



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

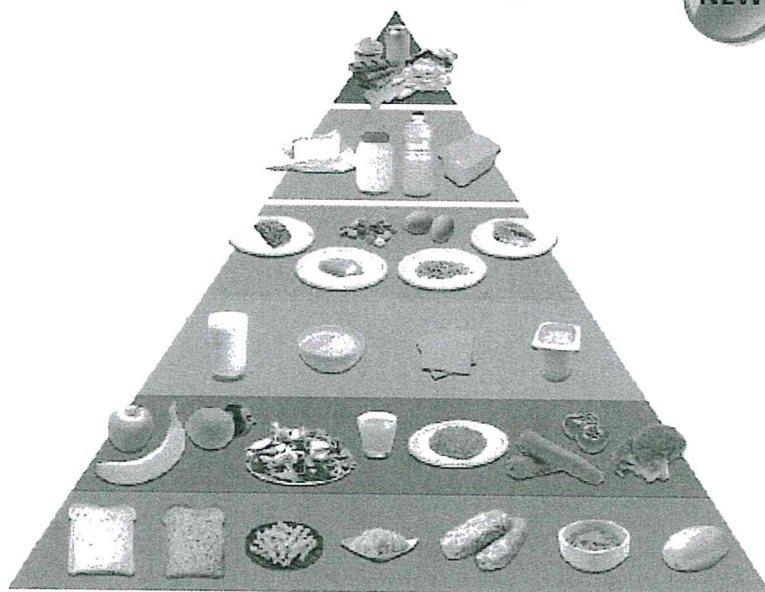


# Healthy Eating Policy

*for our*

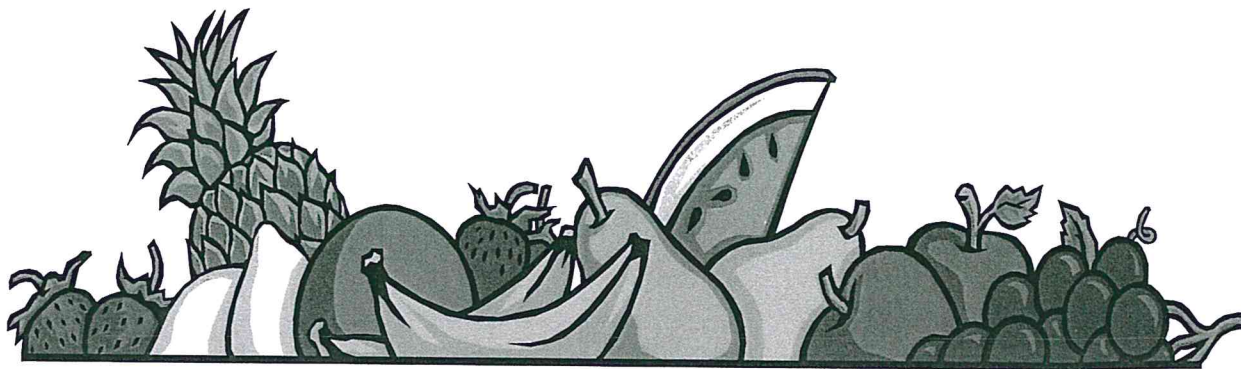
## Primary School Children

*Your Guide to Healthy Eating  
Using the Food Pyramid*



*for Adults and Children over 5 years of age*

**Collon National School**  
**Collon, Co Louth**



## Introduction

### *Health Service Executive Dublin North East (HSE DNE) School's 'Healthy Eating Policy'.*

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

We know from recent Irish and European studies that our young people eat too much sugar, salt and fats. 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 becoming over weight/obese and of getting heart disease or diabetes. What we eat when we are young has an impact on how well we are when we are older.

If we encourage young people to choose and enjoy different foods, we have given them a good start to life, and hopefully started some good habits, which will be with them into adulthood. Maybe as part of this project they can also influence *our* eating habits - it's never too late to start healthy eating.

One believes that the success of such a policy depends on the level of co-operation between parents, schools, health professionals and the wider community.

For these reasons the Health Service Executive Dublin North East is delighted to support this healthy eating project with **Collon N.S.**. The project adopts a whole school approach that involves the teachers, pupils, parents and the community, in line with the World Health Organisation's 'Health Promoting School'.

Thanks to the school principal, teachers, staff, parents and students for the time and expertise that they put into the development and implementation of this '*Healthy Eating Policy*'.

Hearty gratitude to the staff involved in producing this very important document.

**Emer Smyth**  
A/Head of Health Promotion and Improvement  
Health Service Executive – DNE  
November 2016

## **Principal's Acknowledgement**

As Principal of **Collon N.S.** it is a great honour and source of joy and pride for me to undertake and encourage this HSE initiative 'Healthy Eating' School Policy. On behalf of the school staff I pledge our total commitment to the implementation of this agreed policy within our school. In this regard I look forward to the participation and co-operation of all staff members, pupils and parents and I have no doubt it will greatly benefit the entire school community.

