

## Scoil Aodh Rua agus Nuala



### Introductory Statement January 2014

The review and updating of our existing healthy eating policy was prompted by the implementation of the Food Dudes Programme during the last school year and also recent media reports which highlight the increase in childhood obesity and diabetes and the need for a healthy diet. What people eat is known to be a key factor influencing health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance (eg. a low sugar intake promotes concentration, lessens hyperactivity, protects teeth and lessens the risk of diabetes. A low sugar intake reduces the risk of heart disease in later life). Therefore this review is both timely and critical for the healthy development of our children.

### Rationale

The focus of this policy is to support parents and children in relation to healthy eating habits from an early age.

The Healthy Eating Policy is linked to:

**SPHE** : Strand Unit :

- Taking care of my Body,
- Food and Nutrition,
- Making choices (Teachers 'Guidelines).

**Science Programme**: Strand Unit :

- Living Things.
- Human Life Processes

**Green Schools Programme**: Caring for our environment. (Recycling).

**PE Programme**: Promotes active living.

## **Aims**

- To assist all involved in our school community, children, parents and staff to develop positive and responsible attitude to eating.
- To appreciate the contribution that a healthy diet makes to health.
- Through our Healthy Eating Policy we also hope to encourage the children to participate in activities that promote and sustain health/physical education.
- To promote nutritional awareness eg.
  - Looking at the ingredients in food – what is good/bad.
- To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy balanced diet.
- To protect the health and safety of children with serious food allergies.
- To support our Green School Policy insisting on containers or cartons that can be recycled.
- To support and encourage healthy life long habits.

## **Guidelines**

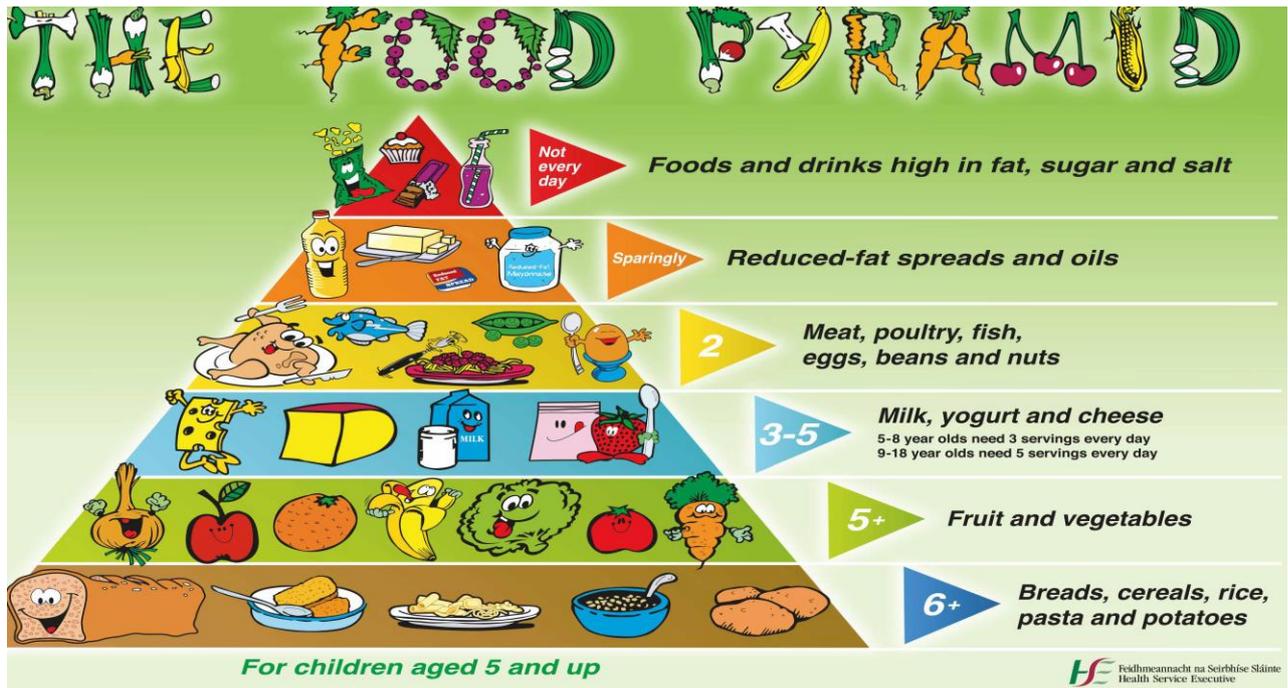
In Scoil Aodh Rua agus Nuala the children eat twice a day – before going out to play.

The traditional packed lunch of milk and sandwiches is under attack from a range of convenience foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, chocolates and soft drinks.

Parents and teachers are concerned about this trend. We ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start.

## **The Healthy Lunch Guidelines**

A healthy lunch box should include one piece of food from the first four shelves of the food pyramid starting from the bottom.



## Drinks

Milk (available at school at a low cost).

Water, Fruit juices, diluted drinks, yoghurt drinks.

No glass bottles allowed. In line with our Green School Policy we request that you use reusable containers or cartons that can be recycled.

**Bread/Alternatives:** Scones, wholemeal rolls, wraps, rice cakes, pancakes, pitta bread.

**Savouries:** Cheese, Pizza slice etc.

Fruit and Vegetables: Apples, bananas, mandarins, peaches, plum, carrots, tomatoes, dried fruit etc.

It may be necessary to peel fruit for Junior Infants.

**The following food is not allowed:**

**Crisps, chewing gum, fizzy drinks.**

Parents should inform the school if a child is on a special diet or has allergies to certain foods.

**“Treats”** are allowed on Fridays, special occasions – First Holy Communion Party, School trips and events.

## **Healthy Eating Initiatives**

### **Food Dudes Programme**

During the last school year our school took part in the Food Dudes Programme which encouraged children to taste different fruits and vegetables. It is hoped that parents/guardians will include these foods in their child's lunch box.

### **Soup Day**

This is an annual event in our school. In autumn the vegetables from our school garden are harvested by the children. The staff make soup using these vegetables and each child is offered a cup of soup. Parents support us by sending in brown bread for this event.

**Milk:** Milk is available at school at a very low cost. Parents/guardians are informed of this at the beginning of each school year.

### **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 carton of milk at lunch, encourage him to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Role of Parents/Guardians:**

- Provide a healthy well balanced lunch for their child
- Give children portions appropriate to their age and appetite.
- Chop and peel fruit/vegetables for Junior children.
- Encourage healthy eating at home.
- Inform the school if child has any special dietary needs.
- Support school policy on prohibited foods.

### **Role of Children:**

- To eat their lunch.
- To bring home uneaten lunch.
- To remind parents/guardians of the school Healthy Lunch Policy.
- Not to bring chewing gum, fizzy drinks or crisps to school.

### **Role of the school staff:**

- To encourage pupils to eat their lunch.
- To afford reasonable time for this.
- To be role models with regard to healthy eating and to support the school policy.

### **Green Schools Programme:**

We are a green school – with this in mind the children are asked to take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers, cartons and fruit and vegetables skins.

**For safety reasons** children are asked not bring in cans and glass bottles.

### **Success Criteria:**

We will know that the policy is effective if the awareness of the school community is heightened and if all children bring healthy lunches to school.

### **Ratification and Communication of Policy**

This policy will be ratified by the Board of Management and communicated to all on the school website [www.saran.ie](http://www.saran.ie)

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

Fr. Peoples  
Chairperson, Board of Management

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