



S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe

Baile Clár na Gaillimhe,

Co. na Gaillimhe.

Fón: (091) 798720

Ríomhphost: clareway.ias@eircom.net

Healthy Eating Policy

Introductory Statement

The Healthy Eating policy was drafted by the staff of S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe in a process that involved consultation, discussion, collaboration and planning by the school staff, the Board of Management, the parents/guardians and the children of the school.

This policy is closely linked to the Child Protection Policy, Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, SPHE Policy, SESE Policy, Health, Safety and Well-Being Policy, Equality of Opportunity Policy, Special Education Policy and Enrolment Policy. This policy is in line with recommendations in Circular 0013/2016 - 'Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles in Primary Schools' and 'Well Being in Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion' - DES.

S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe is a Health Promoting School. The school has an active Health Promoting School Team with pupil, parent, teacher and management representation. The HPS team meets regularly to discuss and research aspects of Health and Well-Being in our school. Emphasis has initially placed on promoting and improving healthy eating in our school. A working group was set up to examine current healthy eating practices and habits in our school. A preliminary meeting was held to outline the plan of actions, aims and time-frame for the first draft of our school Healthy Eating Policy.

All parties were consulted and given the opportunity to become involved in the process.

Parents and children became involved in discussion groups and completed Healthy Eating Surveys. Follow up meetings were held to analyse the data elicited. This provided valuable feedback which helped in formulating this policy.

The Health Promotion Officer visited the school to meet with the working group at various stages of the process.

The staff has had professional development opportunities at whole school level with in-service training from the Healthy Promotion Officer. A number of staff members have attended Healthy Eating Workshops provided by the HSE.

Rationale

The Board of Management and staff of S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe is cognisant of the vital role schools have to play in contributing to the 'Healthy Ireland' agenda that is being led by the Department of Health and Department of Education and Skills. It is acknowledged that mental and psychological well-being are a key part of healthy lifestyles and our school can support these through work on Anti-Bullying and the SPHE curriculum. Our school emphasises the importance of physical activity and healthy eating.

Evidence shows that healthy lifestyle behaviours can improve academic performance, educational behaviour and pupils' cognitive skills. Therefore, our school is committed to supporting the efforts of the school community to improve their health and wellbeing.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe is a Catholic School with a group of pupils, parents, staff and management who share a similar vision. Children and families of other faiths and beliefs are also welcomed into our school and share this vision.

We, the staff in S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe aim to:

- * provide for the holistic development of each child - physically, intellectually, emotionally, creatively, spiritually and socially
- * enable each child to develop in an open, happy, safe, stimulating and mutually respectful environment
- * provide an active, enriched learning environment for children with the availability of appropriate, instructional materials, resources and classroom adaptations
- * develop a love of learning and an openness to lifelong learning
- * foster a sense of community between management, teachers, parents and children and an awareness of belonging to the whole community
- * develop in students an awareness and appreciation of our culture and heritage with particular emphasis on the Irish language
- * develop an appreciation of the environment and one's responsibility for its preservation
- * prepare each child for his/her future in education and in society

Mission Statement

The Board of Management, staff and parents of S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe are committed to the following mission: S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe is a happy, safe and welcoming environment for all, a place where:

- * Catholic values are practised and valued and there is a shared commitment to the Catholic ethos of the school
- * everybody is respected, included and is treated fairly and equally
- * there are clear goals that are commonly agreed and shared
- * honest, open communication and consultation is fostered and decision making is a democratic process with input from all members of the school community
- * diversity is valued and evident and emphasis is on inclusion
- * the highest standards of learning and teaching are promoted and celebrated
- * emphasis is on the provision of a holistic education, enabling each student to achieve their full potential
- * effort and commitment is recognised, affirmed and encouraged
- * teachers and children are inspired to be lifelong learners in a vastly changing world
- * parents are appreciated as partners in education
- * a sense of community and pride in our local parish is fostered
- * all strive for school improvement from year to year and change is embraced in a positive way
- * a love of Irish culture is developed and use of Irish language is promoted

Aims of the Health Promoting Schools Initiative

The aims of the Health Promoting Schools Initiative are to:

- * foster the healthy development of the whole school community
- * provide a framework for developing healthpromoting initiatives in a way that supports andenhances the implementation of the curriculum
- * support the planning, implementation andevaluation of health-related activities under school self-evaluation, and school development planning processes
- * enhance the links between schools and their communities

Aims of the Healthy Eating Policy

- * To promote the personal development, health and well-being of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.
- * To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy.
- * To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy balanced diet.
- * To enable the children to develop a healthy eating habit for life
- * To create a school environment that promotes and provides opportunities for healthy eating
- * To carefully evaluate, plan, review and implement our school healthy eating policy
- * To develop a co-ordinated, cohesive whole-school teaching and learning plan for healthy eating as part of the SPHE curriculum
- * To establish partnerships beyond the school with a view to promoting healthy eating e.g. parents, community bodies, other schools, businesses, support services etc...

