



## Healthy Eating Policy

### Introductory Statement

Murhur N. S. Moyvane supports the view that good nutrition is central to a child's educational development. Evidence from existing studies shows that there is a significant positive relationship between improved dietary status and school performance.

A knowledge of what constitutes a nutritionally balanced diet is acknowledged as being of importance for students. To support this nutrition education is featured in the curriculum of Murhur N. S.

We establish our eating habits at a young age. What we eat affects our immediate health, and for those who are still young, it will make a significant difference to how healthy they are in later life.

We know from recent European studies that our young people eat too much sugar and salt and "hard" fat. On the other hand they don't eat enough fruit and vegetables. There is a clear link between what we eat and our risk of getting heart disease or diabetes. What we eat when we are young has an impact on how we are when we are older.

If we can encourage young people to choose and enjoy different foods we have given them a good start and hopefully started some good habits, which will be with them into adulthood.

### **Rationale**

To improve the behaviour and concentration levels of the children of Murhur N. S. Moyvane, and in the light of growing awareness about healthy eating, the increasing incidents of diabetes in young people and the health risks associated with obesity, the Board of Management introduced a policy of healthy lunches. At a meeting of parents in 2006, this suggestion was greeted with much enthusiasm. We have asked parents to provide healthy, wholesome lunches and snacks for their children. Fizzy drinks, crisps of any kind, chewing gum or sweets are not allowed. It was decided to focus on this area for development

- To improve children's health

Relate to SPHE

- (Strand Unit: Taking Care of My Body: Food and Nutrition)
- To make choices (See *Teacher Guidelines pp 11-13*)
- To relate to Science (Strand Unit: Living Things / *Myself Teachers Guidelines P. 10 – 11*)

## **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit to the School**

In keeping with the characteristic spirit of the school, Murhur N. S. hopes by the implementation of this Health Eating Policy, to enable all its pupils to achieve their true potential by helping them

- To become aware of the importance of food for growth and development
- To explore food preferences and their role in a balanced diet
- To explore the importance of food for promoting growth
- To appreciate that balance, regularity and moderation are necessary in diet
- To differentiate between a healthy and unhealthy diet
- To recognise the wide choice of food available and to categorise food and the factors that influence food choices

## **Aims**

By implementing this Healthy Eating Policy, Murhur N. S. ideally hopes:

- To heighten the awareness of the importance of a balanced diet
- To encourage the children to make wise choices about food and nutrition
- To raise levels of concentration within class due to consumption of healthy food
- To encourage pupils to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems caused by junk food, pre-prepared food, and juice cartons, etc.
- To appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing, developing and staying healthy
- To realise and accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices
- To recognise some of the important nutrients that are necessary in a balanced diet
- To become aware of the importance of hygiene/care in the preparation/use of food

## **Content of Policy**

The current good practice of healthy drinks e.g. fruit juices, milk, water being brought in by pupils for snacks/lunches is to be continued. (No Red Bull or fizzy drinks allowed. Drinks without preservatives and low sugar content are encouraged)

Only healthy food e.g. sandwiches, fruit, yoghurt, cheese are to be brought by pupils for snacks and lunches.

All cereal bars, fizzy drinks, high energy drinks, crisps and all similar products, pop-corn, biscuits, chocolate, sweets, chewing gum and bars are strictly forbidden in the school.

Each class teacher will promote this policy in her own classroom at the start of sos/lunch each day and particularly at the start of the school year.

This Healthy Eating Policy is communicated to parents at the beginning of each school year.

## **Success Criteria**

We will know that this policy is effective if

- Children bring healthy lunches
- No “rubbish” is brought in as lunches
- There is an improvement in behaviour/concentration levels of the children
- There is a decrease in litter around the school area

## **Role and Responsibility**

This Policy was formulated by the teachers of Murhur N. S. in consultation with and supported by the Parents’ Council, Board of Management and the staff. The Principal and the teachers will co-ordinate the progress of the policy, encourage and accept feedback on this implementation and report back to the BOM and parents.

## **Implementation**

This Policy has been implemented since 2006 and is now amended and updated.

## **Timeframe for Review**

This Policy will be reviewed in the school year 2011/2012 and amended or updated, or before that, if necessary.

## **Ratification**

This Policy was ratified at a meeting of the Board of Management.

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Gerard Mulvihill  
Chairperson - Board of Management