



# Dunderrow National School

## Healthy Eating Policy



### Introductory Statement

Dunderrow National School is a Health Promoting School since 2006. Its first Health Promoting Status (HSE) Flag was awarded in 2010 and Health Promoting Status has been maintained every year since, hence a second flag was awarded to Dunderrow NS in June 2015.

Completed surveys, discussion with parents, children, staff, Parents' Association and Board of Management and HSE Guidelines resulted in a Healthy Eating Policy being put in place for Dunderrow National School in 2007.

### Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

Dunderrow National School is committed to promoting the holistic well-being of all of the pupils in its care, developing the spiritual, emotional and physical potential of each individual. The school strives towards developing the full potential of every pupil in communication, literacy, numeracy and relevant life skills. It is acknowledged by all parties that there is an important connection between a healthy diet and a pupil's ability to learn effectively which results in improvements in concentration and behaviour. This in turn assists pupils in achieving their full potential.

### Rationale

The purpose of this healthy eating policy is:

- To follow the food and nutrition guidelines issued by the Department of Health and Children - Eat Smart and Move More (published in 2013), DES Guidelines Circular 0013/2016
- As part of the Health Promoting School Initiative the school will make available H.S.E. information with regards to Healthy School Lunches explaining the food pyramid and the benefits of eating a healthy diet. The food pyramid outlines an excellent common sense approach to healthy and balanced eating. (See Food Pyramid, HSE Guidelines in Appendix 1)
- To ensure pupils and parent(s) / guardian(s) become aware of the importance of food for growth and development as part of the S.P.H.E. curriculum through the medium of
  - ❖ Strand Unit: Taking Care of My Body: Food and Nutrition (Curriculum Junior Infants – 6th Class)
  - ❖ Making choices (See Teacher Curriculum Guidelines p 11-13)
  - ❖ Inviting parents and outside agencies to assist in the promotion of healthy living through cookery, nutritional workshops and using HSE initiatives such as Food Dudes Programme which was rolled out during the 2014-2015 and 2019/20 school year.

### Aims

The aim of this healthy eating policy is to ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in Dunderrow National School promotes the health and well-being of pupils, staff and visitors to the school. Our school also acknowledges that it can play a role in the wider community to promote family health.

Through the promotion of healthy eating our school aims to:

- ❖ Improve the health of pupils, staff and their families by helping to influence their eating habits through increasing their knowledge and awareness of food issues.
- ❖ Present **consistent informed messages** about healthy eating within school and encourage pupils and

parents to make wise choices about food and nutrition.

- ❖ To raise levels of pupils' concentration within class due to consumption of healthy food.
- ❖ To encourage pupils to eat a healthy lunch.
- ❖ To encourage parents to ensure that children are given a healthy breakfast before school.
- ❖ To encourage pupils to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems caused by junk food, pre-prepared food, juice cartons etc. and to recycle all food and drinks products, where applicable.

Dunderrow National School will work toward these aims with the parent(s) / guardian(s), teachers and health professionals.

## A Healthy Lunch

At present we encourage all members of the school community to bring a healthy lunch daily. A healthy lunch is defined as something taken from each of the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid, which is in line with the Dept. of Health directive on Healthy Eating.

Lunches should be composed of a variety of foods and include at least one item from the different food groups.

There should be something in the lunch box from:-

1. Fruit and vegetable group – Some typical choices are a whole fruit, a fruit juice drink, vegetable soup, salad or cooked/raw vegetables.
2. Cereal group – Foods such as bread, rice, pasta, potatoes or pitta bread.
3. Dairy group – Milk, cheese or yoghurt
4. Protein-rich food – Meat, chicken, fish, egg, beans, peas, lentils or cheese.