S.N. BaileClárnaGaillimhe supports Healthy Eating as follows:

Healthy Eating ~ Teaching and Learning

Strand Units of the S.P.H.E. (Social, Personal & Health Education) curriculum taught in S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe focus on Food and Nutrition.

The curriculum for Primary Schools outlines key issues relating to food and nutrition and are explored to the depths that is appropriate for each class.

Key healthy eating messages that are consistent and fact-based assist children in decision making and forming of attitudes and beliefs around healthy eating.

Healthy eating and physical activity represent a balance that is essential for good health, therefore, physical activity is incorporated into each key message.

In the delivery of S.P.H.E an overview of healthy eating includes reference to the following 5 points:

1. Food and nutrition are important for growth and development

- * Folic acid and Pregnancy
- * Breastfeeding
- * Growth, Development and Dental and Oral Hygiene
- * Energy, Concentration & Performance, for example the importance of eating breakfast
- * Calcium & Vitamin D
- * Iron

2. Variety, balance and moderation: The Food Groups and different nutrients

- * Food pyramid: the 4 basic food groups
- * Variety, balance, portion size, moderation in relation to choice of snack foods
- * Basic-nutrients: Protein, Fat, Carbohydrate, Fibre
- * Micro-nutrients

3. Food hygiene

- * Personal hygiene – hand washing etc.
- * Best before/use by/sell by dates
- * Food handling – cooking, re-heating – raw foods
- * Food preparation
- * Food storage

4. Food choices and factors influencing these

- * Likes/dislikes
- * Cultural diversity
- * Availability, supply and demand
- * Labelling
- * Food additives
- * Portion size
- * Peer pressure
- * Nutrition Policy – guidelines for primary schools

5. Food with respect to health, illness and special conditions

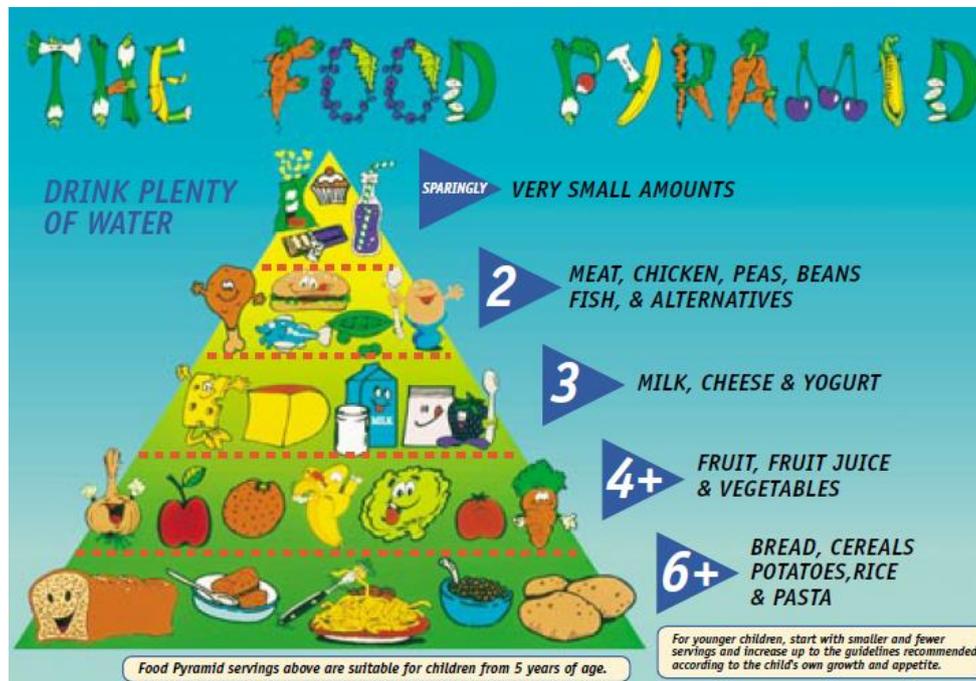
- * Requirements for certain conditions, e.g. constipation, dental caries, anaemia
- * Different requirements for different age groups
- * Pregnancy and breastfeeding, e.g. the importance of Folic Acid

The Food Pyramid

The Food Pyramid is just one of the education tools used in S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe to communicate the healthy eating message.

