



Scoil Mhuire National School, Rosslare, Co. Wexford

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Acceptance, Appreciation and Achievement for All

Healthy Eating Policy

1 Introduction

As part of Scoil Mhuire Rosslare's DEIS Plan, the schools Wellbeing committee set about reviewing the school's Healthy Eating Policy. The HSE booklet *Healthy Eating Policy Toolkit for Primary Schools* was used to assist in the review process. Our Healthy Eating Policy outlines how we as a school support healthy eating practices through the promotion of healthy snacks and healthy lunches and how we help our pupils to gain a greater understanding of the importance of balanced nutrition.

Scoil Mhuire is committed to facilitating our pupils' development of skills and attitudes to allow them to make informed decisions about their food intake. As a school, we believe that key adults in their lives, namely parents/guardians and school staff, should be good role models and support them in understanding how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and general wellbeing.

Our whole school approach to promoting healthy eating will actively involve teachers, parents/guardians and children to ensure that healthy eating messages are part of every aspect of school life. Our pupils will receive consistent messages regarding healthy eating, both at home and at school.

2 Aims of Our Healthy Eating Policy

The aims of our healthy eating policy are:

- To promote a whole school approach to healthy eating and nutrition
- To understand the benefit of a healthy well-balanced diet
- To develop an awareness that good eating habits formed in early childhood influence health and wellbeing throughout our lives
- To raise levels of concentration within class through the consumption of healthy food
- To provide members of staff, parents/guardians and those involved in school activities with clear information.

3 Benefits of a Good Diet

A good diet:

- Ensures the development of healthy hair, skin, teeth, muscles and strong bones
- Provides energy and aids concentration
- Strengthens the immune system.

4 School Actions which Support Our Healthy Eating Policy

As a school, we will implement the following actions to support our Healthy Eating Policy:

- A Healthy Eating Awareness Day will take place annually.
- The School Lunch Provider will be invited into the school to show pupils samples of the range of foods available and provide opportunities to taste the different foods.

- The Parents Association may invite speakers and nutritional experts to host events/information evenings.

5 Breakfast

A nourishing breakfast is the best start to a child's day giving him/her the energy needed to concentrate and learn. Research has shown that children benefit both nutritionally and behaviourally by eating breakfast.

In Scoil Mhuire, Breakfast Club operates for some children in the Staff Room every morning from 9.10am to 9.30am. The food available at Breakfast Club adheres to the required Healthy Ireland *Nutrition Standards for School Meals*. Staff provide the pupils with healthy meals relevant to the schedule.

6 Break/Lunchtime Guidelines

In order to promote the health and safety of all children in the school and prevent the spread of infection, guidelines for eating at lunch and break times are necessary.

- Pupils should not share their food or drink.
- Pupils should not share food utensils or drinks containers.
- Pupils should eat their food at their own table.
- Hot food waste is disposed of in school.
- All recycling/rubbish should be taken home.

7 Morning Break

Pupils are given time by their teacher to eat their snack at their morning break before going outside. This time may be longer for infant classes. Food at this break should be easy to eat, ideally a small sandwich or a piece of fruit. Fruit should be of a manageable size, peeled/chopped if necessary.

8 Lunch Break

Hot meals will be delivered to each classroom and pupils have approximately 10/15 minutes to eat their lunch. This may change to a cold lunch option in September and June.

All pupils should bring a refillable water bottle to school every day. Pupils will be allowed access to water throughout the school day and can refill their bottles when needed.

Every child in Scoil Mhuire has access to a free school lunch under the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection's School Meals Programme. This lunch is provided by an external Lunch Provider. Parents/guardians and children can choose their lunch menu online. Lunch menus are set up to encourage variety. If pupils are availing of this lunch scheme, they will not need to bring any other lunch to school apart from their morning snack.

9 Foods Not Permitted in Scoil Mhuire

The following foods **do not support** our healthy lunch policy and should be **excluded** from your child's lunch box:

- Fizzy drinks, sports drinks and drinks or juices with high sugar content
- Take away food or hot deli food
- Chewing gum
- Sweets & winders
- Crisps & sweetened popcorn
- Biscuits, cakes, muffins (Healthy and homemade bars/muffins are perfectly fine and encouraged)

- Cereal Bars
- Chocolate

For some healthy lunch ideas and tips, please see here

<https://www schooldays.ie/articles/Healthy-School-Lunchbox-Ideas-from-Glanmore-Foods>

Treats may include:

End of term parties

Halloween

School trips and events

Whole school DEIS initiatives

Note: Teachers will not give pupils sweets as daily rewards

10 Implementation

If a pupil brings prohibited food or drink to school, they will be asked by the teacher to bring it home at the end of the school day, as such foods are not allowed. If the pupil does not have anything else to eat, the teacher will deal with the matter at his/her discretion. If a pupil persists in bringing unhealthy food to school, the teacher will organise a meeting with the child's parent/guardian to remind them of Scoil Mhuire's Healthy Eating Policy. School staff will consistently implement the Healthy Eating Policy to ensure that it is adhered to.

11 Allergies

If a child has a serious food allergy, the parents/guardians must notify the school and provide a doctor's report stating the implications of the allergy and listing the foods to be avoided. Parents/guardians will be asked to participate with staff in formulating an individual Allergy Management Plan. This plan will identify how best to minimise the risk of an allergic reaction for the child and it will outline the protocol to be implemented if an allergic reaction occurs. Further details can be found in Scoil Mhuire's Administration of Medication Policy.

There may be certain year groups where there are pupils with allergies. For these classes the school will follow the individual's Allergy Management plan and communicate this to parents of that child's class groups. for more information, see <https://www.ifan.ie/childcare-schools/>

12 Ratification & Communication

This Healthy Eating Policy was reviewed and updated by the Board of Management on , following consultation with staff, pupils and parents/guardians. The policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents Association.

13 Monitoring & Evaluation

The implementation of this Healthy Eating Policy will be monitored by the Principal, staff and Board of Management. It will be reviewed and evaluated at regular intervals, including through formal and informal feedback from parents/guardians, pupils, staff and others. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation.

Fr.James Murphy
Chairperson of Board of Management

James Murphy
Date: 25/6/24

Mr Bobby Kenny
Principal/Secretary to Board of Management

Bobby Kenny
Date: 25/06/24

