**Healthy Eating Policy**

**Gaelscoil de hÍde, Roscomáin**

**As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) Programme we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes. In addition, the Physical Education programme supports the physical development and fitness of the children. The Science curriculum also looks at the development of the body and deepens the children’s understanding of how the body grows and develops.**

**Aims of this policy:.**

* 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 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.

***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).***

In our school the children eat twice a day, before going out to play. To ensure good concentration it is important for children to drink lots of water, so please encourage your child to bring a bottle of water.

**The Healthy Lunch Guidelines.**

* Healthy lunches are encouraged and fizzy drinks, sweets, bars, chocolate (including any chocolate related products )+and crisps will be actively discouraged.
* A healthy lunchbox includes a piece of food from each of the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid.
* Cans and glasses are not allowed for safety and litter reasons. Healthier choices for drinks include water, milk and unsweetened juices.
* Foods which have wrappers are to be kept to a minimum. **ALL** food wrappings must be brought home and we encourage the use of lunchboxes and reusable bottles for drinks.
* If a child is seen with foods or drinks that are not allowed according to our school policy they will be removed from the child in question and returned at 2:40 p.m. along with a note to be signed by parents/guardian. This note is to be returned to the school the following day.
* Hot drinks such as soup are allowed from Rang 4 upwards
* A copy of the food pyramid will be displayed in every classroom and in the staff room and will be referred to by teachers
* Teachers and other school staff members will provide positive modelling to encourage healthy eating.
* Prizes given out as rewards for good behaviour etc will not be food related.
* Children will be given lessons on healthy eating throughout the year.

***What could be in a healthy lunch?***

• Sandwiches or rolls with cheese, meat or other fillings.

• Pitta bread, crackers

• Fruit (peeled and chopped for small children)

• Raisins

• Vegetables (washed and chopped))

• Pasta

• Salad

• Yoghurt (easy to open)

**What drinks could we include in a healthy lunch?**

• Water

• Fruit juices

• Diluted drinks

• Milk

• Actimel

• Smoothies.

***Foods actively discouraged are***

* Crisps, salted nuts
* Chocolate, sweets, lollipops or jellies
* Chewing gum
* Cake, biscuits, pastries or doughnuts
* Chocolate spread
* Fizzy drinks
* Nuts as they are a choking hazard and a number of children are allergic (hazelnut yogurt is included here)
* Flavoured milk.
* Cereal bars ( as many contain nut traces) and fruit winders