From a young age, habits of a lifetime are established and in so far as health in later life is concerned, children are the ideal group to target with health promoting messages. Accordingly, in **Collon N.S.** through our implementation of the Social, Personal and Health Education programme, we endeavour to assist our pupils in the formation of positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health.

I wish to thank most sincerely all those who have participated and contributed enthusiastically and positively to the development of this Healthy Eating Policy:-

Anne Marie Martin

**Principal**

Edel Lennon

**Deputy Principal**

Grainne Reid

**Teacher Representative**

Catherine Hickey

**Parent Representative**

Monica McCrory

**Senior Health Promotion Officer – Schools HSE DNE**

Susanne Shevlin

**Senior Community Dietitian HSE DNE**

Liz O'Reilly

**Health Education Officer – Oral Health HSE DNE**

We proudly regard our school as a 'health promoting school' for the benefit of tomorrow's generation – our children.



## Letter of Commitment

### The Role of the Principal is to:

1. Sign 'Letter of Commitment' to initiate the process.
2. Set up a Healthy Eating Policy Committee to oversee the development and implementation of the policy. This committee will comprise of teachers, parents, students, school health promotion officer and other stakeholders e.g. caterers, special needs assistant representative etc. In consultation with the community dietitian, the Healthy Eating Policy will be drawn up within an agreed timeframe.
3. Oversee the completion of healthy eating survey and present findings to the committee.
4. Initiate and lead implementation, continuation and sustainability of the policy.
5. Take responsibility for keeping the operational points of the policy on file for future reference and every 2 years review, along with the community dietitian and the schools health promotion officer.
6. Ensure that the draft or final policy is not circulated to other schools as it is based on a school's own individual needs.

### The Remit of the Committee is to:

1. Draft Healthy Eating guidelines appropriate to the individual school setting which will form the basis of the Healthy Eating Policy.
2. Forward the draft Healthy Eating guidelines to the Schools Health Promotion Officer for comment and approval in conjunction with the Community Dietitian and Oral Health Education Officer.
3. Circulate the draft Healthy Eating guidelines to staff, parents, board of management, parents' council and students for appraisal.
4. Amend the final draft, based on comments received from above stakeholders.
5. Ratify final draft and disseminate to the wider school community.
6. Implement the agreed Healthy Eating Policy.
7. Organise launch of the Healthy Eating Policy. (optional)
8. Nominate two members to monitor and evaluate the Healthy Eating Policy on a regular basis.

### The role of the Community Dietitian is to:

1. Consult and advise committee on policy content where required.

Signed: Anne-Marie Martin  
Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: Monica A. McGee  
Senior Health Promotion Officer-Schools

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

HSE Dublin North East

Signed: Susanne Sharlin  
Senior Community Dietitian

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

HSE Dublin North East

Signed: Elizabeth O'Reilly  
Health Education Officer-Oral Health

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

HSE Dublin North East

Only HSE certified Healthy Eating policies can display the HSE logo in any format.

## Working Group

Anne Marie Martin	<b>Principal</b>
Edel Lennon	<b>Deputy Principal</b>
Grainne Reid	<b>Teacher Representative</b>
Catherine Hickey	<b>Parent Representative</b>
Monica McCrory	<b>Senior Health Promotion Officer – Schools HSE DNE</b>
Susanne Shevlin	<b>Senior Community Dietitian HSE DNE</b>
Liz O'Reilly	<b>Health Education Officer – Oral Health HSE DNE</b>

# Healthy Eating Policy

Collon National School

Roll No: 14578N

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at Collon National School we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes. Research has shown that health and education are inextricably linked. Healthy young people are more likely to learn effectively.

What people eat is known to be a key factor influencing health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance (e.g. a low sugar intake promotes concentration, lessens hyperactivity, protects teeth, and lessens the risk of diabetes. A low salt intake reduces the risk of heart disease in later life).

Before children come in to school parents should ensure that children have a balanced breakfast to help them learn and concentrate in school.

To promote healthy eating habits in our school, we introduced a healthy eating policy a number of years ago.

## **Aims**

1. To promote the personal development and well-being of the child
2. To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.

## **Objectives**

1. To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy
2. To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre (roughage).

We ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start.

A healthy lunchbox includes a helping of food from the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid, as per the suggestions in the below picture taken from the SAFEFOOD/HSE healthy lunchboxes leaflet. A copy of this leaflet will accompany this policy. Be aware of portion sizes. Children don't need the same amount of food as adults.



## HERE'S WHAT SHOULD GO IN A HEALTHY LUNCHBOX

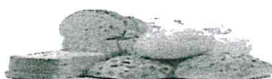
### BREAD AND CEREALS

Two portions from the bread and cereals group which would be...

- 2 slices of bread
- 1 medium bread roll
- 1 tortilla wrap
- 1 pitta bread
- 4-6 crackers or breadsticks
- 4 tablespoons or 6 dessertspoons cooked rice, pasta or couscous
- 1 small bagel

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Including wholegrain varieties of breads and cereals in our diet can help us feel fuller for longer and prevent constipation.



