



Tuam Educate Together N.S.

Healthy Eating Policy

Here in Tuam Educate Together National School, children are encouraged to be aware of and learn about healthy eating to promote health, wellbeing and the energy and enthusiasm that enable them to enjoy their experience of school and to be actively engaged in their learning.

Aims:

- To promote the personal development and wellbeing of each child
- To promote the health of the children and to provide a foundation for healthy living

Objectives:

- To enable the children to learn and appreciate the importance of good nutrition
- To encourage the children to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet

School Lunch Breaks:

Children eat their lunches in the classroom. We encourage the children to keep the food in the lunch boxes or on the lids for reasons of hygiene. The children wash their hands and make use of bacterial hand-washes in the school. For the purpose of recycling, and to cut down costs in school, we ask that all of our children take home their waste packages, leftover food etc. in the lunch boxes to dispose of in their home bins.

Allergies

Because of the risk of severe reactions, at some stage we may ask certain classes that particular food items be banned e.g. nuts. This decision will not be taken lightly, and only in the case where a class member presents with a serious allergy, and the school has been informed by the parents (written confirmation may be necessary from a G.P.) Allergies also dictate that the sharing of food should be avoided, and we would appreciate if parents would advise and remind their children of this. Younger children especially are tempted by the lunches they see in other lunch boxes.

Independent Eating

We would like to encourage independent eating at all times and at all ages: children, if they have them in their lunch boxes, should be able to open and eat a yogurt without spilling; peel a banana or an orange, open a cheese string or a juice bottle etc. Each child should also be enabled to sit at the table and eat calmly. Lunch times can be a good opportunity for socialising, chatting and making friends.

Suggestions for healthy lunches

Sandwiches

Filled rolls

Wraps, pitta bread, bagels

Crackers

Yogurt

Cheese

Fruit and vegetables

Pasta or rice in small container

Quiche

Meat slices, chicken, fish

Water

Milk

Fruit juice (preferably unsweetened and diluted) as a treat

Unsuitable foods

We strongly discourage food which has high sugar content. The following are a list of foods **not permitted** for lunch times.

Fizzy drinks

Sweets

Chocolate bars

Biscuits

Cereal bars

Chocolate/icing-covered cakes

Crisps

Chewing gum, pop corn

Hygiene

The children will be made aware of the importance of hygiene before, during and after eating snacks and lunches. They will be encouraged to wash their hands and keep their tables clean, as well as using their lunchbox lids as plates instead of putting their food on the table. The tables and classroom are cleaned thoroughly at least twice a week, as are the toilets and the rest of the school.

Litter and the Environment

In order to encourage environmental awareness, and to take action to prevent litter in general and in the school in particular, we would like to ask our families to use re-sealable bottles instead of cartons, and re-usable airtight containers rather than disposable wrappings. Any packaging or food left over in a child's lunchbox will be sent home so that parents can monitor how much their child is eating.

Birthdays/Parties/ 'Treats'

While we are happy to fully acknowledge each child's birthday, we discourage cakes, sweets and party bags. Not only do these 'treats' not fit in with our Healthy Eating policy, giving them out to the class also takes up a lot of teaching and learning time throughout the year and can put pressure on other parents to supply similar treats on their children's birthdays. Because of our ethos, in particular our concern that no child is made to feel an outsider in any way, we also ask that invitations to parties and other arrangements to do with birthday celebrations are organised discretely by and among adults outside of the class and school so that no child will feel left out or under pressure to hold his or her own party. Every child in the school is made to feel special on their birthday. On very special occasions, teachers may reward children with treats, however, in line with our code of behaviour, generally children are not rewarded with food items. From time to time, teachers may engage in baking/ cooking activities with their class. Please inform class teacher and school principal of any allergies.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: _____

School Principal