



Holmpatrick National School

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Healthy Eating Policy 2024

Title:

Holmpatrick National School Healthy Eating Policy.

Introductory Statement:

This policy was formulated by the teachers at Holmpatrick National School in conjunction with the Parents' Association. The policy aims to develop positive and responsible attitudes to eating among our pupils, encouraging them to improve their health & fitness by adopting a healthy diet.

Rationale:

It is recognised that eating habits are established at a young age, and therefore it is essential that young children choose healthy options as early as possible.

Recent European studies highlight the fact that young people eat too much sugar, salt and fat, and they do not eat enough fruit and vegetables.

To co-incide with the recent introduction of the 'Food Dudes' first generation programme into the school, and the 'Incredible Edible' programme run by Agri Aware, our policy hopes to encourage the pupils to become aware of the benefits of healthy eating by being introduced to eating, growing and preparing fresh fruit and vegetables. We hope most pupils will be encouraged to make healthy eating choices and this would be reflected in their lunch boxes.

Promoting healthy eating through education of choice, availability and cooking at a young age will help ensure that healthy children become healthy adults. With the support of parents, the school can play a valuable role in health promotion.

Teachers and staff will also adhere to the school healthy eating policy.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School:

Our school cherishes all pupils equally and we wish to promote a healthy eating policy in order to enhance the development of our pupils and help them to achieve their true potential.

Aims:

The main aims of our healthy eating policy are:

- To increase pupils' knowledge of healthy eating and nutrition
- To educate the children to make healthy choices when buying, preparing, eating and cooking food.
- To develop a positive attitude to food, nutrition and all aspects of health education
- To promote a healthy lifestyle at an early age
- To raise levels of concentration within class due to consumption of healthy food

Guidelines:

This policy is incorporated in the Social, Personal and Health Education curriculum under the strand 'Myself' within the unit 'Taking care of my body'.

Implementation:

Parents should ensure that children have a healthy breakfast every day before school.

Children should be encouraged to assist in the making of their own lunches in order to foster an awareness of possible healthy options.

A healthy lunch is defined as a balanced meal which should ideally contain items from the first four food groups.

The following is a list of suggested foods for a healthy, balanced school lunch:

Group 1: Bread/cereal/pasta CARBOHYDRATE	Sandwiches/rolls Pitta bread pockets Naan bread Crackers Crackerbread
Group 2: FRUITS/VEGETABLES	Any fruit or vegetable items Salad in a box (Please remember to peel or cut fruit for younger pupils).

Group 3: DAIRY	Small packets of cheese (eg. 5 in a bag size). Yoghurts (pots or frubes) with spoon Milk to drink
Group 4: Meat PROTEIN	Meats in sandwiches or salad Cold meats or tuna Eggs Bean salads

One item from Group 5 may be given in the lunchbox on Friday only, as a treat. Highly processed foods are not encouraged as they have little nutritional value.

Group 5: TREATS *(Friday only)*	Small fun size bar Small packet/half packet sweets 2 biscuits Bun Cereal bar Popcorn
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The children will be encouraged to take drinks with their meals and throughout the day. All drinks should be in non-spill bottles or cartons. Suggested drinks include: water, milk, unsweetened juices. Drinks not permitted in school: fizzy drinks, high energy sports drinks, hot chocolate.

Monitoring:

Teachers will regularly monitor lunchboxes to ensure the children are adhering to the policy guidelines. Pupils who are found to have unhealthy options in their lunchboxes will be encouraged to choose a healthier option. If the problem of unhealthy lunches persists, a note will be sent home to remind parents of our Healthy Eating Policy.

In our school we acknowledge that there will be some children with special dietary needs. In these cases children will not be limited to the listed foods.

Exceptions:

The following exceptions may apply:

- End of term parties
- School trips
- School events - concerts, matches, etc.

Children with Special Dietary Needs:

In our school we acknowledge that there will be some children with special dietary needs. In these cases children will not be limited to the listed foods. Teachers should be made aware if allowances need to be made.

Timeframe for Implementation:

This policy was ratified and adopted by the Board of Management on 20^h March 2024.

Signed _____
Chairperson Board of Management

Date

Signed _____
Principal

Date

Date of next review March 2026.