### MEAT AND MEAT ALTERNATIVES

One portion from the meat and meat alternatives food group...

- 2 slices (50-75g or 2-3oz) of cooked meat
- 1-2 eggs (hard-boiled, sliced or mashed)
- A small can (100g or 4oz) of tuna, salmon, mackerel or sardines
- 4 tablespoons of chickpea spread, for example, hummus – try out as a dip with carrots or celery

Note: Fish such as tinned tuna or salmon should be included in the lunchbox at least once a week – remove any bones

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Lean cuts of meat such as chicken breast are lower in salt than processed meats such as ham and bacon. Too much salt can raise blood pressure in adults and children so choose lean meat more often than processed meat.



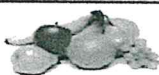
### FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

At least one portion from the fruit and vegetables food group...

- 1 medium apple, orange, banana, pear or similar size fruit
- 2 small fruits – plums, kiwis or similar size fruit
- A small glass (100ml) of unsweetened fruit juice
- Half a tin (3 tablespoons or 4 dessertspoons) of fruit in its own juice
- 1 heaped dessertspoon of dried fruit (for example, raisins or sultanas)
- 1 small bunch of grapes (10-12 grapes)
- 1 small salad (for example, dessert bowl sized salad of lettuce, tomato, cucumber and celery sticks)
- 3 tablespoons or 4 dessertspoons of vegetables (for example, chopped or grated carrots)
- A bowl of homemade vegetable soup

#### DID YOU KNOW?

To avoid soggy sandwiches put juicy vegetables between some lettuce and other sandwich filler for example, cheese. For younger children cutting fruit into manageable size chunks will encourage them to eat more fruit.



### DAIRY PRODUCTS

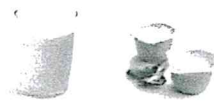
One portion from the dairy products food group...

- 1 glass or mini-carton of milk (200ml)
- A pot of natural or low fat yoghurt (125ml) or similar quantity of custard
- 2 triangles of spreadable cheese
- 2 processed cheese slices
- A matchbox-sized piece of cheese such as cheddar, edam or gouda varieties

Note: Low fat dairy products are suitable for children over two years of age. Flavoured milks are also a good source of calcium but have a higher energy and sugar content than plain milk – check labels and compare brands.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Dairy products are especially important in the diets of children and teenagers as they provide calcium to support growing bones and teeth.



## A word about Drinks

- Although the *Safe-Food Healthy Lunchbox Leaflet* suggests unsweetened juice as a drink for mealtimes; **water** and **milk** are the best drinks. Pure unsweetened juices or well diluted sugar free squashes (1 part squash / 8 parts water) may be included but only as part of children's main lunch meal.
- It is important that children take in enough fluids during the day. If they do not drink enough, children may become dehydrated, thirsty, tired and weak.
- Drinks should always be included for break time and lunch.
- Growing children should get approximately one pint of milk a day, or its equivalent as cheese, yoghurt or milk pudding. This ensures that they get enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth. If a child does not drink a glass of milk at lunch, encourage them to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead.

Pure unsweetened juices or well diluted sugar free squashes (1 part squash / 8 parts water) may be included but only as part of children's main lunch meal.

## We ask that children do not bring the following to school:

Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including the following:

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)
- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc)
- Sweets
- Chocolate biscuits/bars/dips/spreads
- **Cereal bars**
- Chewing gum

- Fruit winders
- Popcorn.
- Nuts / Nutella

So as to take a proactive approach to healthy lunches, teachers will from time to time, praise children who can show a piece of fruit or other healthy foods in their lunchboxes.

### **Treat Day**

From October 2016 **Friday will no longer be a treat day.** Treats can be given at home.

Pupils will no longer receive sweets or lollypops as prizes in Collon National School.

### **Sweet Treats**

Sweet treats for birthdays such as buns, cakes or sweets should **not** be brought into school.

### **Green Flag School**

With our Green school in mind, children are also asked to:

- take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons
- put only fruit peel into the compost bins
- not bring in cans and glass – for safety reasons.
- Use Reusable bottles/ containers

### **Health Promoting Schools Initiative.**

Staff and Parents have attended Healthy Eating Policy development training. The school is currently on a waiting list to be part of the Health Promoting Schools Initiative. The school continues to promote physical activity and well being in all pupils. Nutrition and healthy eating is included as part of the school curriculum.

### **School Related Events**

Food is often a feature of school celebrations. When refreshments are provided at school –related events, the school and Parents Association will try to ensure that healthy choices are on offer.

**N.B. Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school.**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson

It will be reviewed on \_\_\_\_\_.



These 'Healthy Eating' Guidelines reflect the needs of the **Collon N.S.** *whole* School Community - staff, parents and children.



*Produced by*

The Community Dietitian Team  
Health Promotion Department  
Health Service Executive DNE



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

