

Brannoxtown CNS

Healthy Eating Policy

Brannoxtown Community National School (CNS) is a primary school under the Patronage of the Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB). Brannoxtown CNS opened in September 2018 with a new Principal, Dr. Sarah FitzPatrick. Brannoxtown CNS operates within the regulations laid down by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and follows the Primary School Curriculum (DES, 1999) which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998). The Principal and the Board of Management fully subscribe to the principles of partnership, accountability, inclusion, respect for diversity, parental choice and equality, in developing and implementing all school policies.

1. Introduction

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Curriculum, we encourage children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes. In addition, the Physical Education Curriculum supports children's physical development and fitness. The Science Curriculum also looks at the development of the body and deepens children's understanding of how their body grows and develops. This Healthy Eating Policy draws from the above Curriculum subjects as well as research and best practice to promote and support healthy eating at Brannoxtown Community National School.

In addition to the well-known health and dental reasons for healthy lunches, research has shown that poor concentration and hyperactivity in children may be caused by nutritional imbalances. Imbalances in blood sugar levels, caused by eating sweet foods also impairs children's learning and concentration. Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients, without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote the personal development and well-being of the child.
- Promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living.
- To encourage children to eat sensibly so that they can derive maximum benefit from the teaching and learning opportunities provided in the course of the school day.

Actions arising from these aims are to enable:

- Children to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and staying healthy.
- Children to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.
- Parents to make the right choices in helping their children to eat healthily at school.

3. Healthy Lunch Suggestions

Following consultation with children, during Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) time, the following guide was designed to help parents to provide quick, appetising and nutritious lunches for children. This list is not exhaustive; it suggests some appropriate foods for your child's lunchbox. In line with best practice in primary schools, Brannoxtown CNS is a **Nut Product Free Zone**. Children are asked not to share lunches in school to avoid sharing foods which may not be tolerated well by others.

Bread & Alternatives	Savouries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread or rolls • Rice or pasta • Potato Salad • Scones • Bread sticks • Crackers • Pitta bread • Wraps • Rice cakes • Healthy cereal bars (ideally homemade) • Popcorn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lean Meat • Chicken/Turkey • Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines • Cheese • Vegetarian Sausage • Beans • Chickpeas
Fruit & Vegetables	Drinks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apples, banana, peach • Mandarins, oranges • Carrot sticks • Cucumbers • Melon slices • Pineapple cubes • Grapes • Sweetcorn • Tomato 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Milk • Fruit juices (un-sweetened) • Diluted sugar free squash • Yoghurt drinks

Milk and Dairy

Research suggests that growing children should get approximately one pint of milk or an alternative, vegan source of similar nutrients per day. This is to ensure children have enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth. If a child does not drink a glass of milk at lunch, we encourage him/her to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese/vegan alternative, instead.

