

St. Joseph's N.S. Brackloon

Policy on Healthy Eating and Positive Life-style

Introduction:

We drew up this Policy in order **to promote nutrition, healthy eating and positive life-style** among pupils in our school. We invited a Nutritionist from the Western Health Board to talk to Staff and to address a meeting of parents. She offered advice on how best to go about drawing up this Policy. As a result through the involvement of all partners we have agreed the following 'Policy on Healthy Eating and positive Life-style'.

School Philosophy:

In our Mission Statement we state that it is our intention to provide pupils with learning opportunities so that they receive a quality education. We will try to fulfil their needs, thereby enabling them to live full lives as children.

Aims:

We will aim to:

- Promote the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of each child.
- Promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.
- Help pupils to acquire a knowledge and understanding of their bodies.
- Help pupils to develop a sense of responsibility for their own health.
- Help pupils to understand the importance of regular and challenging physical exercise in their lives.

Objectives:

- To help pupils understand the benefits of healthy eating.
- To learn the main food groups in the food pyramid.
- To understand the benefits and drawbacks of snacking.

- To understand why sugary snacks are not the best option.
- To investigate alternative choices for snacks.
- To promote healthy options for mealtime and school lunches.
- To maintain and enhance health-related fitness through enjoyable physical activity.
- Understand and practise good hygiene and posture.

The Management and Organisation of this Policy in our School:

- **Food and Nutrition, and Physical Education** to be taught as part of the curriculum; e.g. during Physical Education classes, swimming, games, project work on related subjects, Social, Personal and Health Education.
- To educate pupils on the importance of **healthy eating and lifestyle** on concentration, on learning and on physical development.
- **Guidelines:** Adopt the '**Food Pyramid**' as a guide in promoting nutrition and balanced diet.
- Offer the following guidelines for a **healthy diet**:
 1. Enjoy your food.
 2. Eat a variety of different foods.
 3. Eat the right amount to be a healthy weight.
 4. Eat plenty of foods rich in starch and fibre.
 5. Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables.
 6. Don't eat too many foods that contain a lot of fat.
 7. Don't have sugary foods and drinks too often.

School Lunches:

1. St. Joseph's N.S. offers parents the opportunity to avail of the school lunch scheme under the DEIS initiative. The school lunches are prepared in line with the school's Healthy Eating Policy. Participation in the lunch scheme is totally voluntary and unfortunately it is not possible to cater for individual tastes.
2. Every effort should be made to follow the '**Food Pyramid Guidelines**.'
3. A relaxation of the Policy to be allowed on **specified occasions only**: e.g. school outings, school parties etc.
4. **Special dietary requirements:** If a pupil has a medical condition or other needs which requires a special diet, parents are to inform the school so that appropriate arrangements can be put in place. The following are **not allowed**:
Fizzy drinks, crisps, sweets, chewing gum, chocolate bars, biscuits. Glass bottles and tins can not be allowed for safety reasons.

- Parents are **advised** to avoid convenience lunch products e.g. Dairylea lunchables, Cheese strings. These processed products are often marketed as ‘Healthy’ lunch options but in reality are not very healthy.
- When exercising wear **appropriate clothing and footwear**.
- We will encourage a **whole school and whole family** approach to this Policy.
- The **full co-operation of all parties** involved will be vital if we are to be successful in promoting healthy eating and positive life-style.

Resources and Guidelines:

1. Health Board Leaflets: ‘**Healthy Lunch box to grow, Learn and Play, Healthy Eating for Children and Quick and Easy Breakfast Ideas**’, which will be distributed to parents and pupils.
2. Health Board wallcharts: The ‘**Food Pyramid**’ and ‘**The Exercise Pyramid**’, which will be displayed in the classrooms.
3. Other Department of Education and Health Board Resources, as they become available.

Support, Development and Review:

The Board of Management will offer support, in so far as it can, to teachers, pupils and parents to facilitate the successful implementation of this Policy by making a commitment to:

- Provide educational opportunities for the school partners in promoting this Policy.
- Provide, as far as possible, relevant Healthy eating and Positive Life-style resources.
- Provide opportunities to have this Policy looked at regularly and revise if necessary, after first consulting with school partners.