



Scoil Bhríde, Oldtown, Naas, Co. Kildare

Healthy Eating Policy

The purpose of this policy is to support parents/guardians in encouraging their children to develop healthy eating habits at an early age. As part of Scoil Bhríde's Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) programme we encourage parents/guardians and children to become aware of the importance of a healthy diet.

Aims:

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

Objectives:

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

Parents/guardians and pupils are encouraged to support Scoil Bhríde's Healthy Eating Policy at all times. The following are suggestions to help you provide quick, appetising and nutritious lunches for your children:

Drinks:

Water
Milk

Bread and Alternatives:

Bread or rolls
Rice
Pasta
Potato salad
Wholemeal scones
Bread sticks
Crackers
Pitta bread
Wraps
Rice cakes (plain or with a healthy topping)

Fruit and Vegetables:

Fruit and berries
Cucumber
Sweetcorn
Tomatoes
Carrot sticks
Coleslaw

Savouries:

Lean meat
Chicken/turkey
Tinned fish, e.g. tuna
Cheese
Yoghurt
Vegetarian sausage
Hummus
Beans

The Food Pyramid

The Food Pyramid provides a sample guide to healthy eating. A healthy, balanced lunch should, if possible, include a variety of foods from the bottom four shelves of the pyramid.



Food Allergies

Please note that due to allergies in the school, Scoil Bhríde is a 'Nut Product Free Zone'. This includes items which contain, or may contain, nuts, e.g. Nutella. Children are asked **not to share lunches** in school. While we understand that it may be done with good intentions, treats or food items of any kind should not be brought into school for the purpose of sharing them with other children.

N.B. Parents/guardians should inform the school of any allergies or special dietary requirements that your child may have. A form can be obtained from the school office for this purpose.

Foods that are not allowed in school:

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

- Sugary drinks, e.g. fizzy drinks, fruit juices, sports drinks, etc.
- Chewing/bubble gum
- Nut products
- Crisps or popcorn
- Chocolate or any food items that contain chocolate
- Sweets, lollipops, Fruit Winders, etc.
- Biscuits, bars, cereal bars, etc.
- Muffins, cakes, buns.

If such foods or drinks are brought to school, children will be asked to bring them home in their lunchbox.

Treat Days

Certain days during the school year may be designated by the principal or by your child's teacher as 'Treat Days'. On a Treat Day parents/guardians may give a treat to their own child. These may be special occasions such as:

- End-of-term parties
- Hallowe'en
- Other specific occasions or events deemed appropriate by the class teacher or principal.

Although it is a special occasion, in the interests of fairness to the other children in their class, we ask that treats are not brought to school on your child's birthday. Normally, treats will not be used as classroom rewards in Scoil Bhríde. However, on occasion, treats may be given by the principal/teachers as prizes for competition winners, etc. On such occasions, again out of fairness to the other children in their classes, the prize-winners will be asked to take their prize

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home before they eat it. We hope that allowing treats in the limited circumstances listed above will help to develop a sense in the children that these foods are occasional treats rather than a staple part of their everyday diet.

Green Schools

At Scoil Bhríde we take part in the Green Schools programme which is all about environmental awareness and promoting sustainability. With this in mind:

- We ask that packaging on lunch items be kept to a minimum. Children are asked to take wrappers, empty cartons, uneaten food, etc. home again in their lunchbox.
- Fruit peels/cores can be put into the compost bin in the classroom.
- Drinks should be brought to school in a reusable plastic bottle.
- For safety reasons, cans or glass should not be brought to school.

Promoting Healthy Eating in the School

Lessons on healthy eating form an important part of the S.P.H.E. Curriculum. In addition to this we may, from time to time, launch projects, initiatives or competitions in school which are aimed at raising awareness of the Healthy Eating Policy and promoting healthy food choices and a healthy lifestyle amongst the children.

We encourage parents/guardians and children to prepare their school lunches at home as this provides a perfect opportunity for children to get involved in learning about and making healthy food choices. **In contrast, we discourage buying lunches in the shop on the way to school or giving children money to buy their lunch in the shop on the way to school.** In our experience, the wide range of junk foods available in convenience stores in the locality means that in such situations the likelihood of children making unhealthy food choices is greatly increased.

Useful Links

The school website has a section on healthy eating which can be viewed at this address:

www.scoilbhridenaas.com/healthyeating

The following web pages may also be useful and informative for parents/guardians:

www.safefood.eu/whatisahealthylunch

www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes

www.fooddudes.ie

Success of the Healthy Eating Policy

The success of Scoil Bhríde's Healthy Eating Policy is reliant on the support of staff, parents/guardians and pupils. We encourage all members of our school community to promote an awareness of the need for a healthy, balanced diet as set out in the aims and objectives above.

The Healthy Eating Policy will be included as part of the presentation given to parents at the annual Junior Infants induction meeting. With regard to existing pupils, we envisage the policy being introduced to the school on a phased basis as follows:

- March/April 2019: Consultation with staff members and parents.
- May 2019: Emphasis to be put on educating the children on what a healthy lunch looks like, in line with this policy. This will include a 'Healthy Eating' poster competition, to flag the beginning of the pilot phase.
- June 2019: Piloting of the Healthy Eating Policy and review of its implementation to date.
- September 2019: Introduction of the full policy, taking into account any lessons learned during the education/piloting phase.