

St. Francis' Primary School Drummaroad



Healthy Break Policy Spring 2021

Date Ratified	
Signature: Chairperson of the Board of Governors	
Signature: Principal	

“St. Francis’ Primary School recognises the importance of health and nutrition in child development and the need to encourage healthy eating habits from an early age, to help children reach their full potential.”

Context

St. Francis’ Healthy Break Policy has been written within the context of the most currently available legislation and guidance available. Staff members are fully tuned into and are guided by the following:

- DENI: Every School a Good School – Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes (In consultation with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Health)
- EA: Healthy Breaks for Schools
- Public Health Agency
- Community Dental Staff Staff of Down and Lisburn Health and Social Services Trust
- EHSSB ‘Save Our Smiles Award’

Rationale

This ‘Healthy Break Policy’ is part of a broader Healthy Eating Policy that has been agreed by the staff, governors, pupils and parents of the school. It aims to promote both the health and dental health of the children by ensuring that they do not take sugar containing snacks and/or drinks between meals during the normal school day.

Aims

A healthy, balanced diet makes an important contribution to the growth and development of children and it plays a vital role in their educational performance and attainment and ultimately to their long-term health and wellbeing. The school wants to work together with parents to ensure that consistent messages about healthy eating are being given to children within the school setting. By working together we can make a real difference to the overall health and well being of the children in our school, both now and in the future.

Guidelines for Healthy Breaks

Drinks

It is important for children to stay hydrated throughout the school day so that they don't become dehydrated and tired. The children are actively encouraged to drink water throughout the school day. Drinks should always be included for break and lunch time. Water and milk are the most suitable drinks for children.

Suitable Drinks:

- Water: tap water or unflavoured, still, bottled water.
- Milk: whole, semi-skimmed or skimmed unflavoured milk.
- Pupils may have dilute juice with their lunch but not as a constant drink throughout the day.

Not Suitable:

- Fruit Juices (including pure fruit juice)
- Smoothies
- Sparkling Water
- Fizzy Drinks
- Drinks labelled 'no added sugar', 'diet' or 'zero'

Guidelines for Healthy Breaks

Snacks

It is important for children to get their five a day by providing them with a fruit or vegetable for their snack at break time. This includes all fresh fruit and vegetables and pots or tins of fruit in fruit juice, **but** not in syrup.

A Portion could be:

- 1 medium sized piece of fruit e.g. apple, orange, banana, pear
- 2 small fruits e.g. kiwi, Satsuma's, plums
- 1 cup of grapes, cherries or berries
- 1 large slice of pineapple or melon
- 1 cereal bowl of salad e.g. lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber and celery
- 3 heaped tablespoons of fresh vegetables e.g. carrots, peppers or sugar-snap peas
- 3 heaped tablespoons of fruit salad (fresh or tinned in fruit juice)

PLEASE NOTE THAT ANYTHING SMALL THAT COULD GET LODGED IN YOUR CHILD'S THROAT LIKE GRAPES, STRAWBERRIES, ETC **MUST BE CUT UP** AS ADVISED BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY

For younger children aged between four and six years of age reduce the portion sizes highlighted above by approximately half, then increase the amount as they grow. Older children in primary school should be eating full portions.

Not Suitable:

- Fruit tinned in syrup
- Dried Fruit e.g. raisins, sultanas
- Processed fruit bars e.g. fruit winders, fruit flakes, etc

These are **high in sugar** and can cause tooth decay and they are therefore **not suitable** as between meal snacks.

Monitoring

The staff in school will monitor and implement the Healthy Break Policy. If children bring in drinks or snacks that do not comply with the guidelines they will be removed from and returned to them at the end of the school day.

To comply with the criteria for the EHSSB 'Save Our Smiles Award' the implementation of the Healthy Break Policy will be monitored by community dental staff.

The Healthy Break Policy will be reviewed every three years.

Inclusion

With all aspects of school life, we as a school recognise the importance working with the children to give them a voice and therefore ownership of school initiatives. As childhood is an important time to establish good eating and drinking habits for future, health praise and attention is used encourage children to adapt healthy eating habits. By doing this, we give children the knowledge and opportunity to make healthier choices both now and in the future.

Links With The Community

At St. Francis' Primary School we believe that educating our pupils about healthy eating is important as it highlights the importance of maintaining a healthy and balanced lifestyle. We understand that parents and those with parental responsibility are the primary influencers and have ultimate responsibility for the eating habits of their children but we like to work with them in the promotion of healthy eating.

Parents are requested to only send drinks and snacks to school that comply with those highlighted in the Healthy Break Policy.

If your child requires a special diet that will not allow the guidance outlined in this policy to be met exactly, please come into to school to discuss it. Parents will be asked to provide a copy of their child's diet sheet that has been provided by a State Registered Dietician.

As a school we always value the continued support of our parents and we will continue to work together to implement this policy promoting healthy eating.