

Tubber N.S. Healthy Eating Policy



Date	Status	Comments
15 November 2013	Draft	Needs to be ratified by BOM

Policy ratified by the Board of Management on ___/___/2013

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson: _____ **Date:** _____

Principal: _____ **Date:** _____

➤ **Introductory Statement:**

For many years Tubber National School has been actively raising the awareness of pupils in the school on the importance of healthy eating. The writing of this policy is a natural progression from this and was drawn up by the staff in Tubber N.S. It will continue to be reviewed on an on-going basis

The focus of this policy is to support parents and pupils in relation to healthy eating habits from an early age. We believe that healthy eating provides the building blocks for lifelong health and well-being. Our pupils spend a large part of their day in school where they eat one of their main meals.

It is our policy that healthy eating be encouraged by pursuing both education for pupils and guidance for parents. Children will be encouraged to participate in Sporting Activities as part of the schools healthy eating/healthy lifestyle policy. Practical suggestions are included, alternative snacks and treats as well as possible nutritious lunches.

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.

Research suggests that attention and concentration levels improve with the consumption of nutritious food.

This policy is linked to

- SPHE: Taking Care of My Body - Food and Nutrition and Making Choices
- Science: Myself - Human Life Processes

➤ **Objectives:**

- 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

➤ A Healthy Lunch

A healthy lunch-box contains a piece of food from the lowest 4 levels of the Food Pyramid. Nutrition is an incredibly important part of life for school-going children. A third of the day's energy needs should be provided at lunch (calories, vitamins and minerals) without being high in fat, sugar or salt

- Food can only be eaten at Break time and Lunch time. Pupils will be given time, before and after breaks, to eat their lunches.
- Snacks for small break include fruit, vegetables, flapjacks, fruit yoghurts, fromage frais, crackers and raisins.
- Healthy fillings for sandwiches are encouraged.
- Water and milk are encouraged, although juices may be used as an alternative.
- Children are allowed **ONE** treat in their lunchboxes on a Friday.

➤ Why?

Healthy food is important for the following reasons:

- ❖ Food is our only source of energy.
- ❖ Children are growing and developing and need a good diet.
- ❖ Food helps children to work well and improves concentration at school.
- ❖ A balanced diet is important for our children's health.
- ❖ Children who develop good eating habits will have them for life.

➤ Promoting Our Healthy Lunch Policy

- ✓ Parents and Staff will promote the policy throughout the school week.
- ✓ Information on the food pyramid and healthy lunch ideas will be displayed in our school on an on-going basis.
- ✓ Information on our Healthy Lunch Policy will also be included in Our Handbook for New Parents/Guardians.

- ✓ We will continue to source and use means to promote this policy e.g. posters, leaflets, the food pyramid etc.
- ✓ Information will also be included in our school newsletter in an effort to communicate with parents and to encourage parents to support this policy.
- ✓ Children are encouraged to bring uneaten food home.
- ✓ Information on healthy eating will be taught in all classes as part of the S.P.H.E. programme, strand unit: *Food and Nutrition*.

➤ **Exceptions**

Exceptions to our Healthy Lunch Policy can be made, on occasions, based on the professional discretion of the class teacher. These exceptions may include as a reward in recognition of hard work or good behaviour, end of term parties, school trips, school events or birthdays.

➤ **"Discouraged" Food and Drink**

If a child, brings any "discouraged" food or drink, (fizzy drink, crisps, sweets, chocolate bars, chewing gum, "Fast Food" and other "junk" food), to school the child will be reminded of the healthy eating policy and will be requested not to eat it during school hours. They will be asked to bring the item home.

If a child has no other food to eat, they may be permitted to eat the food or an alternative lunch may be provided by the class teacher. This is at each teacher's own professional discretion.

If a child persists in bringing unhealthy food to school a letter will be sent home. This will include information on what food is not permitted as part of a child's lunch, the reasons why a healthy lunch is important

and also information on healthy lunch ideas for the parent/guardian of the child.

➤ **Role of the Parent**

- Provide a healthy, well-balanced lunch for their child.
- Encourage healthy eating.
- Inform the school, in writing, of any child's special dietary needs.
- To implement school policy by not allowing their child to bring fizzy drinks, crisps, sweets, chocolate bars, chewing gum, "Fast Food" or other junk food to school (except on treat day).
- To follow the Green-Schools guidelines and reduce packaging and re-use bottles and lunchboxes where possible.