The Food Pyramid is a fun way we teach children in all classes about the different food groups and the nutrients in each group. The pyramid is divided into five shelves, each representing a different food group.

Choosing a variety of foods from each of the bottom four main shelves ensures that children have a balanced and healthy diet.



Healthy Eating the 'Pyramid Way'!

Children are familiarised with the Food Pyramid and the food groups on each shelf of the pyramid. They are then taught how to use all of these foods in making decisions about their own diet in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Key Messages

- * Maintain a healthy varied diet
- * Ensure adequate energy intake for growth and development
- * Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables for vitamins, minerals and fibre
- * Plan for adequate calcium intake for healthy bones and teeth
- * Have adequate iron intake to prevent anaemia
- * Ensure adequate fluid intake – drink water frequently and/or choose tooth friendly drinks
- * Keep a regular eating pattern - this means not skipping meals
- * Learn how to read and interpret food labels and become more aware of all ingredients including excess sugar, salt and fat

The Healthy Lunch Guidelines

Children in each class were asked to discuss what they thought should be in a healthy lunch. At a Health Promoting School Team meeting, the following guidelines emerged based on feedback from the discussions:

What is a healthy lunch?

- It is full of goodness like protein, vitamins and calcium.
- Contains food with no sugar, because too much sugar is bad for your teeth and your entire body.
- Contains no artificial colouring or additives.
- Gives us strength and energy
- Makes us fit and healthy
- Helps our brain power

Foods we Encourage

- Sandwiches or rolls with cheese, meat or other fillings. *Hummus
- Pitta bread, crackers, unsalted rice cakes *Eggs (chopped)
- Fruit (peeled and chopped for small children) *Salad
- Raisins *Low fat cheese
- Vegetables (washed and chopped)
- Pasta Wraps
- Yoghurt (easy to open)

Foods we Discourage

- Crisps, salted nuts or popcorn *All nuts due to food allergies
- Chocolate, sweets, lollipops or jellies *Kiwis due to food allergies
- Chewing gum *Fruit juices with high sugar content
- Cake, biscuits, pastries or doughnuts • Fizzy drinks
- Chocolate spread • Flavoured milk

Drinks we Encourage

- Water
- Unsweetened fruit juices
- Diluted drinks
- Milk
- Actimel
- Sugar-Free Smoothies

Drinks we Discourage

- Fizzy drinks
- Sugary drinks
- Hot drinks (in case of spillage)

Who should make sure everyone follows the rules?

- Our parents, because they make our lunch and should set a good example. They are responsible for our health.
- We should, because it's our health and we want to be fit and full of energy.
- Teachers, because they can see what's in our lunch boxes and know who's eating the right foods everyday.
- The Principal

Should we make exceptions for special occasions?

- Yes, for treats after communion or confirmation
- Yes, for end of term parties
- No, for school trips (in case we get sick on the bus)
- No, we cannot have children's birthday parties in school.

Healthy Lunches – School Procedures

- * The school understands the importance of lunch-time and have carefully considered the lunch environment.
- * Lunch time is planned to ensure there is time to enjoy lunch and to have physical activity at lunch time.
- * From 12.30pm, once the bell rings, lunch time is supervised, with children sitting while eating at their tables
- * Children are discouraged from sharing lunches as within our school there are pupils with severe food related allergies. Parents/guardians of children with food allergies are requested to inform school immediately.
- * At 12.40 p.m., the bell rings again and the children put away their lunches and prepare to go outside.
- * Younger children, children with special needs etc... are given more time to have their lunch and are supervised at all times.
- * Children in the senior classes help younger children with lunch and Special Needs Assistants and teachers are on duty and assist children to ensure that all children have the opportunity to have a healthy lunch.
- * Families are encouraged to prepare and eat healthy lunches here in S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe.
- * On enrolment, families are informed of the school's Healthy Eating Policy.
- * An overview of healthy eating and healthy lunches is included at the parent/guardian enrolment evening.
- * Information on healthy eating is provided in the enrolment pack for all families.
- * The Health Promoting Schools Team and co-ordinators visit classes regularly to promote healthy eating and healthy lunches.
- * The school participates in national initiatives e.g. Operation Healthy Lunchbox.
- * Children who make a special effort to eat healthy lunches are awarded the Healthy Lunch Heroes Certificate.
- * Sample healthy lunches are displayed in our Healthy Eating area in the school halla.
- * Key messages regarding healthy eating are reinforced regularly.

