Medical Conditions**

Parents/Guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school to make the necessary arrangements regarding their son/daughters dietary requirements.

Parents/Guardians of children experiencing eating/dietary disorders or difficulties are also encouraged to make contact with the school. In such circumstances Scoil Phádraig Naofa may assist in facilitating a solution where possible.

### **Funding.**

The Department of Social Protection provides a grant to cover all food costs for the school's Lunches, Hot Meals and After School Snacks.

Parent's Council, when necessary may contribute towards the provision of healthy foods in our school along with supporting our schools healthy eating and active lifestyle philosophy.

### **Policy Review**

Scoil Phádraig Naofa's Healthy Eating Policy was reviewed in May 2022.

## **Appendix 1: Healthy Eating for Children.**

### **Healthy food pyramid**

The Healthy Food Pyramid is a fun way of teaching your children about the different food groups.

The pyramid is divided into five shelves, each representing a different food group. Choosing a variety of foods from each shelf ensures that your children have a balanced and healthy diet.

You should select most of your children's foods from the bottom two shelves of the Healthy Food Pyramid. Smaller amounts of food should be chosen from the next two shelves, while foods at the top of the pyramid should be taken sparingly.

### **Healthy servings**

The following is a list of suggested servings from each of the food groups in the Healthy Food Pyramid. Each represents one serving. The recommended number of daily servings are indicated beside each food group.

Cereals, bread and potatoes group 6+

- 1 oz slice wholemeal bread or breakfast cereal
- 1 small bread roll
- 1 small scone – plain/brown/fruit
- 2 wholegrain cream crackers or crispbread
- 1 oz plain popcorn
- 1 medium-sized potato – boiled or baked
- 2 tablespoons boiled rice or pasta

Children and teenagers may require additional amounts from the Cereals, Bread and Potatoes Group for physical activity and growth.

### **Fruit and vegetable group 4+**

1 medium-sized fresh fruit, e.g. apple, orange, banana, pear  
1/2 glass unsweetened fruit juice  
Salad vegetables, e.g. tomato, lettuce, cucumber, carrot, celery  
Vegetable sticks made with carrot, pepper, celery, cucumber  
2 tablespoons cooked vegetables or salad  
bowl of home-made vegetable soup

### **Milk, cheese and yogurt group 3**

1/3 pint milk  
1 carton yogurt  
1 oz cheddar/Edam/Blarney cheese  
2 cheese singles

### **Meat, fish and alternatives group 2**

2 oz lean cooked meat, beef, lamb, ham, corned beef  
2 oz chicken/turkey  
3 oz fish, tuna, mackerel, sardines  
2 eggs (not more than 7 per week)  
2 oz pate (low fat)  
1 oz peanut butter  
4 oz baked beans

### **How many servings from the food pyramid did you have today?**

Cereals, bread and potatoes group.  
Fruit and vegetables group .  
Milk, cheese and yogurt group.  
Meat, fish group.  
Alternatives group.  
Total :

### **Healthy main meals**

Suggested meal plan for 5-10 year olds

#### **Breakfast**

The most important meal of your child's day

Fresh fruit or unsweetened fruit juice  
Breakfast cereal, e.g. wholegrain/bran type or porridge Wholemeal bread,  
butter/margarine spread thinly –preferably low fat.  
Jam/marmalade  
Milk or tea

## **Lunch**

Should provide one third of your child's food requirements for the day.

Meat, fish, chicken or combination dishes, e.g. pizza, quiche

Bread for sandwiches – rolls, pita, soda bread

Fresh fruit/yogurt

1 glass or carton of milk or unsweetened fruit juice

## **Dinner**

Adapt your favourite recipes into healthy, balanced dishes.

Home-made vegetable soup

Lean meat or chicken or fish

Good serving of vegetables or salad

Boiled/baked potatoes or boiled rice/pasta

Fresh fruit/stewed fruit/milk pudding/yogurt

1 glass of water

Milk or tea

## **Bedtime/between meals**

Cup of milk and small snack, e.g. wholegrain cracker, scone, plain biscuit

## **Dos and don'ts of good eating for children**

DO eat regular meals, not one big meal each day

DO eat as wide a variety of food as possible

DO eat breakfast every day

DO eat more fruit, vegetables and salad foods

DO eat wholegrain cereals and bread

DO drink plenty of water

DO use mayonnaise/salad creams/salt sparingly

DO remember to brush your teeth after breakfast and at bedtime

DON'T skip meals or eat lots of snacks each day

DON'T eat fried foods. Grilled instead.

DON'T eat sweets, cakes and biscuits too often. Have them as occasional treats.



The following guide is designed to help parents provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for our children:

Breads & Alternatives	Savouries
<p>Bread or rolls (preferably whole-meal, whole-grain or whole-wheat varieties)</p> <p>Wraps Pitta bread</p> <p>Bread sticks</p> <p>Rice – wholegrain Pasta – wholegrain Wholemeal Scones/ Crackers.</p>	<p>Lean Meat (e.g. chicken/turkey, ham)</p> <p>Eggs</p> <p>Tinned Fish eg tuna/sardines/salmon</p> <p>Potato Salad</p> <p>Hummus</p>
Fruits & Vegetables	Drinks
<p>Apples, Banana, Peach Mandarins, Plums</p> <p>Orange segments</p> <p>Fruit Salad, dried fruit,</p> <p>Pineapple cubes, Grape,</p> <p>Cucumber, Sweetcorn, Tomato,</p> <p>Pepper slices,</p> <p>Carrot batons.</p>	<p>Water or Milk are the ideal choice Fruit juices - <i>without added sugar.</i></p> <p><i>Purefruit juice also contains natural sugar and should be diluted with water)</i></p> <p>Yoghurt</p> <p>Dairy</p> <p>Milk</p> <p>Natural Yoghurt</p> <p>Cheese (triangles/slices/ small blocks of cheddar/gouda/edam etc)</p>

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