

# **Scoil San Treasa, Mount Merrion, Co. Dublin. Board of Management**

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## **Introductory Statement**

Good nutrition is essential for school children. Physical activity is integral to any healthy eating programme and hence should also be promoted and encouraged. In consultation with the Principal and staff, a sub-committee of the Parent' Association reviewed and updated the school's healthy eating policy a number of years ago. The existing policy was reviewed in the summer term, 2019, in consultation with pupils, parents, staff and Board of Management.

The involvement of the broad school community in drawing up and subsequently reviewing the policy ensures that children receive consistent messages both at home and at school.

## **Rationale**

- Healthy eating is an essential component of the overall health of children and as such is part of the holistic education that Scoil San Treasa advocates in its education philosophy and mission statement. The adoption of a whole school approach ensures that healthy eating messages are part of every aspect of school life.
- Healthy eating is part of the SPHE (social, personal and health education) curriculum programme for each primary school class. Research suggests that the provision of nutritious school food enhances not only the child's health but also allows the child to take full advantage of the education provided by improving attention levels and concentration spans.
- Key healthy eating messages that are consistent and fact based assist children in decision making and in the formation of attitudes, beliefs and practices around healthy eating.

## **Aims**

- To assist all involved in our school community-children, parents and staff to develop positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to appreciate the contribution that good foods make to health.
- To improve the opportunities for our children to grow into healthy adults and to heighten an awareness of the importance of a balanced diet.
- To raise levels of concentration within class due to consumption of healthy food.
- To encourage children to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems caused by junk food, pre-prepared food, juice cartons etc.

## **Guidelines**

### *A Healthy Lunchbox & healthy snack for small break*

- A healthy lunchbox includes a range of food from the first four shelves of the food pyramid. For health and safety reasons, nuts should **not** be included in our child's school lunch. *Please note, however, that we cannot guarantee that the school will be a nut-free zone. It is important that parents of children who may have allergies/food intolerances ensure that their children are aware of the importance of not eating food other than what they know to be safe for them.*
- Parents should inform the school if a child is on a special diet or has an allergy. Once teachers are aware of a child's special needs they can advise against swapping and sharing of food.
- Healthy choice of drink include water, milk and fruit juices. No fizzy drinks allowed. (yoghurts/yoghurt drinks are not recommended in infant classes for practical reasons)
- The following foods are not allowed at any time: crisps, chewing gum, lollipops, fizzy or energy drinks.
- "Treats" are allowed on Fridays only i.e. one treat in the lunch box (fun size bars, biscuits, sweets).

### *Healthy School Environment*

- Through the Parents' Association, every effort will be made to communicate with and encourage parents to support the healthy eating policy.
- The school community will source and use means to promote this policy e.g. posters, leaflets, the food pyramid, outside speakers and agencies - as appropriate to circumstances over time.
- National campaigns can be used as opportunities to focus on healthy eating messages. (The school's participation in the Food Dudes programme coincided with the introduction of the policy.). The school organises an annual healthy eating week to highlight the policy.
- Children eat their lunch while supervised in classrooms. They are permitted to bring uneaten food to finish in the yard.
- Children are encouraged to drink water/fluids (at specified times) during the school day.

**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.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Parents play an essential role in helping shape children's eating habits and attitudes towards physical activity. Parents are encouraged to send children to school with a healthy lunch. Teachers will monitor the progress of the policy in their own classroom. The teacher will send home any food not allowed as per guidelines, along with any uneaten food. (Children are asked to bring packaging home under Green Schools guidelines)

**Timeframe for Implementation and Review**

This policy is currently being implemented throughout the school and will be reviewed periodically in the light of experience and as time allows.

**Ratification and Communication**

This policy is published on the website.

The policy in its current form was ratified by the Board of Management on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2019