



# Dean Kelly N.S.

## Healthy Eating Policy

### **Introduction**

Dean Kelly N.S. is committed to facilitating our pupil development of skills and attitudes to allow them to make informed decisions about their food intake. As a school, we believe that key adults in their lives, namely parents / guardians and school staff, should be good role models and support them to understand how balanced nutrition contributes to a person's health, happiness and general wellbeing.

Our whole school approach to promoting healthy eating will actively involve teachers, parents / guardians, and children to ensure that healthy eating messages are part of every aspect of school life. Our students will receive consistent messages regarding healthy eating, both at home and at school.

### **Aims of our Healthy Eating Policy**

- To promote a whole school approach to healthy eating and nutrition
- To understand the benefit of a healthy well-balanced diet.
- To develop an awareness that good eating habits formed in early childhood influence health and wellbeing throughout our lives.
- To raise levels of concentration within class through the consumption of healthy food
- To provide members of staff, parents / guardians and those involved in school activities with clear information.

### **Benefits of a Good Diet**

A good diet:-

- ensures the development of healthy hair, skin, teeth, muscles and strong bones;
- provides energy and aids concentration;
- strengthens the immune system.

### **School Actions which Support our Healthy Eating Policy**

- As a school we will implement the following actions to support our Healthy Eating Policy:-
- A Healthy Eating Awareness Week will take place in January each year.
- SPHE lessons on healthy eating will be planned and implemented across all year groups at the same time each year.
- The school lunch provider will only supply healthy snack options with a good choice available to the school to show students samples of the range of food available and provide opportunities to taste the different foods.
- Class teachers will encourage pupils to choose a healthy lunch from the selection available.

- Teachers to allow children from different backgrounds to bring their own food, once it is a healthy option. A multi cultural food awareness week will be held during the year when pupils talk about food from their country.
- The school lunch provider will adhere to the required Healthy Ireland Nutrition Standards for School Meals.
- Sweets and / or food treats will not be used as daily rewards by teachers. Instead teachers will give pencils, rubbers etc.
- The HSCL Co-ordinator will organise regular healthy eating / cookery / baking sessions for parents / guardians.
- Pupils will do baking / cooking classes on a regular basis to learn about healthy eating.

### **Breakfast**

A nourishing breakfast is the best start to a child's day, giving him the energy needed to concentrate and learn. Research has shown that children benefit both nutritionally and behaviourally by eating breakfast.

In Dean Kelly N.S. a breakfast club operates in the breakfast room every morning from 8.45 to 9.00 a.m. Breakfast club is open to all students. The food available in the breakfast club adheres to the required Healthy Ireland Nutrition Standards for School Meals. Breakfast is also available for students who attend the wellbeing room. The wellbeing room breakfast runs from 8.50 a.m. to 9.15 a.m each morning. Wellbeing room staff provide the students with a healthy breakfast and a positive start to their school day.

### **Break / Lunchtime Guidelines**

In order to promote the health and safety of all children in the school, and prevent the spread of infection, guidelines for eating at lunch and break times are necessary.

- Students should not share their food or drink.
- Students should not share food utensils or drink containers.
- Students should eat their food at their own table.
- Any uneaten food should go back into the pupil's lunch box. This will help the parent / guardian to be aware of what their child is actually eating.
- Any recycling / rubbish should be taken home.

### **Morning Break**

Students have approximately ten minutes to eat at their morning break. Food at this break should be easy to eat, ideally a small sandwich or a piece of fruit. Fruit should be of a manageable size, peeled / chopped if necessary.

### **Lunch Break**

Students have approximately 15 minutes to eat their lunch.

A healthy lunchbox should contain:-

- At least one portion of fruit / vegetable;
- One portion of meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans or nuts
- One portion of bread or cereal

- One portion of dairy
- Milk or water

All students should bring a refillable water bottle to school every day. Students will be allowed access to water throughout the school day and can refill their bottles when needed.

Every child in Dean Kelly NS has access to a free lunch under the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection's School Meals Programme. This lunch is provided by an external lunch provider. Parents / guardians and children can choose their lunch menu. Lunch menus are set up to encourage variety. If students are availing of this lunch scheme, they will not need to bring any other lunch to school.

### **Foods not permitted in Dean Kelly NS**

The following foods do not support our healthy lunch policy and should be **excluded** from your child's lunch box:-

- Fizzy drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks and drinks / juices with high sugar content
- Take away food / hot deli food
- Chewing gum
- Sweets and winders
- Protein bars
- Crisps and Popcorn
- Biscuits/ cakes / muffins (except on treat day)
- Cereal bars (except on treat day)
- Yogurt drinks and frubes
- Chocolate spread / Nutella
- Chocolate (except on treat day)

Please note that there are students with nut allergies, and nuts and foods containing nuts are not permitted.

### **Treat Days**

On Friday evenings at the end of the school day, pupils are given a treat from Foodies (the lunch company) Treat days may also include End of term parties

- Hallowe'en
- School trips and events
- Class Rewards
- Birthday celebrations (monthly)

On these occasions, teachers may provide treats for the class, or students may be invited to bring in items to share. Teachers will be aware of students with allergies and will ensure safety and inclusivity.

### **Implementation**

If a pupil brings prohibited food or drink to school, they will be asked by the teacher to bring it home at the end of the school day, as such foods are not allowed. If the pupil does not have anything else to eat, the teacher will deal with the matter at his/her discretion. If a pupil persists in bringing unhealthy food to school, the teacher will organise a meeting with the child's parent / guardian to

remind them of Dean Kelly's Healthy Eating Policy. School staff will consistently implement the Healthy Eating Policy to ensure that it is adhered to.

### **Allergies**

If a child has a serious food allergy, the parents / guardians must notify the school and provide a doctor's report stating the implications of the allergy and listing the foods to be avoided. Parents / guardians will be asked to participate with staff in formulating an individual allergy management plan. This plan will identify how best to minimise the risk of an allergic reaction for the child and it will outline the protocol to be implemented if an allergic reaction occurs. Further details can be found in Dean Kelly's Administration of Medicines Policy.

### **Ratification and Communication**

This Healthy Eating Policy was reviewed and updated by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_, following consultation with staff, students and parents/guardians. The policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the parents association.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The implementation of this Healthy Eating Policy will be monitored by the Principal, staff and Board of Management. It will be reviewed and evaluated at regular intervals, including through formal and informal feedback from parents / guardians, pupils, staff and others. This policy will be reviewed as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal

Dated

Dated