



## **Scoil Bhríde Eglantine Healthy Eating Policy**

### **Healthy Eating Policy - Introduction & Rationale**

This policy has been developed to support and promote healthy eating habits among children during school hours, in line with the SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) curriculum. It is widely recognised that diet plays a vital role in both general and oral health. Research shows a strong connection between healthy eating, physical well-being, cognitive performance, and overall development.

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It is recommended that lunch should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt.

To reinforce our commitment to this important aspect of student welfare, we began a review of our Healthy Eating Policy in June 2023. As part of this process, school leaders attended a HSE (Health Service Executive) course on healthy eating for primary schools on Tuesday, 14th March 2023.

## **The Team**

- Ger O'Brien (Principal)
- Lorraine Lyons (Assistant Principal II)
- Lisa Lavers (Assistant Principal II)
- Student Council. (Representing the student body)
- Parents' Association (Representing the parent body)

## **Aims/Objectives**

- To take a whole school approach to healthy eating in our school, in relation to: The Culture and Environment, Curriculum (Teaching and Learning) Policy and Planning, Relationships and Partnerships.
- 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 adopting a healthy, balanced diet.
- To make the provision and consumption of food an enjoyable and safe experience for all in Scoil Bhríde.

## **Culture and Environment**

- Staff are encouraged to model healthy eating habits and promote positive attitudes toward food and nutrition.
- School events and celebrations are planned with a focus on balanced treats and healthier alternatives where possible.
- Displays throughout the school (posters, student projects) promote awareness of healthy eating messages.

## **Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)**

- Healthy eating is taught as part of the SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) curriculum. These lessons are delivered at the beginning of each school year, ensuring consistent and age-appropriate coverage of healthy eating topics.
- Healthy eating is taught as part of the science curriculum throughout the school year.

## **Policy and Planning**

- Healthy eating taught in SPHE at a certain time every year. (\*beginning of year)

- Displays throughout the school (posters, student projects) promote awareness of healthy eating messages e.g. food pyramid.
- Jellies and sweets are not given as class rewards. Occasionally, teachers may choose to provide a class with a special treat e.g. popcorn with a movie or hot chocolate at Christmas time.
- Bake sales may be held from time to time. These events are carefully managed - no more than two in an academic year.
- Parents' Association provide an ice cream treat at the end of the school year.
- Continuation of the school milk scheme
- Work with hot lunch providers we feel align with our Healthy Eating Policy, who provide options for children with allergies or specific dietary requirements and who offer nutritional advice and support for parents.

### Relationships and Partnerships

- Parents and guardians are regularly informed of the school's healthy eating policy through school newsletters and school website [www.eqlantine.ie](http://www.eqlantine.ie)
- Collaboration with outside agencies (e.g. HSE, dietitians, or local health organisations) to reinforce key messages and provide expert input.

### Key Measures

- Pupils should be encouraged to have a role in preparing their own lunches.
- Water - We encourage children to bring in a water bottle (that can be reused and refilled) to aid concentration.
- Engagement with the Student Council will take place on an ongoing basis to further encourage and promote healthy eating.

The following foods and drinks are not allowed at school:	We prefer the following foods are limited to treat day only. (Friday only)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)</li> <li>• Sugary, fizzy drinks</li> <li>• Fruit juices</li> <li>• Hard Sweets</li> <li>• Lollipops</li> <li>• Chewing gum</li> <li>• <b>Any product containing nuts</b></li> </ul>	<p>Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anything containing chocolate</li> <li>• Biscuits/bars</li> </ul> <p>• <b><u>Treat Day- Friday</u></b> will be our treat day. The children are encouraged to eat the treat <b>AFTER</b> their lunch is eaten at 12.30pm.</p>

	<p>On this day, children can bring ONE of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat/ fun sized bar</li> <li>• Treat/ fun sized bag of sweets (for example not a full-sized bar of chocolate)</li> <li>• Small portion of biscuits</li> <li>• Small cereal bar (some cereal bars have very high sugar content)</li> <li>• Small home baked treat</li> </ul>
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#### **Implementation and review:**

- Parents are responsible for providing a healthy school lunch for their child(ren).
- Children are encouraged to participate in making their own healthy school lunch.
- Teachers will explicitly teach about healthy eating as part of the SPHE curriculum.
- Eglantine will review our Healthy Eating Policy regularly and in collaboration with Board of Management, the staff, parents and pupils.
- Scoil Bhríde Eglantine's Healthy Eating Policy is available on our website at [www.eglantine.ie](http://www.eglantine.ie) and as a hard copy from the office and by post if requested.

#### **Other Considerations**

##### **Allergies:**

The school community is made aware by the parents and guardians of the possibility of food allergies within the school population. We understand some children follow special diets for medical reasons, or children may have food allergies. Parents will be asked to provide as much information as possible about this allergy to her child's teacher. Where required, a medical protocol will be drawn up by parents and Deputy Principal and under the guidance and advice of the relevant medical professionals. This information will be shared with staff.

**For the safety of all children and with food allergies in mind, children are not allowed to share lunches.**

Treats brought from home e.g. birthday cake or similar, are not distributed in school.

### **Role of Parents:**

- Inform the school of any child's special dietary needs giving as much information as possible.
- Read the website of the hot school's meals provider and be aware of ingredients, allergens etc. Parents are to contact hot school meals provider directly if they have any questions or concerns.
- Explain to you child that some children have different dietary requirements so it is important not to comment on other children's lunches.
- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children.
- Encourage healthy eating.
- Follow request not to send birthday cake or food treats in to your child(ren)'s class.
- To support the implementation of school policy by not allowing their children to bring chewing gum, crisps and other unhealthy choices to school.

### **Role of Children:**

- To eat their lunch
- To bring home any uneaten lunch
- To refrain from sharing lunch with others and to not make comments on other children's lunches.
- To help make their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Lunch Policy
- Refrain from bringing foods to school that are not allowed.

### **Role of School Staff:**

- To promote and encourage healthy eating.
- To educate children by teaching the appropriate content from the curriculum
- To engage in the policy review process
- To attend continuous professional development courses where possible

### **Communication and Ratification**

A copy of the reviewed policy will be sent to all parents and a copy will be included in the school website ([www.eglantine.ie](http://www.eglantine.ie))

Signed: Sheela O'Leary (Chairperson)

Signed: Seraldine O'Sea (Principal)

Date: November 18<sup>th</sup> 2025