



## Saint Catherine of Siena National School Curragh Camp Co. Kildare

Principal: Mr Jonathan Healy Phone: 045-441458 Email: [curraghprimary@gmail.com](mailto:curraghprimary@gmail.com)

Roll Number: 20558Q Website: [www.curraghprimary.com](http://www.curraghprimary.com)

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### Policy Statement on Healthy Eating

#### **Introduction:**

Health education is important in that it enables people to obtain information and skills that will help them in making good decisions in relation to their health. When education is combined with appropriate policies, structures and support systems, the healthy choice becomes the easier choice. (Dept. of Health and Children. A Health Promotion Strategy. 1995. Government Publications).

St Catherine of Siena is committed to developing an understanding of healthy living, an ability to implement healthy behaviour and a willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health. We believe that this is most effective if based on a consistency in approach and where responsibility is shared by parents, teachers, children, Board of Management, health professionals and relevant members of the community.

Education about healthy eating is provided in the broader context of the **S.P.H.E. curriculum**, which is spiral in nature and delivered with the support of a health promoting school ethos. Rationale: This policy is a response to the fact that we accept that one of the aims of education as outlined in the **White Paper** is *“To promote physical and emotional health and well-being.”* We take cognisance of reports of growing concerns over childhood illnesses related to poor diet and the acknowledgement of the link between healthy eating and learning. Our school aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly learning environment where all partners are valued and facilitated to reach their full potential. A balanced diet provides the nourishment and energy to maximise life’s opportunities.

*“Health habits adopted in childhood will influence health and well-being both now and in the future. Developing health-promoting practices throughout his/her time in school*



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*can encourage the child to take increasing control over his/her own health and help to establish and maintain healthy behaviour from an early age. (Primary School Curriculum. S.P.H.E. Teacher Guidelines, p.3).*

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

**Pupils** are encouraged to be active learners, recording their learning through artwork and the compilation of portfolios. Cross-curricular links are acknowledged, for example, links with such subject areas as S.E.S.E., Drama and Oral Language.

**Teachers** will be responsible for the delivery of formal lessons and informal guidance in the area of health and nutrition and will encourage healthy lunches. They are to be supported in this and be provided with relevant resources.

**Parents** of St Catherine of Siena, as partners in education, are asked to support and encourage this healthy eating policy. Suggestions and comments in relation to this policy are encouraged in the spirit of democracy and ownership.

### **Content:**

The policy is delivered in the context of the S.P.H.E. curriculum. Curriculum resources include The Walk Tall programme and charts/literature provided by the Health Board and outside agencies.

The school acknowledges the special dietary needs of some children and adults and strives to support them in any way possible. The importance of a wholesome breakfast in relation to memory and concentration is acknowledged. Lunch and break timetabling is adequate to allow children to eat lunch. A short water/fruit/snack break is scheduled before small break for our Infant Classes.



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A small snack and drink is sufficient for lunch. Nourishing foods are encouraged – sandwiches, cheese, fruit, yogurt, milk and water. St Catherine of Siena NS is lucky to be part of a **Hot School Lunches** pilot scheme which is funded by the Department of Social Protection. Under the scheme, parents and children are invited to choose from a variety of hot and healthy lunches from an extensive menu of nourishing foods all prepared fresh by a local chef. This is in accordance with the school's policy on healthy eating. We strongly encourage all children to avail of these lunches.

Should parents choose to provide their own lunches, a **healthy lunch might include:**

1. At least 2 portions from the bread, cereals group.
2. One portion from the meat and the meat alternatives group.
3. 2/3 portions from fruits and vegetables.
4. One portion from the dairy products group.
5. The following foods **should not** be included in your child's lunch from home; crisps, chewing gum, sweets, bars including breakfast cereal/cereal bars, cakes, biscuits, lollipops, chocolate, chocolate spread.

*\* At the ratification time of this policy we have no children with nut allergies on our roll, so no guidance is needed there. However this is subject to change.*

6. Milk, water & fruit juice are the only drinks options encouraged. Re-useable containers are to be used for safety and environmental reasons. Cans and glass bottles are **not** permitted. According to the HSE; "there are no recommendations for the amount of water or other fluids children need. However, like adults, to stay healthy it is important for children to replace the water they lose to prevent dehydration."
7. Treats- Children may bring in a small treat on a Friday as part of their lunch, eg; a small chocolate bar, a small bag of crisps etc.

ST. CATHERINE  
OF SIENA N.S.



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This Healthy Eating Policy Statement was first formulated in September 2021 by the teachers, parents, pupils and BOM of St Catherine of Siena NS.