



Food Policy

for

Cedar Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit



Cedar Integrated Primary School recognises the need to encourage healthy eating habits from an early age as this will help children to reach their full potential in terms of their growth and development.

Within the curriculum pupils learn about healthy living with an emphasis on the need for regular exercise and a healthy diet.

We try to promote these good habits by:

- providing children with lots of opportunities to exercise through PE lessons, play and after school sports.
- Encouraging the children to eat healthy food at break and lunch.

The following policy was drawn up by the school community and this policy relates appropriately to guidance on nutritional standards in school, which underpins the provision of healthy school meals and implements the guidelines given by various government agencies. Therefore, a whole school policy which aims to ensure children do not take high sugar containing snacks between meals will be implemented. The dental and general health of all pupils will be promoted and it is believed that habits will be formed that will be continued in future years.

In Northern Ireland, the condition of our children's teeth is much worse than in other parts of the UK and Ireland. One of the main causes is our frequent eating of sugary foods and drinks.

Each time we eat or drink sugar, it is converted into acid. Teeth can generally withstand 3-4 'acid attacks' per day before tooth enamel sustains any real long-term damage.

By limiting break time to sugar-free snacks and drinks, we can reduce the number of acid attacks on our children's teeth (this does not mean banning snacks and puddings with sugar in them at lunchtime). Sweets, chocolate and crisps are not permitted.

Sticking to healthy snacks and drinks can also help towards avoiding other health problems such as obesity, cancer and heart disease.

Purpose of this policy:

- To encourage children to have a healthy diet.
- To inform parents/carers about healthy eating in school.
- To have a healthy school community.

We want our pupils to:

- eat more fruit, vegetables and unrefined carbohydrates;
- eat less sugar and fat;
- learn about the effects of healthy eating and poor diet in PDMU and NI Curriculum.

Healthy Break Policy

Cedar Integrated Primary School will actively promote healthy lifestyles, part of which is providing children with age appropriate information on food values and the importance of eating healthy snacks.

Healthy Eating Guidelines

- We have a healthy break—
 - Fruit
 - Vegetables
 - Bread based snacks -no sugar based fillings please
 - Cheese/ crackers
 - Bread sticks
- Milk is available to order each term.
- We promote the drinking of water during the school day. Children are encouraged to bring a bottle of water from home each day or they can fill up in school.
- Packed lunches should be healthy, ideally containing unrefined carbohydrates e.g. bread, pasta and fruit and vegetables.

We do not allow:

- Fizzy drinks and/or energy drinks
- Chewing gum
- Nuts or foods with nut content — some children have serious allergies
- Flasks—this is to avoid hot liquids being spilled such as soup.

Please note:

- Friday Treat Day: allows parents/carers to include a small treat at break or lunch.
- Small treats are also optional on special occasions such as class parties, school discos, school celebrations and as class rewards.

Arrangements for Nursery and Foundation Stage

The school provides a healthy break for our youngest pupils for which a small contribution is made by parents. By establishing good eating habits early, our hope is that the children will then continue to make appropriate choices as they get older.

How will this policy become practice?

- Teachers will talk to children and parents at the start of the school year about the policy.
- Parents/Carers will receive reminders at the Welcome Meetings at the beginning of the academic year.
- A copy will be circulated to each family
- Healthy eating will be taught in the curriculum
- Staff will monitor the foods that pupils bring to school.

Healthy Lunches

Encouraging a healthy lunch is a positive way to help protect your child from developing problems with obesity, tooth decay and diabetes.

What's in a healthy packed lunch?

Ideally a packed lunch should contain foods from each of the main groups, such as:

- **Fill up foods** - starchy foods such as bread, pasta or rice. These are a good source of energy for growing children and for keeping hunger at bay.
- **Foods for growing kids**- e.g. meat, fish, eggs and cheese for protein.
- **Pack some vitamins**- through fruit and vegetables.
- **Calcium to boost bones**- through milk, cheese, yoghurt, custard.
- **Hydration** - milk or water are ideal to help ensure that your child does not become dehydrated.

Keep it cool

For safe, cool lunches, use a cool bag and pop in an ice pack or better still, add a water bottle that's been 1/3 filled with water, left in the freezer overnight and topped up with water in the morning.

Cedar is a Nut Free zone

Although nuts and nut products are suitable for most people, it is best not to take nuts or foods containing nuts to school (e.g. peanut butter) because other children may have a nut allergy. Even if nuts are in someone else's lunchbox, this can be enough to affect some children with a nut allergy!

Ideas for packed lunches

Make lunch attractive, colourful and varied from day to day to encourage your child to enjoy it.

- **Sandwiches:** - start with a tasty base: Choose bread, rolls, soda bread, wheaten bread, bagels, pitta bread, tortilla wraps, crackers or crispbreads, ideally whole grain where possible. Spread with a little butter, margarine or low fat spread.

- **Choose your filling:** Choose from lean bacon, banana, corned beef, chicken (plain, roast or flavoured), cheese, (sliced, grated, cream or spread), cold sliced meat (e.g. roast beef, ham, turkey), sardines, salmon, tuna, egg or houmous. Try a little salad cream or mayonnaise to bind fillings together.
- **Add a little interest:** Grated carrot, coleslaw, cress, cucumber, lettuce, onion, (or scallions for a milder taste), pickled onions, peppers, pickle, pineapple, sweetcorn, tomato, scallions, beetroot, apple, tinned peach or pear (sliced). A little lemon juice helps stop cut fruit from turning brown. Add tasty raw vegetables e.g. carrot sticks, celery sticks, cherry tomatoes, cucumber chunks, raw cauliflower florets or raw pepper slices as a crunchy snack.

Some combinations you might try:

- Bacon, lettuce and tomato
- Mashed banana and chopped dates
- Egg and cress
- Egg and onion
- Cheese and sliced apple
- Cheese and beetroot
- Grated cheese and carrot
- Cheese and tomato
- Chicken and beetroot
- Chicken and sliced peach
- Chicken and sweetcorn
- Ham and pineapple
- Roast meat and pickle
- Salmon and onion
- Tuna and cucumber
- Tuna or sardines and tomato
- Turkey and coleslaw
- Turkey and cranberry sauce

Other heated lunch ideas in a wide necked flask (Not liquids such as soup)

- Baked beans with a soft roll.
- Pasta salad mixed with tuna or chicken.
- A slice of pizza and mixed salad (homemade pizza with soda bread or soft roll as a base makes a tasty change and allows you to choose healthy toppings).
- A slice of quiche, some cherry tomatoes and cucumber sticks.
- Rice salad mixed with some ham.

A little something to finish with:

- Fruit - fresh, dried*, a carton or tinned or fruit salad
- Yoghurt or fromage frais

- Custard or rice pudding
- Plain popcorn
- Fruit bread
- Slice of plain cake or a plain bun

* Dried fruit is best taken at a meal time as it is high in sugar. To look after teeth, it should be avoided between meals.

This information was adapted from

- "Hunger busters for lunch boxes", compiled by the Community Nutrition and Dietetic Service on behalf of the Public Health Agency.
- Save Our Smiles (Healthy break times)

Please support us in delivering this policy.

We value the support of everyone involved in helping us to carry out this important school policy and suggest that parents may wish to support the initiative by providing similar healthy between-meal snacks at home

Monitoring and Review

This policy was formulated through consultation between staff and BoG in Spring 2021 and was ratified in March 2021. This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Next Review: March 2024

Ratified March 2021