



# **O Connell Primary Healthy Eating Policy**



**An Edmund Rice School**

This document is intended to provide details of the main policies of O' Connell Primary School relating to Healthy Eating. It is intended to help the school community, including staff, parents, guardians and other relevant parties to understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is regularly reviewed. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Authors</b>
2024	Formulation of policy	Sub-committee of the BOM comprising of teachers and parents and pupils.

## **Introductory Statement**

The Healthy Eating Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies – Health and Safety Policy and Administration of Medications Policy – and with the school information booklet.

## **Rationale**

Our school setting provides an excellent health promotion avenue, reaching a large section of the community: children, families and teachers. The policy is intended as a guide to healthy and safe eating for the school.

## **Aims**

The aims of the policy are to:

- Promote nutrition awareness
- Positively affect healthy eating among school-age children
- Raise levels of concentration within class through the consumption of healthy food
- Support and encourage healthy eating habits in children, which is hoped will become lifelong habits
- Provide members of staff, parents and those involved in school activities with clear information
- Protect the health and safety of children with serious food allergies.

## **Content**

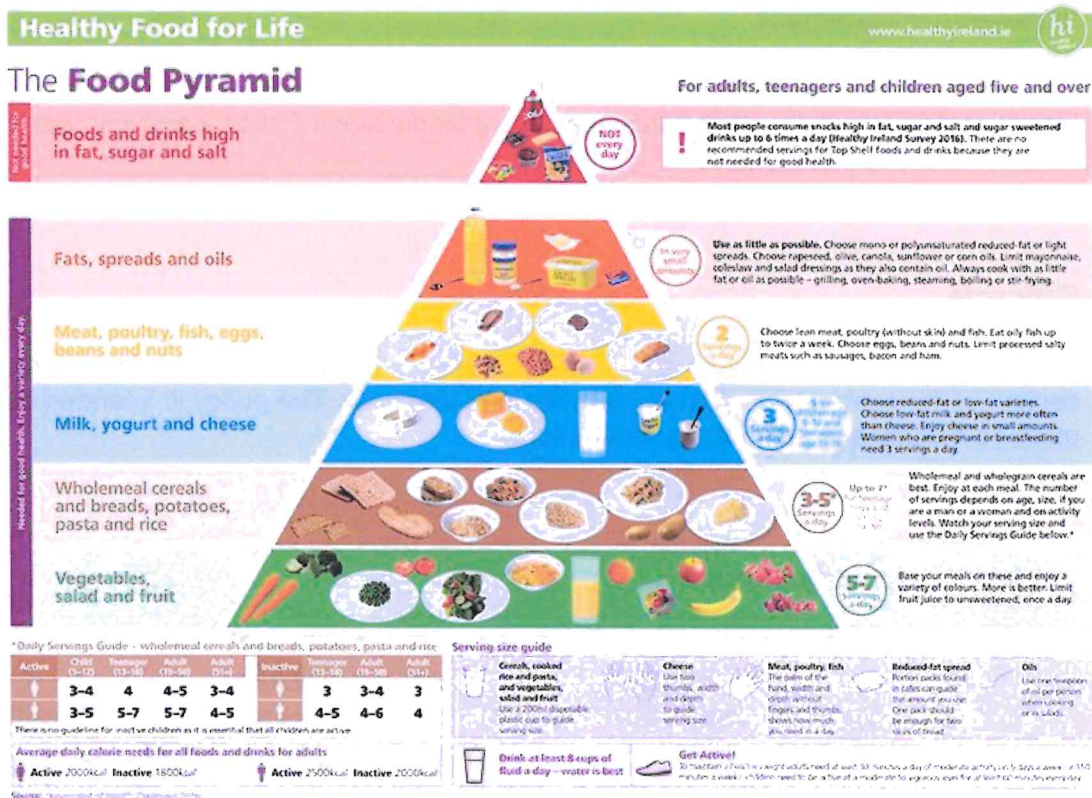
### **1. Healthy Lunch**

All children in O' Connell Primary School will have access to the schools hot meals programme. These meals are nutritionally balanced and supplied by Glanmore foods. Children will have a choice of 5 meals on a daily basis including a vegetarian option.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide children with a healthy snack for first break, which helps to maintain their level of concentration in the classroom throughout the day. A healthy lunch should, if possible, include a variety of foods from the bottom four shelves of the Food Pyramid. These are:

- fruit, fruit juice and vegetables
- bread cereals
- milk, cheese and yogurt
- meat, chicken, fish and alternatives

A healthy snack might be a ham, cheese or tuna sandwich, yogurt, some fruit and a drink of water.



## 2. Treats

In order to encourage healthy, balanced eating habits among children in school, the following foods are only allowed on treat days:

- crisps
- sweets
- bars
- chocolate

As there is a high risk burns and scalds, please do not include hot drinks as part of a child's lunch.

Fizzy drinks and chewing gum are **never** allowed in school.

On a treat day, as determined by the school, parents/guardians may give treats to their own child and teachers may give treats to their own class. These are special occasions such as:

- End of term parties
- Halloween
- School tours
- On a child's birthday, if desired by a parent.

As a general principle, children are not given treats as rewards.

It is important to remember that the guidelines about sharing in section 3 and allergy restrictions in section 4, apply on treat day.

### **3. Lunch Time Guidelines**

In order to promote the health and safety of all children in the school and prevent the spread of infection, guidelines for eating at lunch and break times are necessary. These are essential and therefore mandatory:

- Children are not to share food or drink.
- Children are not to share food utensils or drinks containers.

We would also encourage that:

- Any containers sent to school from home are labelled with the child's name.
- As far as practicable, lunches are eaten in one place within the classroom.

It is important to note that the health and safety of children with serious allergies will take precedence over other issues. It may, therefore, be necessary to introduce additional precautions or restrictions in classes in which some children have serious allergies.

### **4. Allergies**

If your child has a serious food allergy, as parents/guardians you must notify the school and fill in relevant documentation as per Administration of Medications policy.

#### **Implementation**

If children bring prohibited food or drink into school they will be asked by the class teacher to bring it home, as it is not allowed.

If children do not have anything else to eat, they will be provided with fruit and toast that are almost always available in the school.

If children persist in bringing unhealthy food to school the class teacher and principal will organise a meeting with their parents/guardians to remind them of the Healthy Eating Policy.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Parents/guardians have a responsibility to provide healthy lunches.

Children have a responsibility to eat their own lunch and not share or trade food, drink or treats with others.



Staff have a responsibility to provide a good example through their own healthy eating habits.

The whole school community - staff, parents / guardians and children – will work together to promote the progress of this policy. All are encouraged to discuss and provide feedback on its performance, which will be reported back as appropriate to the principal and staff.

The overall performance of the policy will be regularly monitored and evaluated.

### **Success Criteria**

We will know if the policy is effective by

- Observing what children have for lunch and during other break times
- The feedback from parents/guardians and school staff
- The level of concentration and performance of children in the classroom

### **Timeframe for implementation**

January 2024

### **Timeframe for review**

January 2025

### **Ratification and Communication**

The BOM originally ratified the policy at its meeting in January 2024.

The policy is available to all staff, children and parents on the school website. It will be promoted in school as part of the SPHE policy and its importance will be stressed in communication with parents.

### **Useful Information:**

The Health Promotion Unit provides information on food and nutrition for children and is available to download at: [www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie).

The Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute has a vast amount of information on nutrition and diet and have suggestions on what to include in school lunch boxes: [www.indi.ie](http://www.indi.ie).


This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in April 2022

Signed:

  
Principal

Date: 01/2/24

Signed:

  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 01/02/2024

