

ROCKBORO PRIMARY SCHOOL HEALTHY EATING POLICY



Introduction

The staff of Rockboro Primary & Pre-School agrees that a healthy eating policy is essential, in order for the personal and educational goals of the school to be achieved. The policy was revised in response to parents' encouragement and with the support of the teaching staff and referenced to the guidelines available from the Health Service Executive (HSE).

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/health/healthy-eating-guidelines/>

Rationale

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 fiber (roughage). A balanced diet will enhance a child's chances of achieving his/her potential.

Secondly, the cultivation of healthy eating habits and awareness of food value is part of the Social Personal and Health Education Curriculum (S.P.H.E) aims.

Aims of the Policy

- To ensure every child brings a healthy lunch and snacks.
- To promote healthy eating habits among the children.
- To encourage children to make healthy choices about food and nutrition.
- To maintain high levels of concentration within class due to the consumption of healthy food.
- To raise awareness of the food groups and nutrition.
- To reduce junk food content consumed in school.
- To promote a healthy school.

Guidelines for Healthy Lunches

The most effective way to plan a healthy lunch is to include one food from each of the main food groups e.g. fruit, milk/yoghurt, and bread, meat / poultry /cheese/ vegetables.

- A. Healthy packed lunch should contain at least one item from the major food group. Variety is extremely important.
- B. Please do not give your child convenience foods like crisps, biscuits and sweets.
- C. Crisps and fizzy drinks are banned on all days.
- D. A treat is allowed on Friday as part of lunch but *not as a replacement for it*.
- E. We allocate 10 minutes at the beginning of the main break each day for eating lunches.
- F. For the 15-minute break please give the children something small and manageable for bringing outside e.g. peel/prepared fruit.
- G. Chewing gum is **not allowed** in the school.
- H. From time to time the school distributes information from the Health Service Executive (HSE) and participates in Health Promotion activities poster/ poetry competitions etc.
- I. Occasionally an expert may be invited to speak to the children.
- J. Children are required to take home all waste from lunch each day. This includes food (apple cores, remains of sandwiches etc.) empty cartons (drinks, yogurts, boxes etc.), cling film, wrappers from snacks etc. This is :
 - To ensure that parents are aware of what their children have/have not eaten during the day.
 - To promote environmental awareness and care.
 - To reduce the cost of waste management in the school.

Note: On special occasions, exceptions may be made provided there has been prior arrangement with the principal and class teacher.

Roles and Responsibility

Parents have a role in providing a healthy lunch and in communicating relevant dietary requirements to the child's teacher e.g. diabetics, allergies etc.

The **Class Teacher's** role is to encourage, by highlighting the positive aspects of individual lunches in the classroom and impart knowledge as part of the S.P.H.E. curriculum.

The **Principal's role** is to monitor the policy and to review feedback from staff, the committee and the parents.

Outcomes

Pupils may show knowledge of healthy / unhealthy foods

All pupils will have healthy lunches.

There will be no crisps or gum in school.

The school staff looks forward to your cooperation in implementing this policy.