



Ard Rí Community National School
Balreask Old,
Navan,
Co. Meath

Roll No. 20352T

Healthy Eating Policy
March 2017



Healthy Eating Policy

Introduction

What people eat is known to be one of the key factors influencing long term health of school children and staff. The school day provides the opportunity for having at least one of the daily meals within the school. The curriculum provides an opportunity to learn and explore about food and healthy lifestyles. Through these guidelines Ard Rí Community National School aims to help all those involved in our school community in developing positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health.

Aim of this Policy

- To promote the personal development and the 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 adapting a healthy, balanced diet.

The Healthy Eating Guidelines

1. **Breakfast;** Parents should ensure that children have a balanced breakfast to help them learn and concentrate better in school.
2. **Lunch;** A healthy lunchbox includes a helping of food from the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid; Fruit and vegetables, cereals and grains, dairy and protein. The HSE Food Pyramid can be found on page

Healthy snacks we encourage are:

- Sandwiches or rolls with cheese, meat or other healthy/nutritious fillings.
- Pitta bread, crackers, plain rice-cakes
- Fruit (ready to eat)
- Vegetables (ready to eat)
- Cheese
- Pasta
- Salad
- Standard yogurts (non-dessert)

Healthy drinks we encourage are:

- **Water;** pupils are encouraged to bring a bottle of water to school. If children do not drink enough water to school, they may become dehydrated, thirsty, tired and weak. Water breaks will be scheduled throughout the school day.
- **Plain milk;** pupils are encouraged to bring plain milk to school. Milk is an excellent source of calcium which is the main mineral present in bones and teeth. For children aged 9-18 years 5



servings of calcium rich foods are recommended due to the importance of this mineral during this life stage.

What does not belong in a healthy lunch.

- Chocolate spreads, chocolate/cheese dips
- Cereal bars, chewy sticky bars, chocolate bars
- Sweets, chewing gum, crisps
- Fizzy drinks, juice drinks, squash
- Biscuits, cake, doughnuts

3. How can we ensure successful implementation of the Healthy Eating Policy?

- Parents are responsible for the health of their children. Where possible we encourage parents and children to prepare school lunches together.
- Children need to follow the policy and become positive about healthy lifestyle choices.
- Teachers and staff will provide positive modelling and support attitudes to encourage healthy eating. This includes providing non-food related rewards.
- School management will support the community in developing a healthy eating culture by providing healthy options at events like parents nights/school tours, running schemes like 'Food Dudes' when available. School management will make the policy easily available to the community on the 'About' page of the Ard Rí CNS website or in hard copy from the office.

4. What happens if children bring in food they are not allowed?

- The children bring the food/drink home in their lunchbox. Teachers will use their discretion here to ensure no child is left hungry. A poor lunch is better than no lunch.
- Teachers may issue a ticket which will remind parents to refer to the Healthy Eating Policy.
- Sweet treats for birthdays such as cakes, buns, sweets, party bags etc. should not be brought into school as in the school setting, there may be so many birthdays that sweet treats are available nearly every day.
- Special dietary requirements will undoubtedly be recognised by the school. Please discuss special dietary requirements with your child's class teacher.

School Philosophy and Ethos

Ard Rí Community National School is a multi-belief school which welcomes pupils of all beliefs and none. Our school is committed to inclusion, equality and fairness. In drawing up this Healthy Eating policy we recognise and respect the racial and ethnic diversity among our school community and to this end we appreciate the different values and morals regarding the consumption of different types of food. This policy seeks to be cognisant and respectful of the cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of our school community.

The food laws followed by families of various faiths are broad and complex. If your family follows faith specific food law please notify the school.

Allergies

Ard Rí Community NS is a nuts free school. No nut products allowed.
To ensure all children's safety no sharing of lunches is permitted.

Monitoring/Evaluation/Review

This policy was reviewed and updated in a partnership between the school Principal, Darragh Roe and Class Teachers Catherine Dooley and Maria Bradley O'Connor. The policy was reviewed by Teachers and SNAs before being passed through the Parent's Consultative Forum and being ratified on28/2/17..... by the school manager.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, at other times where deemed necessary or as required by legislation or DES circular.

This will be circulated to parents, available on the 'About' section of the Ard Rí Community National School website www.aridrics.ie and on request from the office.

Signed:*Maria Bradley O'Connor*..... (School Manager)

Signed:*Maria Bradley O'Connor*..... (Staff Representatives)

Signed:*Darragh Roe*..... (School Principal)

Signed:*PCF Rep.*..... (PCF Rep.)

The Food Pyramid

For adults, teenagers and children aged five and over

www.healthyireland.ie

