CARLANSTOWN NATIONAL SCHOOL

HEALTHY EATING POLICY

This policy was drafted by the staff of Carlanstown N.S. in March 2004 and reviewed in November 2014 in consultation with parents and the BOM.

Rationale:

Carlanstown NS aims to help those in our school community: children, staff and parents, to develop positive attitudes towards healthy eating and to learn how healthy eating may contribute to our overall health and well being. It is our policy that healthy eating be encouraged by pursuing both education for pupils and guidance for parents. Research suggests that attention and concentration levels improve with the consumption of nutritious food. We approach this policy with the understanding that ultimately children's appetites and tastes differ, and it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that his/her child eats healthily at all times.

Aims

- To help children and parents make healthy food choices
- To improve the children's concentration and energy levels
- To develop an awareness of nutrition i.e. ingredients of food and heighten awareness of the importance of a balanced diet

Guidelines:

- A healthy lunch-box contains a piece of food from the bottom 4 shelves (lowest 4 levels) of the Food Pyramid.
- Suggested snacks for small break (10.50-11.00) include fruit, chopped raw vegetables (eg- carrot sticks, cucumber, celery, cherry tomatoes), seeds, fruit yoghurts, fromage frais, crackers and raisins, whole-meal muffins, scones, or wholegrain/ digestive biscuits.
- We encourage parents to chop fruit into manageable portions and to peel fruit (e.g. an orange) for younger children until able to do so independently.
- Chewing gum, popcorn, crisps, sweets, chocolate and fizzy drinks are are not permitted for health and safety and/or litter reasons. They do not have a nutritional value and will not provide your child with the energy required to sustain attention & concentration throughout a busy school day
- Healthier choices of drinks include water and milk. Pure unsweetened juices or well diluted sugar free squashes may be included. Other drinks such as sweetened fruit juices, fruit drinks, squashes, fizzy drinks should be avoided due to their sugar and/or acid content, as these are also harmful to teeth.

- *Parents/Guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet must disclose this on the enrolment form and upon admission fill out the Special Dietary Needs Form (Appendix 1)

- As part of our Green School Programme we are trying to reduce the amount of waste in school. We would greatly appreciate if parents tried to reduce the amount of packaging in pupils' lunchboxes. All uneaten food including fruit peel, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons will be brought home in lunchboxes.

- For safety reasons, cans and glass are not permitted.

Implementation of Healthy Eating Policy:

The staff will implement the policy within the context and methodology of the SESE, SPHE (Food groups, the consequences of a poor diet, the Food Pyramid) and P.E curriculum. The following whole school approached will be adopted also

- Lunches are eaten indoors before going out to play. This habit encourages the children to focus on eating their food and enjoying it. Children may bring outside their sandwich, bread roll, fruit etc which they have not finished eating. Children must remain on the tarmac where they can be supervised by an adult until finished eating.

- The school will provide information regarding healthy eating habits to staff, children and parents. This information will include literature / resources available from relevant professional bodies. The school booklet, newsletter and parental notes will be used as a means of promoting healthy eating within the school environment.

- Food hygiene is recognised as an integral part of developing a healthy eating habit and will also be explored within the SPHE curriculum. A copy of *The Healthy Food Pyramid* will be on display in every classrooms and will be referred to regularly.

- The staff of Carlanstown N.S recognises that healthy eating and exercise are inextricably linked and will therefore, be promoted side by side within the context and methodology of the SPHE / P.E curricula.

- This policy will be implemented throughout the school and during all school activities (e.g. sports day, school tours etc.) At school celebrations the Parents Association will be encouraged to offer fruit and healthy treats and also fruit juices/water rather than fizzy minerals

- On special occasions such as the Halloween or Christmas Party, or other school celebrations sweets and chocolate may be given to the children by the class teacher/school/PA as a treat. The school will actively promote foods from the top section of the food pyramid as foods we eat less often and as a treat.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Role of Parents:

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children and in doing so encourage healthy eating
- To implement school policy by not allowing their children to bring sweets, chocolate, fizzy drinks, chewing gum and crisps to school
- Inform the school of any child's special dietary needs

Role of Children:

- To eat their lunch and to bring home any uneaten lunch
- To help make their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Lunch Policy
- Not to bring sweets, chocolate, fizzy drinks, chewing gum and crisps to school. If brought to school children will be asked to take it home.

Role of School:

- Observation of lunches and ongoing praise and encouragement for healthy lunches.
- If children present at school without lunch then the class teacher will contact parents/guardians
- If children present at school without lunch consistently **or** bring sweets, chocolate, fizzy drinks, chewing gum and crisps to school then class teacher should write note in diary. If the difficulty continues the Principal will contact parents/guardians to discuss the matter.

Staff Development & Training:

- The staff and school will also be supported in participating in relevant health promotions and programmes offered by other professional bodies (e.g. Action for life programme, Healthy Eating Week etc.)

Success Criteria

This policy will have been deemed effective if the children develop a habit of eating a healthy balanced lunch.

Review & Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in January 2014 and will be reviewed in two years time.

Signed	**Kay Coughlan** **Chairperson, Board of Management**	**26th January 2015**
Signed	**Sarah Curran** **Principal**	**26th January 2015**