



Inch National School

Scoil Náisiúnta an Inis

Inch, Killeagh, Co. Cork.

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Healthy Eating Policy

Our school recognises that a healthy diet is essential for maintaining and protecting children's health, for ensuring they perform to their full potential during the school day (both academically and physically) and for their growth and development.

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, Inch National 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. It is for this main reason that we take part in the Food Dudes Programme.

It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that children have a healthy lunch at school daily.

We ask that parents be mindful of the schools agreed healthy eating policy when travelling with pupils to school events, for example matches and to enable and encourage all children to follow adhere to the policy

Aims of this policy

- Promote an awareness of the importance of a balanced diet.
- Positively affect healthy eating among school-age children.
- Raise levels of concentration within class through the consumption of healthy food.
- Support and encourage healthy eating habits in children, which is hoped will become lifelong habits.
- Provide members of staff, parents and those involved in school activities with clear information.
- Protect the health and safety of children with serious food allergies.
- To encourage the children to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems.
- To encourage positive involvement in their child's nutrition.
- To promote personal well-being and confidence through diet, activity and dental hygiene.

Healthy Lunch

Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide children with a healthy lunch, which helps to maintain their level of concentration in the classroom throughout the day. A Healthy Lunch should, if possible, include a variety of foods from the bottom four shelves of the Food

Pyramid as outlined Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Primary Schools” which is available to download from www.healthpromotion.ie and further outlined at <https://www.safefood.net/education/healthy-lunchboxes>

FOODS TO BE DISCOURAGED

In order to encourage healthy, balanced eating habits among children in school the following foods are prohibited

- Sweets
- Crisps/ Corn chips, – high fat content
- Chocolate / chocolate nut spreads – high fat and sugar (allergy related)
- Take away foods – burgers/ hot dogs/ chips/ wedges / hash browns/ fried chicken (high in fat)
- Fizzy Drinks – (high sugar content)
- Chewing gum
- Chocolate/cream biscuits
- Iced Buns
- Cereal bars covered in chocolate – very high in sugar can lead to hyperactivity/ poor concentration
- Nuts – possible allergy
- Fruit Winders – high sugar content
- Lollipops

Children can have one small treat on Fridays only. For example: 1 fun size bar (eg. Freddo etc.), 2 biscuits, yoghurt covered rice cakes, mini muffin, popcorn etc.’

large sized bars, share bags of treats or crisps and lollipops should not be brought to school on Fridays.

End of term parties / treat days will continue at the class teacher’s discretion. This will be communicated to parents by the teacher.

Lunch Time 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. These are essential and therefore mandatory:

- Children are not to share food or drink.
- Children are not to share food utensils or drinks containers.
- Any uneaten food goes back into the child's lunch box- the parent/guardian will be aware of what their child is actually eating.
- In keeping with all our responsibility to care for the environment we encourage the use of reusable lunch boxes and bottles, and to avoid the use of tin foil, single use plastics, as well as reduced lunch wrappings.

We would also encourage that:

- All containers are labelled with the child's name
- Children bring their own forks and spoons as required.

Allergies

If your child has a serious food allergy, as parents/guardians you must notify the school and provide a doctor's report stating the implications of the allergy and listing the foods to be avoided. You will be asked to participate with staff in formulating an individual allergy management plan.

Implementation

If children bring prohibited food or drink into school they will be asked by the class teacher to bring it home, as it is not allowed.

If children do not have anything else to eat, the teacher will deal with this matter at his/her discretion.

The whole school community - staff, parents/guardians and children – will work together to promote the progress of this policy.

Ratification and Communication

The policy will be communicated to all staff and children at the beginning of each school year and a copy made available to parents on the school website. It will be promoted in school as part of the SPHE policy and its importance will be stressed in news updates shared via Aladdin throughout the school year.

Signed:

Chairperson

Principal

Date:

Useful Information:

The Health Promotion Unit has a booklet called "Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Primary Schools" it is available to download from www.healthpromotion.ie

Safe Food Ireland also have downloadable leaflets available at

<https://www.safefood.net/education/healthy-lunchboxes>