

St. Eunan's N.S

Healthy Eating

Policy



1. Title

Healthy Eating Policy - St. Eunan's N.S, Laghey

2. Rationale / Mission Statement

We recognise that proper nutrition is a foundation for children's health, wellbeing, learning and development. This policy aims to:

- Foster a whole-school approach to healthy eating in line with national guidelines (e.g. Healthy Food for Life, Food Pyramid)
- Ensure consistency between healthy eating messages taught in class and the food and drink environment in school.
- Promote food provision (in school, from home, in events) which meets the ethical, medical and dietary needs of the school community.
- Encourage a positive, enjoyable, and safe eating environment.
- Support pupils, staff, parents and the community to make informed choices

This policy was developed through consultation with the principal, staff, Board of Management, pupils, and parents/guardians.

3. Policy Team / Review Team

The following people were involved in drafting this policy:

- Principal
- School Staff
- Parent Association
- Student Council
- Board of Management

This policy will be reviewed every **3 years** (or more frequently if required).

4. Aims & Objectives

Aims

- To create a school environment that supports healthy eating in culture, curriculum, policy, and partnerships
- To embed healthy eating across school life, aligning with national guidelines
- To ensure the food provided / permitted is safe, nutritious and inclusive
- To make eating times positive, calm, and social

Objectives

To achieve these aims, we will:

Key Area	Objectives / Actions
Culture & Environment	Provide time and space for eating; promote water as primary drink; discourage consumption of "top-shelf" treat foods except on rare occasions; model healthy eating among staff; plan non-food rewards; manage food at events and celebrations.
Curriculum / Teaching & Learning	Incorporate age-appropriate lessons on food, nutrition, food origins, and consumer awareness in SPHE, Science and other subjects; adopt the Food Dudes programme; use HSE / Safefood resources; invite external speakers / workshops.
Policy & Planning	Ensure all food provision (hot lunch providers, caterers etc.) adheres to nutrition standards; include healthy eating in the school development plan; plan for staff training

We will prioritise the main areas identified by audits and surveys in our school when implementing the policy.

5. Guidelines / Standards for Food & Drink at St. Eunan's N.S

5.1 Drinks

- Drinking water shall be freely available throughout the school day; pupils should bring a labelled water bottle to class
- Water, milk, orange/apple/diluted juice are the only drinks permitted, except where medically required
- **Sugary / fizzy drinks** are **not** be permitted on the school premises, except where medically required

5.2 Lunches / Snacks / Packed Lunches

- Encourage packed lunches which reflect healthy balanced eating (e.g. whole grains, lean proteins, vegetables, fruit, dairy)
- Discourage foods from the "top shelf" of the food pyramid (sweets, chocolate, crisps, cakes) except on **treat days** (on Fridays or special occasions)
- Teachers / staff may offer guidance or sample lunchbox ideas to parents. This is communicated in the welcome packs for all new pupils
- Pupils should be encouraged to eat what they bring; uneaten food should be taken home
- School staff to supervise and promote good manners, handwashing, tidiness etc.
- Strictly NO NUTS allowed in the school building (due to medical conditions within the school community)

5.3 Food Provided by external providers eg. Fresh Today

- All external caterers or providers must adhere to national nutritional guidelines and the nutritional values of each 'hot lunch' is available for all parents to view

5.4 Food at Events, Celebrations & Rewards

- Minimise food for celebrations; prefer non-food based celebrations
- If food is used, encourage healthier options (fruit, popcorn, unsweetened treats) where possible
- Do not use sweets / cakes as rewards — prefer alternatives: praise, privileges, certificates, extra playtime, tokens, etc.

5.5 Special Dietary Needs

- The policy must cater for allergies, intolerances, religious / cultural diets, vegetarian / vegan preferences, medical conditions etc.
- A protocol will be maintained for identifying, communicating, and safely managing students with special dietary requirements

6. Implementation / Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Board of Management	Ratify and support the policy, allocate resources, monitor compliance
Principal / Leadership Team	Oversee implementation, lead policy review, ensure communication
Teachers / Staff	Promote healthy eating, integrate into lessons, model behaviours, monitor eating / drinking habits in their classroom
Catering / Food Providers	Comply with guidelines, liaise with school, ensure menu suitability
Parents / Guardians	Support by preparing healthy lunchboxes, reinforcing policy at home
Student Council	Contribute ideas, peer support, feedback, involvement in monitoring

If a situation arises where the policy is not being followed (e.g. unhealthy foods brought)

- If a treat is brought into school Mon to Thur, the child will not be allowed to eat it and it will be returned home.
- A treat must only be a 'fun size' treat or equivalent. If the treat is too big, the children will be permitted to eat a small portion of the treat and the remainder will be returned home.
- Some items that are considered treats; Crisps, Pringles, Biscuits, Rice Krispie bars, cereal bars with any chocolate ingredients, ????????. The child will not be allowed to eat these items Mon to Thur and it will be returned home. If this continues, the class teacher will send a note home.

7. Communication & Promotion

- The policy will be displayed prominently on our school website
- Regular reminders via school email, student council meetings, parent meetings
- Parent tips / leaflets will be distributed to all newly enrolled pupils
- Use pupil voice: involve classes in healthy eating campaigns, competitions, posters

8. Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

- Every 3 years (or more often if necessary).
- Evaluate changes in behaviour, barriers encountered, feedback from stakeholders.
- Update the policy accordingly

Date of Ratification: _____

Signed: 

(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Date: 10th June 2026