Foods and drinks not allowed in school

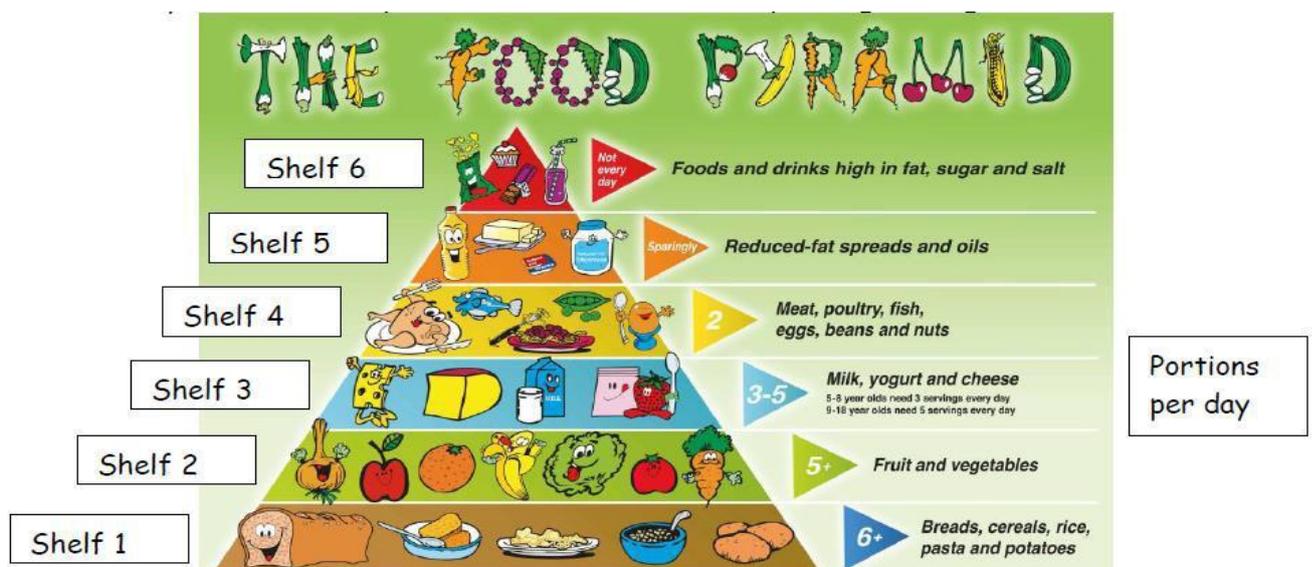
- Crisps
- Sugary drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, fruit juices, etc.)
- Nut products including Nutella
- Sweets
- Biscuits/bars (unless homemade)
- Sugary Cereal bars (Kellogg's cereal bars, rice crispie squares etc.)
- Chewing gum
- Hot drinks

In the interests of equity and fairness for all, children who may bring the above items to school will bring them home again in their lunchboxes. In turn, school staff will support the healthy eating policy; sweets/chocolate will not be offered to children as rewards or prizes. Instead, children will enjoy a range of rewards for effort, learning and behaviour including special activities, homework arrangements, prizes, etc. On special occasions, e.g. birthdays, parents are welcome to bring homemade treats, that adhere to the Healthy Eating Policy, to share with all children in the class.

During scheduled eating time (snack and lunch), children are supported to eat and talk together. We wish for children to be mindful and to develop good habits for their eating and communicating. Therefore, the Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) is not used during children's mealtimes at school.

As a developing school, we aim to become a **Green School** this year. With this in mind, we ask children to take home all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons.

4. The Food Pyramid



- The food pyramid is an important visual tool in communicating healthy eating messages.
- It is very important for children's energy and concentration levels that they eat a healthy breakfast before coming to school.
- A healthy lunchbox includes items from each of the first four shelves of the pyramid.
- Bottom shelf carbohydrates (energy) and fruit and vegetables (vitamin and minerals rich) are encouraged to ensure recommended daily portions are met.
- Any food from the top shelf of the pyramid is not allowed in school.

5. BCNS Healthy Eating Policy: Monitoring and Reviewing

a. Success Criteria

Practical indicators of the success of this policy will be evident in healthy snacks and lunches for all children at the school and ultimately, healthy children who are fit and well.

b. Implementation and Timetable for Review

When finalised, this policy will apply from October 2019 at Brannoxtown CNS. This policy and related policies will be reviewed annually (or in line with a change in Department legislation) and amended if/as necessary.

c. Ratification and Communication

A print copy of the draft policy developed with children was provided for parents on 16th September 2019 and children's homework was dedicated to discussing healthy eating and healthy foods for school with a parent at home. Feedback on ways to improve the policy was invited at a meeting with parents on Tuesday, September 17th and/or in writing by Friday, September 27th, 2019. Following feedback, the policy was finalised and posted on the school's website. Hardcopies of the policy are available to parents on request.

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management of Brannoxtown CNS on 15th June, 2021.

Signed: 

Date: 15 June 2021

Ms. Deirdre O'Donovan
Chairperson

Signed: 

Date: 15 June 2021

Dr. Sarah FitzPatrick
Principal