The following foods outlined below in Category 1 are suitable for lunches:

### Category 1

Whole fresh fruit	Fruit juice	Vegetable soup	Batons of raw vegetables
Salad vegetables in sandwiches	Wraps and rolls	Crackers	Sandwiches
Fruit chunks in ready to peel packs	Rice cakes (not chocolate)	Bread sticks	Pasta salad
Homemade fruit salad	Potato salad	Rice salad	Bean salad
Cheese triangles	Pasta salad	Yoghurt drinks	Smoothies
Tinned fish in brine	Fromage frais	Yogurt pots	Cheese
Chicken	Turkey	Beans	Ham
Egg	Oatcakes-homemade	Scones	Milk/water/non Fizzy drinks
❖ Nuts	Dried Fruits	Hummus	
❖ Peanut Butter			

## Treats and Celebrations

- Food from the top shelf of the food pyramid - "a treat" (treat size being recommended), will be allowed on Friday or at the end of term as a well done reward.. End of Term will be celebrated with a class activity and one treat.
- Food choices for school special occasions and celebrations will be directed towards more healthy options as agreed by all parties (e.g an ice-cream at the final practice for Communion/Confirmation)

One of the following foods in Category 2 are allowed only as a Friday treat/special occasions:

### Category 2

Chocolate sweets	Popcorn - treat size	Tortillas	❖ Nuts
Biscuits-all types	Doughnuts	Chocolate bars-treat size	Nutella
Sweets – treat size	Danish pastries	Small piece of cake –	Muffins/Buns/Fudge

		including homemade	
Croissants	Cereal Bars	Flapjacks	

## Health & Safety

- ❖ Nuts in appropriate quantities can be in either categories but periodically nuts may ***not*** be allowed at school or in a particular class where a child is prone to a nut allergy. If you have any suspicion that a child may currently have or may be developing a food allergy please inform the pupil's class teacher.
- ❖ On the grounds of health & safety gum is not allowed in school at any time
- ❖ Due to different types of food allergies across the school any baking should be an informed decision by the class teacher, having read all files. Cooking lessons are preferred to baking lessons in accordance with our health Promoting School status.

The following foods are ***not*** allowed at any time:

Crisps and similar bagged corn/potato products e.g Snax, Hula Hoops, Pringles etc.	Fizzy Drinks Sports Drinks	Chewing Gum
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## Lunchbox Guidelines

As children respond better to routine and regular meals (see appendix 3 - HSE Meal Planner guidelines) the following recommendations will be promoted as guidelines for a healthy lunchbox

- \* All children should have a lunch on a daily basis.
- \* Lunch portions given should be age appropriate so as to maintain a healthy weight for your child (see appendix 2 - Portion Control is Weight Control).
- \* Lunch size and content should be determined to meet the needs of an individual child.
- \* Using DES Guidelines children will be given time to eat lunch in class before play. It is imperative that children with encouragement from parents and teachers eat lunch during this time.

## Drinks

Drinks, which are encouraged, include milk, water, natural fruit juices and yogurt drinks. Outdoor water fountain is available to all children at school. Cartons of juice with high sugar content e.g. Ribena, Capri-sun, etc. should be kept as a Friday treat.

We encourage all parent(s) / guardian(s) to support the policy in the interest of their own child's health, nutrition and the benefits of healthy eating.

A copy of the Healthy Eating Policy will be included as part of the enrolment pack for new pupils enrolling at Dunderrow National School and will be on view in school and on school website.

The Parents' Association of Dunderrow National School will also promote this policy.

## Success Criteria

We will know that the Healthy Eating Policy is effective if all the children bring healthy lunches to school. It is essential that there is consistency from all members of staff in promoting our Healthy Eating Policy. The policy may not be broken for rewards – see Code of Discipline for rewards and sanctions.

## Roles and Responsibility – by all parties involved in your child's education

The Healthy Eating Policy will be supported and developed and the school will co-ordinate the progress of the policy, encourage and accept feedback from parent(s) / guardian(s) and pupils on its implementation.

### **Timeframe for Implementation**

The Healthy Eating Policy has been fully implemented since September 2007. This was updated in 2016 and was reviewed again in February 2020 as part of the Food Dudes Initiative.

### **Ratification and Communication**

This Healthy Eating Policy has been ratified by the Board of Management of Dunderrow National School at a meeting held in 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020. It was updated again by all stakeholders especially the children of our school, in May 2021.

Signed: Seamus McCarthy  
Seamus McCarthy  
Chairperson Board of Management

Date: 21/6/21

Signed: Triona Hannon  
Triona Hannon  
Principal

Date: 21/6/21