



Knocknacarra Educate Together
National School

Healthy Eating Policy

This policy has been formulated by Knocknacarra ETNS to provide guidance to parents, teachers and children regarding the development of healthy eating habits among the children in our learning community.

Original Ratification: 2016 Reviewed: 2021, 2024

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Introduction and Background

This school policy on healthy eating was written in consultation with parents and approved by the Board of Management of Knocknacarra Educate Together NS in 2016. It was reviewed through a consultation process with the Parent Teacher Association in 2021 and 2024. The school endeavours to educate the whole child, ensuring each child reaches his or her full potential and develop habits that lead to long-term health and well-being.

Rationale, Aims and Objectives

This policy is required for the following reasons:

- To help children improve concentration, learning and energy levels.
- To support parents and children make healthy enjoyable decisions around food.
- To develop nutritional awareness.
- To provide procedures related to the school's participation in the Hot Meals Programme.

Policies and Procedures

Promoting Healthy Eating

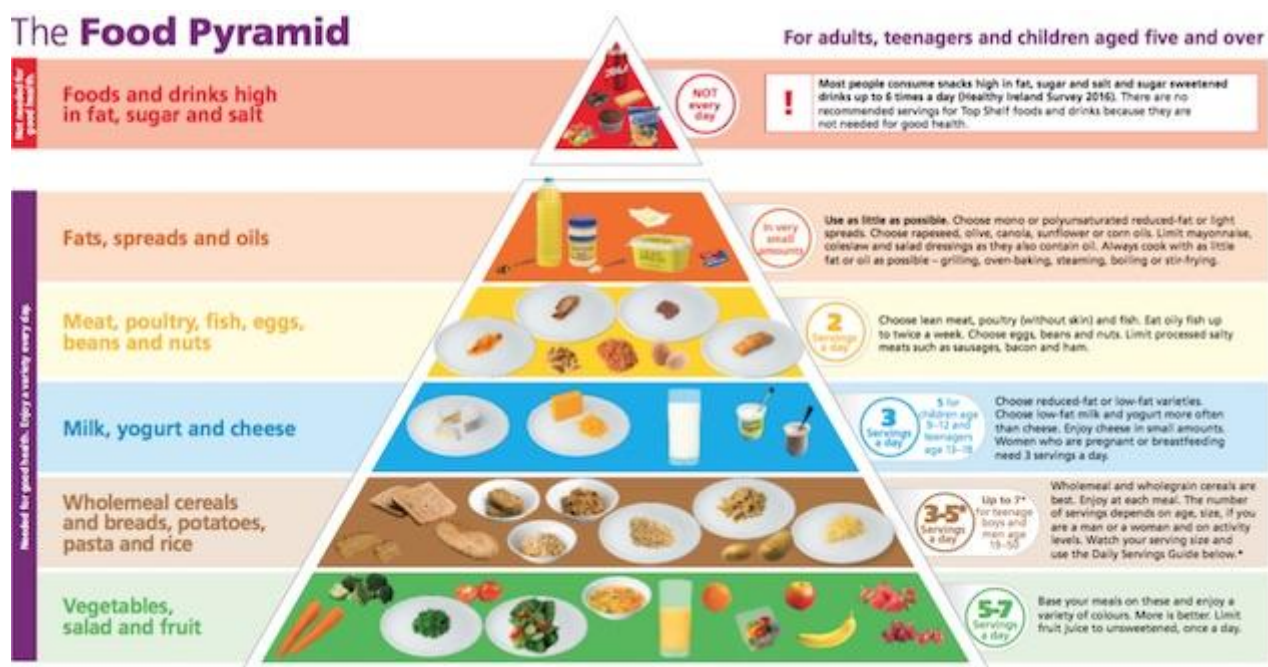
- As part of the SPHE curriculum and integrated with the other subjects, healthy eating will be taught on a regular basis, at least once per term. Both information about nutrition and healthy eating as well as hands-on lessons, including cooking activities and science experiences, will help develop awareness of healthy, balanced eating.
- Advice for healthy eating, including recipe and lunchbox ideas, will be included in the school newsletter.
- School staff will provide positive modelling and supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.

Guidelines for Hot Meals

- The school participates in the Hot Meals Programme. All children are eligible to receive a hot meal, with the cost funded by the Department of Social Protection.
- Our current provider is Carambola. Families must select their options for the following week by the close of business on Friday.
- Carambola ensures that the nutritional guidelines from the Department of Social Protection are followed including limiting choices, as required, for anything declared processed food.
- Children's dietary requirements are accommodated, with all allergens clearly labeled.
- Meals are delivered to the school in the morning, heated and delivered to classrooms following food-safety procedures as determined and monitored by the provider. A local worker, paid by Carambola, is responsible for these tasks.
- Participation in the programme is highly recommended but voluntary. Parents of children who are not participating are kindly requested to let the school know to avoid food wastage. If children opt to bring in their own lunch, the guidelines below should be followed.
- In the event that an entire class will be away for a school trip or excursion, a cold bag lunch will be provided by Carambola. On occasions when only some children from a class will be away for an event, parents will be required to provide a cold lunch.

Snacks and Lunches Brought from Home

- A healthy snack or lunchbox uses the food pyramid as a reference guide for making choices of what to include. The items in the very top of the pyramid are not to be brought in lunches. Fruits and vegetables from the bottom of the pyramid are most important.



- We encourage children to have Fruit First, eating fresh fruits or vegetables at the first break.
- Glass bottles are not permitted for safety reasons, though we encourage families to use reusable containers. Healthier choices of drink include water, milk and unsweetened juice.
- Some of the healthy options that are recommended include popcorn, fruit, vegetables, flapjacks, yogurt, fromage frais, brown bread and crackers. Parents are advised to check the sugar content in all foods.
- Foods which have wrappers are to be kept to a minimum and disposed of properly to reduce litter and protect the environment.
- Parents are welcome to provide hot items in flasks.
- Crisps, fizzy drinks, sweets, chewing gum and chocolate (in any form including bars, yogurt and spreads) should not be brought to school. If these items are brought to school, they will be sent back home in the lunchbox.
- In normal circumstances, children will not share food from their lunches to ensure that children’s allergies and dietary preferences are respected.
- Regarding nuts and other potential allergens, parents are informed if nuts are not allowed in particular classes or school-wide depending on allergies among the children or staff of the school. Parents must inform the school of any allergies, and these parents will be consulted when making decisions about banning particular food items.

Special Events

- On rare occasions, the requirements for healthy choices will be lessened for special events such as end-of-term potlucks and social events.

Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management

- To review this policy regularly.

Principal

- To ensure staff and parents are aware of the policy.
- To facilitate the review of the policy.
- To apply for and arrange for the Hot Meals Programme.

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Hot Meals Provider

- To deliver meals on a daily basis.
- To ensure that food-safety and nutrition guidelines are followed.
- To facilitate the selection of meal options.
- To employ and supervise a local worker who administers the programme.

Class Teachers

- To teach lessons on healthy on a regular basis.
- To monitor lunchboxes and liaise with parents.
- To model healthy eating choices.

Parents and Guardians

- To provide a balanced snack and water every day as well as a full lunch if not participating in the Hot Meals Programme.

Children

- To make good food choices and experience a range of healthy options.
- To participate in lessons.

Implementation and Review

The policy has immediate effect and will be reviewed no later than 2027.

Ratification and Communication

This revised policy was ratified by the BoM on the date below. It will be posted on the school website in due course.

Paul Adams, chairperson

Date of ratification: 18/11/2014