Key Messages:

- * Children need a wide variety of foods to help them grow, learn and play.
- * A healthy breakfast before school is very important.
- * A healthy lunchbox is an important part of the school day.
- * Use the suggestions from each shelf of the food pyramid to pack a healthy balanced lunch box.
- * Be wary of foods labelled sugar free, fat free or low fat

Steps to a Healthy Lunch Box:

- * Encourage wholemeal or wholegrain varieties of breads, rolls, scones and crackers
- * Use butter or spreads sparingly and use those low in saturated fat
- * Include salad vegetables in sandwiches and salad boxes, e.g. lettuce, tomato, cucumber, carrot and use vegetable sticks
- * Include at least one piece of fruit at lunch e.g. apple, orange, banana
- * Encourage low fat milk or yoghurt with every lunch
- * Ensure that meat, chicken, fish, egg or cheese is included as part of lunch
- * Include a drink at lunch e.g. low fat milk, water, unsweetened pure fruit juice or diluted sugar free squash
- * Using low fat dressings, sauces and relish can add variety and taste to sandwiches, wraps, rolls and salads
- * A healthy lunch includes 2 servings from the bottom shelf and 1 serving from the next three shelves.



Drinks

- * It is important that children take in enough fluids during the day.
- * Almost 2/3 of the body is made of water.
- * If children do not drink enough water, they may become dehydrated, thirsty, tired and weak.
- * Drinks should always be included for lunch and break-time.
- * Water and milk are the best choices and milk is also a valuable source of calcium, which is important for healthy bones and teeth. Unsweetened fruit juice/ diluted sugar free squashes are also suitable drinks if taken with meals.
- * Children should be encouraged to drink fluids with meals and not to fill up on drinks before meals.
- * Fluid intake is very important and children should be encouraged to take a drink with their meal. It is important that drinks are provided in a non-spill bottle.

Good Choices
Water
Milk

Only At Meal Times
Diluted Sugar Free Squash
Unsweetened Fruit Juice

Not Tooth Friendly
Fruit Drinks
Fizzy Drinks

The following items should **not** be included in your child's lunchbox for the reasons stated:

Actively discouraged:	Because:
Nuts	they represent a choking hazard and a number of pupils are allergic to them
Kiwis	A number of pupils are allergic to them
Sweets Chocolate Bars Crisps & similar snacks Fizzy Drinks Fruit juices (unless homemade) Cakes, biscuits and buns	they are on the top shelf of the pyramid
Chewing Gum	it represents a litter problem

Get your child involved!



Make their lunch fun!

It is the policy of our school that:

- * Healthy lunches be encouraged and fizzy drinks, sweets, bars, chocolate and crisps be discouraged.
- * A healthy lunchbox includes a piece of food from each of the bottom four shelves of the Food Pyramid. e.g. ham sandwich, carton of orange juice and strawberry yogurt.
- * Cans and glasses are not permitted for safety and litter reasons.
- * Healthier choices for drinks include water, milk and unsweetened fruit juice.
- * Food labels- we encourage children to read food labels and to keep an eye out for ingredients that they don't understand as well as excess sugar, salt and fat.
- * Foods, which have wrappers, are best kept to a minimum. All food wrappings must be brought home and we encourage the use of lunchboxes and reusable bottles for drinks.

Friday is

‘HEALTHY HERO HALF-HOUR DAY!’

Children in our school will enjoy a ‘Healthy Hero Half Hour’ activity every Friday, as a way of rewarding each pupil for their effort in following the school’s healthy eating guidelines.

Children will no longer need to bring a sweet treat to school on Friday as part of their lunch.

Rationale:

Rewarding children with sugar-based treats undermines our efforts as a school to teach our pupils about health, nutrition and wellbeing.

While there’s nothing wrong with enjoying sweets and sugar based treats and having them at celebrations, we want to make sure children don’t learn to always associate sweets or food in general ,as a reward for themselves.

Using food rewards teaches children to eat when they aren't hungry and can cause them to develop life-long habits of rewarding or comforting themselves with unhealthy foods. This behavioural pattern becomes imbedded in the brain, resulting in a lifelong connection between sugar/food based rewards and that desired feeling of satisfaction and comfort.