➤ **Role of the Child**

- To eat their lunch.
- To bring home any uneaten lunch.
- To help make their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Lunch Policy.
- Not to bring fizzy drinks, crisps, sweets, chocolate bars, chewing gum, "Fast Food" or other junk food to school (except on treat day).
- To follow the Green Schools guidelines and keep wrappings to a minimum and to bring home their rubbish and all uneaten food.

➤ **Role of the School**

- To promote and encourage healthy eating.
- To provide a consistent programme of cross-curricular nutrition education.
- If a child brings a "discouraged" food or drink to school, they will not be allowed to eat them while in school.
- To teach lessons advising pupils on diet, lifestyle, fitness etc.
- If a child presents at school without a lunch parents/guardians will be contacted by phone.
- If a child presents at school without lunch consistently then the class teacher should
 - ~ Keep a record of the incidents.

- ~ Write a note in the child's diary to inform the parents/guardians.
- ~ Orally inform the child's parents/guardians through a phone call or meeting.
- ~ Inform the D.L.P..

❖ **Success Criteria**

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy will be conducted through:

- Continued observation
- Reduction in the number of incidents where children are bringing "discouraged" foods and drinks to school.
- Increased awareness among children on healthy eating.
- End of year review and recommendations.

❖ **Implementation**

This policy will be implemented from December 2013. During this month the food pyramid will be displayed on the parent's noticeboard in the hall. Each teacher will discuss the food pyramid with their class and brainstorm ideas for healthy lunches.

The food pyramid will be referred to regularly during the school year.

Each class will complete at least two lessons on healthy eating during the school year based on the S.P.H.E. programme.

Information for parents/guardians on healthy lunches will be displayed on the school website.

❖ Review

➤ Responsibilities and Timeframe for Review

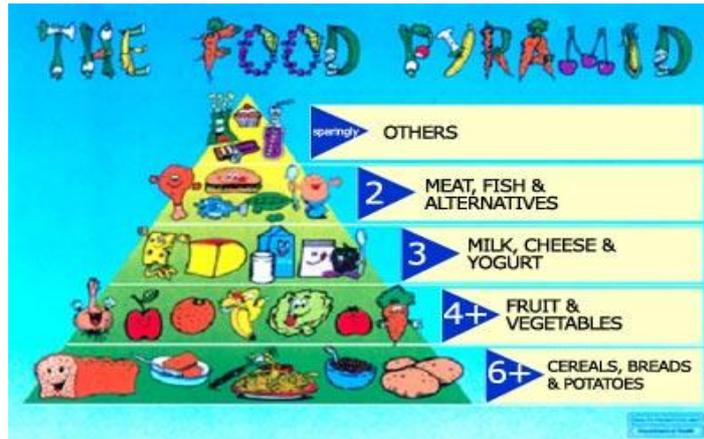
This policy will be referred to regularly in individual classrooms and individual teachers will monitor the progress of the policy in their own classrooms. It will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.

❖ Ratification and Communication

This policy will be communicated to the parents/guardians through our school newsletter, information on our school website. Information will also be included in the handbook for new parents/guardians.

This policy will be communicated to all pupils by each class teacher and referred to regularly during the course of the school year.

Comments and suggestions are invited from the pupils, parents/guardians, staff and Board of Management of Tubber National School.



Lots of Great & Tasty Ideas

Snacks:

Try ... whole-meal muffins, raisins, scones, flapjacks, raw vegetables, fruit, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, fruit yoghurts, crackers, fromage frais or bread

Drinks:

Gulp Down ... water, unsweetened fruit juices, yoghurt drinks, vegetable drinks, or smoothies



Carbohydrates:

What About ... whole-grain breads, rolls, bagels, wraps, oatcakes, crackers, pasta, rice or rice cakes.

Fillings could include: cheese, tuna, cold meats, lettuce, cucumber, tomato, onion, peppers, coleslaw, salad or jam.

Fruit:

Chop On ... apple, orange, banana, grape, pear, plum, kiwi, melon, grapefruit, pineapple and many more ...

N.B. Parents/Guardians of any child with a medical condition, which requires a special diet should contact the school.