

Coole National School Revised Healthy Lunch Policy

Our revision of the schools Healthy Lunch Policy comes at a time of consistent warning, from the medical profession, of the long-term health implications of poor eating choices made by young people

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at Coole School we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

What people eat is known to be a key factor influencing health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance (e.g. a low sugar intake promotes concentration, lessens hyperactivity, protects teeth, and lessens the risk of diabetes. A low salt intake reduces the risk of heart disease in later life).

To promote healthy eating habits in our school, we reviewed our healthy eating policy and will implement it from November 2014.

Background

A Healthy Lunch Policy has existed in the school for some time. In recent years, teachers noticed that much of the good practice, promoted in this policy, was no longer in evidence in many of the lunches being brought to school. Having examined the reasons for this, the following were noted:

- A Healthy Lunch Policy should be circulated regularly to familiarise new families and staff members with its contents and to remind parents, teachers and children of agreed good practices.
- Parents have found it very difficult to get their child to adhere to the policy when others have been permitted not to follow the agreed guidelines.

Therefore two key elements of the revised policy are that it should be circulated regularly and that parents, teachers and children ensure that it is adhered to by everyone.

Aims

1. To promote the personal development and well-being of the child
2. To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.

Objectives

1. To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy
2. To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre (roughage).

The traditional packed lunch of milk and sandwiches is under attack from a range of convenience foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, chocolate and soft drinks. Parents and teachers are concerned about this trend but some find it difficult to come up with popular healthy alternatives. We ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start.

The following guide is designed to help you provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for your children

Bread & Alternatives

Bread or rolls, (wholemeal if possible)
Rice – wholegrain
Pasta – wholegrain
Wraps
Wholemeal Scones
Bread sticks
Crackers
Pitta bread
Plain rice cakes

Fruit & Vegetables

Apples, Banana, Peach, plums, berries
Mandarins, Orange, orange segments, mandarins
Fruit Salad, dried fruit, lettuce, broccoli, celery
Plum, Pineapple cubes, strawberries
Grapes, passion fruit, kiwi, raisins or
other dried fruits carrot, avocado, melon,
beetroot, cucumber, Sweetcorn, beans
tomato, cherries.

*In Junior classes, fruit peeled and chopped in tubs are ideal

Savouries

Lean Meat
Chicken/Turkey
Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines
Cheese
Quiche

Drinks

Milk
Water (natural, non-fizzy)
Low fat/low sugar cordial/diluted
drinks

Dairy

Low fat/low sugar yoghurts

A word about Milk

Growing children should get approximately one pint of milk a day, or its equivalent as cheese or yoghurt. This ensures that they get enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth. If a child does not drink a glass of milk at lunch, encourage him/her to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead.

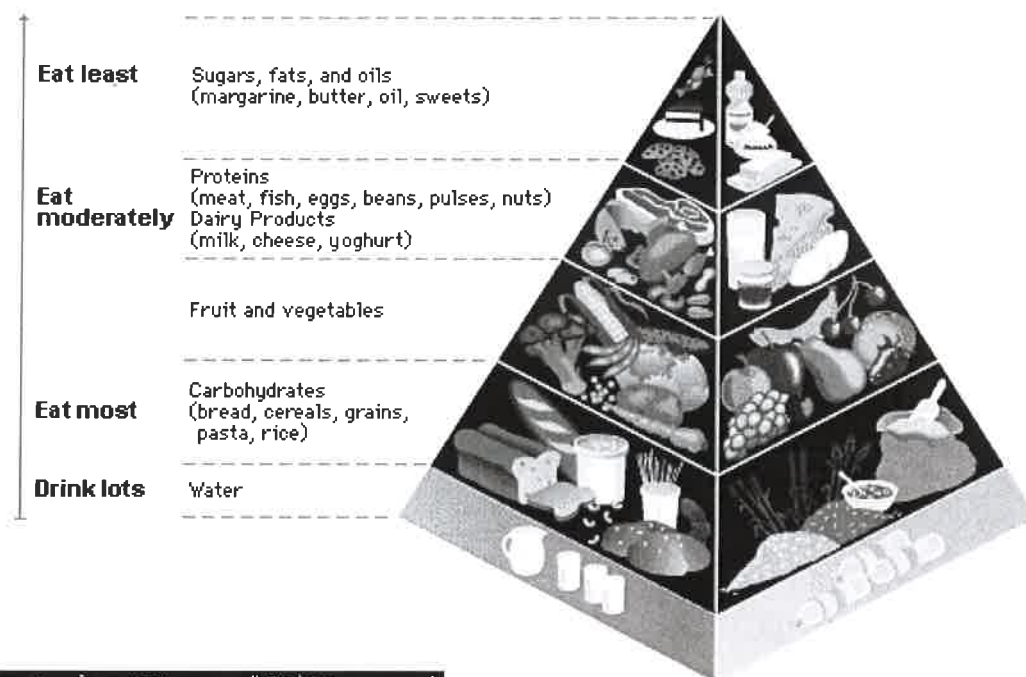
We ask that children do not bring the following to school:

Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including the following:

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)
- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc)
- Sweets
- Chocolate
- Biscuits/bars
- Cereal bars or flapjacks
- Chewing gum
- Fruit winders
- Popcorn
- Any chocolate spreads

A very simple approach to healthy eating is to use the Food Pyramid:

A Guide to Daily Food Choices



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Nuts

There is a **TOTAL BAN** on nuts and nut products (including products that contain traces of nuts) due to serious allergies of some of our pupils.

With our Green Schools policy in mind, children are also asked to:

- take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons
- put only fruit peel into the compost bins
- not bring in cans and glass – for safety reasons.

N.B. Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management & Parents' Association on _____ . It will be reviewed in November 2015

Chairperson of Board of Management P. J. Gannon Date: 7/01/2015
(P.J. Gannon)

Chairperson of Parents' Association Nikki O'Connor Date: 28/01/15
(Nikki O'Connor)

School Principal Sara McCauley Date: 7/1/2015
(Sara McCauley)