Healthy Eating Policy

## INTRODUCTION:

Our School supports the view that good nutrition is central to a child’s educational development. Evidence from existing studies shows that there is a significant positive relationship between improved dietary status and school performance.

Knowledge of what constitutes a nutritionally balanced diet is acknowledged as being of importance for our students. To support this, nutrition education is featured in many curricular areas particularly in our SPHE programme.

This policy was formulated following consultation with staff, parents and pupils of Monastery School and with the approval of the Board of Management.

## RATIONALE:

Our most recent Healthy Eating Policy has been implemented since September 2014 with the aim to promote healthy eating habits in our school. At the time of introduction we had noticed a decline in healthy-eating habits among some of our pupils, which both teachers and parents were concerned about.

While much improvement has been made in recent years we are updating this policy to ensure that continued progress is made in line with current guidelines and practice in our school.

The focus of this policy is to continue supporting parents and pupils in relation to healthy-eating habits, with practical suggestions and guidelines.

## AIMS:

* To heighten an awareness of the importance of a balanced diet.
* To encourage the children to make wise choices about food.
* To improve the children’s’ concentration and energy levels.
* As a Greenschool to encourage pupils to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems caused by junk food, pre-prepared food, juice cartons, excessive wrappings etc.

**GUIDELINES:**

A healthy lunch

* Is full of goodness and includes protein, carbohydrates, and vitamins etc which are all required for a balanced diet.
* Gives strength and energy to concentrate and enjoy physical activities
* Keeps us fit and healthy

Foods which are encouraged in our school

* Sandwiches, rolls, wraps filled with meat, fish, cheese and salad
* Pitta bread and crackers
* Fruit
* Chopped vegetables / salads
* Pasta, rice and potato salads
* Yoghurts (natural/fruit)
* bread sticks, rice cakes, scones
* Drinks include – water, squash e.g. miwadi, yoghurt e.g. actimel, smoothies.

Foods which should not be in a healthy lunch

Convenience and highly processed foods which are full of sugar and / or fats e.g.:-

* Crisps, salted nuts.
* Popcorn
* Chocolate, sweets, jellies
* Cereal bars high in sugar e.g. – rice crispy squares
* Winders
* Cakes, biscuits, buns, pastries, doughnuts
* Toffee/chocolate flavoured yoghurts
* Highly processed fillings eg. Deep fried/ Breaded chicken rolls

Foods which will never be tolerated in our school are:-

* Chewing gum
* Fizzy drinks, energy drinks, sports drinks
* Lollipops

Treat Day

* Treat Day is Friday and pupils can include *one* treat (not multi-pack, supersize, share bags/ family pack portions) along with their healthy lunch.
* Fizzy drinks, lollipops and chewing gum however should never be brought to school
* We encourage pupils to eat their treat at lunchtime after their healthy lunch has been consumed

Who is responsible for ensuring pupils consume a healthy lunch

* Pupils
* Parents
* Teachers

What is the procedure if a child brings in an unhealthy item to school

The child is encouraged to bring the item home with him again in his lunchbox as long as they have sufficient amount of other food to eat.

Breakfast Club

Our school participates in a breakfast club.

* Each pupil receives two snacks daily as part of the ‘Breakfast club’
* This is funded by the Department of Social Protection.
* These snacks are distributed in the classroom at approximately 10.20am each day.
* If a child is not eating the snack provided to him he must bring the item home.
* Menu options are provided to the classes. Teachers and children select options from the menu for each class on a regular basis.
* Our current provider for these snacks is Glanmore foods. Their range is prepared according to Healthy Ireland food guidelines.
* The provider and menu is reviewed annually in consultation with parents and pupils.

Exceptions

* Treat Day
* Sometimes after special events, we are given treats during school time e.g.:- The School Show, Soccer Marathon, Graduation and Choir.
* Cake Sale day
* School tour
* Prizes for special activities such as Maths week or in class competitions
* Treats distributed in school are kept to a portion size

Green Flag School

* Pupils are asked help keep our Green school clean, tidy and litter free by bringing home all wrappings and containers and Reducing, Reusing and Recycling whenever possible.
* When making choices about food we encourage children to avoid single use plastics and to bring reusable drinks bottles
* Pupils are encouraged to leave wrappings in the classroom and not bring unnecessary wrapping to the school yard.
* Pupils are not allowed to eat in the corridor when moving from classroom to school yard.

Healthy Eating Promotion

* We encourage pupils at class level by monitoring their lunches and endorsing healthy choices.
* We cover lessons during SPHE on Taking care of my body and Food and Nutrition and during Science on Human Life.
* We take part in the ‘Food Dudes’ programme when it is available

Special Dietary Requirements

* Our school caters for boys with special dietary requirements and we will continue to work together with parents to ensure these needs are met.

SUCCESS CRITERIA:

We will carefully monitor what boys are bringing in for break and lunch. Teachers will continue to encourage healthy eating within their classrooms.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

* Our healthy eating policy will be monitored at class level and during break times by the teachers.
* We rely on parents/guardians to support this policy when providing lunches and snacks

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION

* We intend to implement our revised Healthy Eating Policy from March 1st 2020.

TIMEFRAME FOR REVIEW

* This policy will be reviewed annually.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW

Our revised policy will be reviewed by:-

* Staff
* Pupils
* Parents

APPENDIX

* Attached to this policy are the Strands, Strand Units and Objectives as laid out in the SPHE curriculum.

RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to parents through a letter sent out in September, an insert in the school diary and the school website.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Chairperson of the Board of Management Date