

Scoil Naomh Eoin

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Scoil Naomh Eoin, Killenard **Healthy Lunches Policy**

Rationale:

Why a healthy eating policy?

Recent studies of the changing eating habits of the Western World in the last thirty years have shown some startling and worrying results. The increased amount of fat, salt, sugar and chemical additives we ingest in processed food and refined foods is leading to:

- An increase in the numbers of overweight and obese children and adults.
- An increase in the incidence of hyperactivity and attention deficit disorders in children.
- More dental problems in children.

In the best interest of the children, to improve their overall health and well-being and to help concentration and learning, we have developed this policy encouraging healthy lunches and snacks. We aim to encourage children to have lunches that are "junk free", cutting out crisps, sweets, fizzy drinks and artificial additives.

The following recommendations were made:

- That the school would adopt a "healthy eating policy"
- That guidelines re healthy lunches would be sent to all families - see Appendix (i)
- That every pupil in the school would have a lunch box with his/her name on it and in this lunchbox would be healthy food for the two breaks.
- Food wrappings and uneaten food will be returned to the lunch box for children to take home. (This will enable you to re-use e.g. tinfoil and also to see what has and has not been eaten).
- Drinks should be put in small screw cap bottles which are easy for children to manage - these bottles can be taken home in lunch box and re-used.
- Drinks in cartons should not be used as they cannot be closed and are often spilt. The children may bring soup in a flask (with a cup).

Obviously co-operation between school & home is essential to the success of the children eating healthy lunches and the appearance of our school environment so it was agreed that these matters should be put to the Parents Council for their advice and support. This was done at the annual general meeting of parents which was held in the school on Monday October 21st 2000 and the parents present gave unanimous endorsement to these proposals.

Appendix (i)

Healthy School Lunches **Guidelines**

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO BRING LUNCHES THAT:

- Are high in fibre, low in fat, low in sugar and low in salt
- Provide a variety of foods from the Food Pyramid
- Do not contribute to tooth decay
- Help reduce litter in the school grounds

Suggestions for Healthy Lunches:

- Sandwich, roll, bread, crackers
- Fruit, vegetables
- Milk, Water, soup in a flask, pure fruit juice
- Scones, plain buns (no icing), brack
- Yogurt, fromage frais

Foods not recommended:

- Fizzy drinks
- Sweets, chewing gum, cakes, chocolate, all bars
- Chips, crisps, chipsticks etc.,
- Biscuits/Bars
- Popcorn (not because it's not healthy, but danger of choking)
- Nuts (some children may have a nut allergy)

Source: The Health Promotion Department, South Eastern Health Board.