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**Chairperson of the Board of Management: Harold Brooks**

**Policy: Healthy Eating in School**

**Date of Issue: March 2008**

### **Amendments / Reviews**

January 2016 – Chairperson change  
September 2017 – Chairperson Change

**Aim of Policy:** To promote healthy eating habits in school.

# Healthy Eating Policy

## Introduction:

The primary objective of the healthy eating policy is to ensure that the pupils are encouraged to have a healthy diet. At our Lady of Good Counsel School we encourage all pupils to make healthy choices about the food they eat. We recognise the importance of having a good breakfast as a good start to the school day. We encourage pupils to have a healthy lunch. In the junior section of the school we are particularly concerned that pupils form good eating habits. In the senior pupils are taught to plan and make their own snacks. Our healthy eating policy is along the lines of that recommended by the Health Promotion Unit of the HSE. The HSE published new guidelines in 2013 for healthy eating for adults and children over five. Using the food pyramid the guidelines recommend the necessary intake of a variety of healthy foods required. An example of a daily eating plan should include breakfast, mid-morning snack, lunch, mid-afternoon snack, dinner and supper. Consequently the concept of “a little and often” is a healthy option for the junior cycle.

**The guide lines for the Healthy Eating Policy are formulated using the food pyramid and the emphasis is on healthy lunches and snacks which are eaten in school.**

These recommendations are still important even though lunches are provided for many of the children through the school lunch scheme:

1. Protein is particularly good for growing children. One portion should be included in the lunch in the form of cold meat (ham, chicken, beef, lamb, corn beef) or hardboiled egg or fish.
2. Over the day several servings of fruit and vegetables are required. At least one, but preferably two, should be included in the student’s lunch.
3. One serving of dairy in the school lunch is desirable. This can be added in the form of milk, cheese or yogurt.
4. With regard to bread, the recommendation is either one small bread roll or two slices of bread. The preferred choice is the wholemeal option (i.e. brown bread or brown roll). Butter, mayonnaise, etc should be spread *thinly* over the bread.
5. We would appreciate that treats would only be provided on Friday only.

## Birthdays

If a pupil’s birthday falls during the school term it is celebrated with a class party. Parents may send in a cake if they wish.

## Health & Safety

Please DO NOT send in items of food that need to be microwaved. In general, the school does not have the facility to microwave lunches as, for safety reasons, microwave are not allowed in classrooms. It is also not feasible for SNAs to reduce supervision in the class to go to the staffroom to microwave food.

This rule, can be relaxed for certain pupils with whom we have agreed that microwaving lunches are the only option for them. Please outline these reasons to your child’s class teacher.

## Introductory Statement:

This policy was devised as a result of of consultation between teachers, pupils, the Parents’ Association, the Board of Management and the Health Promotion Unit of the H.S.E.

## Rationale:

1. The health and well-being of our students and staff are important for everyone in the school community.

2. This policy will aspire to achieve the objectives of the S.P.H.E. and S.E.S.E. (Science) guidelines, as set out in the curriculum.

**S.P.H.E.:**

- Strand: Myself
- Strand Units: Taking care of my body; Growing and changing.

**S.E.S.E. (Science):**

- Strand: Living Things
- Strand Units: Myself: variety and characteristics of humans, Human Life Processes.

**Aims:**

- To encourage the students to make informed choices about the food they eat.
- To develop the students knowledge of nutrition.
- To heighten the students and their parents awareness of the importance of a balanced diet.
- To support and encourage healthy eating habits in students, which is hoped will become lifelong habits.
- To develop an awareness of hygiene and safety when handling food.
- To develop correct hand washing methods throughout the school.
- To understand the importance of exercise to maintain health.

**It is the policy of our school that:**

- Healthy lunches are encouraged and fizzy drinks, sweets, chocolate and crisps be discouraged.
- Students are encouraged to bring in at least one type of fruit and/or vegetable as part of their lunch.
- Food wrappings and leftovers are taken home in lunchboxes each day for recycling.
- Good hygiene practices are employed at all times.

**Nutritional content of lunches:**

The Food Pyramid is an ideal and appropriate way to teach our students about the different food groups.

Healthy lunch ideas:

- Bread & Cereals: 2 portions (depending on how active the child is)
  - All types of bread rolls: white, brown, wholemeal, wholegrain, etc.
  - Tortilla wraps.
  - Pitta breads, scones, burger buns.
  - Rice or pasta (plain or with sauce).
  - Bagels, crackers, rice cakes, popcorn.
- Fruit & Vegetables: 1-2 portions
  - Oranges, apples, plums, grapes, bananas, pears, etc.
  - Carrot or celery sticks.
- Milk & dairy: 1 portion
  - Milk to drink.
  - Cheese (chunks, slices, grated, spread)
  - Yogurts or yogurt drinks.
- Meat, fish and alternatives: 1 portion
  - Sliced turkey, ham, chicken
  - Sliced hard boiled egg.

- Cheese.
- Tuna mixed with sweetcorn

On special occasions, teachers may give treats to their class, e.g.

- Christmas, Halloween, end of term parties.
- Birthdays.
- Shop on Friday.

### **Importance of hand washing**

Teaching children how to wash their hands correctly is a means of disease control. Hand washing is one of the simplest methods of preventing many infectious illnesses.

The goals of teaching about these are:

- To increase knowledge of the necessity for hand washing.
- To increase the practice of hand washing in students.
- To increase knowledge of proper hand washing.

Proper hand washing may eliminate nearly half of all cases of food borne illnesses and significantly reduce the spread of the common cold and flu.

### **Considerations:**

- School milk scheme.
- Healthy Eating Week.
- Posters and other materials, e.g. Food Pyramid.
- 'Food Dudes' and other healthy eating initiatives, e.g. 'Fruity Friday'.
- Student cookery demonstrations and practical application of skills.

### **Roles & Responsibilities:**

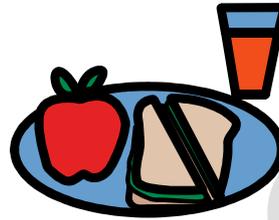
Parents/guardians have a responsibility to provide healthy lunches, in so far as is possible.

- Teachers have a responsibility to provide a good example through their own healthy eating habits.
- The whole school community – staff, parents/guardians and children – will work together to promote the progress of this policy.
- All are encouraged to discuss and provide feedback on its performance, which will be reported back as appropriate to the Principal and staff.
- A Healthy Eating Committee consisting of the Principal, Teacher rep., SNA rep., head boy/girl, parent rep. and home economics teacher will meet from time to time to review this policy.

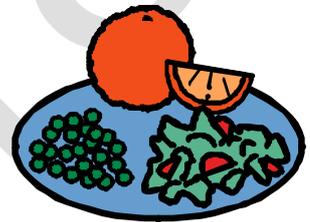
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## Healthy Eating Policy

- Eat healthy lunches.



- Eat fruit and vegetables everyday.



- Drink water everyday.



- Exercise everyday.

