

Healthy Eating Policy @ SCMJ

Our recent surveys of children, parents and staff showed a very large majority believe Scoil Mhuire Junior should develop a Healthy Eating Policy. Research shows that improved nutrition in schools leads to increased focus and attention, improved test scores and better classroom behaviour. **Nutritious school food helps students develop lifelong healthy eating habits.**

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) Programme we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

Aim:

The aim of this policy is to ensure children eat a healthy, well-balanced lunch, and to promote personal development and a healthy lifestyle. By encouraging healthy eating patterns we educate children for later life.

Objectives:

The objectives of this policy are to enable the child to:

- appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growth, development and good health.
- accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

Healthy Lunch Options:

The following guide is designed to help in choosing a quick, appetising, and nutritious lunch.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● breads/rolls/wraps/bagels/scones● crispbread● oatcakes● crackers● pasta● rice● rice cakes.● fruit● raw vegetables and hummus● cheese● cream cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● meat: chicken, ham, turkey● eggs● tuna and sweetcorn● salmon● salad● pasta salad● potato salad● coleslaw● quiche● fruit yoghurt● seeds
--	--

Foods not allowed in school:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Fizzy drinks● Energy drinks● Sweets● Chocolate bars● Biscuits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Chewing gum (not permitted at any time)● Chocolate (dessert) yoghurts● Crisps● Fruit Winders
---	---

Treat Friday

Every Friday, children are permitted to bring in one small food item for 'Treat Friday'. A treat does not necessarily mean one of the food items that are not permitted throughout the rest of the week.

We encourage children to use 'Treat Friday' to bring in fruits they don't regularly have, to engage in home baking so they can bring in a homemade treat or to try something new such as carrot sticks and hummus.

If a child is bringing in an item such as a chocolate bar, please ensure that it is **treat sized**.

Children **may be allowed** to have a treat day at end of term parties.

Teachers may give children a sweet treat on occasion, in an effort to acknowledge positive behaviour. However, this will be kept to a minimum with other rewards, such as homework passes, experiences and extra responsibilities being prioritised.

School Lunches

We would ask parents and guardians to be mindful of the **quantity** of food that is being made available to children. Bradbury's school lunches are comprised of four items: a 'main' item (e.g. sandwich or pasta), a piece of fruit and two snacks (e.g. crackers and cheese and a yoghurt). This is a significant quantity of food and your child may only need 1-2 additional snack items daily.

Nut Free School

Please support us in helping our school remain nut free. Please ensure there is no peanut butter or Nutella in your child's lunch.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Role of Parents:

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children.
- Encourage healthy eating.
- Inform the school of any child's special dietary needs.
- To co-operate with our school's Healthy Eating Policy.

Role of Children:

- To eat their lunch.
- To bring home any uneaten lunch/packaging.
- To help make their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Eating Policy.
- Not to bring chewing gum, crisps, chocolate bars or sweets to school (apart from exceptional days, as noted above).

Role of School:

- To promote and encourage healthy eating.
- To explicitly teach what is meant by healthy eating and the rationale behind it, as guided by the SPHE Curriculum (Myself: Taking care of my body)
- Where needed, to liaise with parents and caregivers to provide support and guidance on healthy eating options.

Implementation:

This policy will be implemented from 07th February 2023.

As part of the Social Personal and Health Education curriculum, reasons for healthy eating will be discussed with the children regularly by staff.