A wide variety of alternative, activity-based rewards will be used to provide positive reinforcement for children’s behaviour and effort. [Appendix A]

Our school will also encourage children to think of their own list of healthy, non-food based rewards for their class.

Non-food based rewards and activities can support a healthier school environment while still recognising children for their achievements and good behaviour.

This practice will also complement our ‘*Friends For Life*’ programme which is taught in senior classes as a module of our SPHE curriculum. As part of this programme, children are encouraged to reward themselves with non material rewards.

We hope that each child will eventually develop the ability to become self-motivators where outside reinforcement will no longer be necessary. This is a wonderful skill for all to achieve.

To help highlight awareness of healthy school lunches the following will take place:

- * The Healthy School Lunches guidelines will be displayed in every classroom and the staff room and will be referred to by the teachers.
- * A poster of the Food Pyramid will also be displayed in every classroom and the staff room and it class lessons will be held to explain how it works
- * At the beginning of each school term teachers and pupils will discuss healthy eating.
- * During the year, discrete lessons on healthy eating and nutrition will be taught as part of the SPHE curriculum.
- * Parents/children will be offered the opportunity to attend a healthy eating information session facilitated by a dietitian.
- * Teachers will provide positive modelling and supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.
- * The school Healthy Eating Policy will be reviewed regularly
- * An annual Healthy Eating Awareness week will be held
- * The school will establish links within the community to explore healthy eating opportunities e.g. with local shops to promote healthy lunch choices
- * Healthy eating posters, slogans ... will be displayed throughout the school
- * The Health Promoting Schools Team will hold regular meetings with Healthy Eating as one of the topics discussed annually
- * A Health Promotion display area with information on healthy eating is organised and maintained by the HPS team
- * Resources on healthy eating and nutrition will be available in the teacher resource library and will be added to annually

Implementation of Healthy Eating Policy

- * All families are provided with a copy of the school Healthy Eating Policy
- * New families are provided with a copy of the Healthy Eating Policy on enrolment
- * Clear guidance is provided to families in relation to suitable school lunches/snacks as well as suggestions and tips on appropriate foods and portion sizes
- * The whole staff team are familiar with the policy and prepared to work within it.
- * All new staff members are provided with a copy of the Healthy Eating policy
- * Everyone is aware of the importance of the implementation of the policy for the health and well-being of the entire school community.
- * Reminders of Healthy Eating guidelines are included on school newsletters throughout the year.
- * Healthy Eating Guidelines are displayed in all classes and throughout the school
- * The healthy eating message is incorporated into the school day through both formal and informal lessons.
- * Healthy Eating Awareness Week is held annually
- * The Healthy Eating policy is reviewed regularly

Monitoring

- * The HPS team and school co-ordinators will monitor Healthy Eating practices throughout the school year
- * The HPS co-ordinators will discuss healthy eating as part of Health and Well-being promotion at staff meetings
- * Feedback from parents/guardians and children will be sought in relation to healthy eating practices
- * The Healthy Eating policy will be reviewed regularly

Review of Policy

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, to parents/guardians and pupils.

A record of the review and its outcome, will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department

Ratification and Communication

The Healthy Eating Policy of S.N. Baile Clár na Gaillimhe was ratified by the Board of Management

Philip Cribbin

Date: 15.3.2016

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Review Date

School Year 2017-2018

Healthy Heroes Half Hour

Here are some of our Positive Healthy Class Rewards



- Extra break time
- Extra P.E. lesson
- Playworks Games
- Brain Teaser puzzles
- Class quiz / Table Quiz
- Class bingo game
- Show & Tell - my favourite toy/book/game/piece of clothing etc.
- Talent show
- Watch short video
- Free writing
- Drawing time
- D.E.A.R.
- Read Aloud Time - Teacher reads favourite book to the class
- Read Aloud Time - Students volunteer to read to the class
- Student teaches something new to class e.g. Song, poem, dance step, magic trick etc.
- Word puzzles on whiteboard e.g. Hangman
- Class game e.g. Pin Tail on the Donkey
- Game Time - Maths games, board games, word games
- Dance party
- Creative half hour - Children make something from art supplies provided to each group
- Karaoke half hour
- Read outdoors
- Sit by friend
- Read to a younger class
- Listen to music while working
- Bring in a favourite board game from home to share with friends
- Activity / Game sheets
- Listen to a book on CD
- Holding class outdoors
- Treasure Hunt outdoors
- Nature walk
- Sketching outdoors
- Chalk drawing outside

