



# Presentation Primary School Bandon



## SCHOOL FOOD POLICY

### Introductory Statement

Presentation Primary School is a health promoting school. Health Promoting Status (HSE) was awarded in 2014. This policy has been developed through survey and discussion with staff, children, parents and Board of Management. This policy follows HSE guidelines for healthy eating. Our previous Nutrition Policy is now being reviewed and renamed as our School Food Policy.

### Rationale:

The purpose of this school food policy is:

- To follow the food and nutrition guidelines issued by the Department of Health and Children.
- To ensure pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s) become aware of the importance of food for growth and development as part of the S.P.H.E. curriculum.
  - ❖ Strand Unit: Taking Care of My Body: Food and Nutrition (Curriculum J. Infants – 6<sup>th</sup> Class)
  - ❖ Making choices (See Teacher Guidelines pp 11-13)
- Part of the Health Promoting School initiative.
- H.S.E. information is available to parents with regards to Healthy School Lunches explaining the food pyramid and the benefits of eating a healthy diet. The food pyramid outlines an excellent common sense approach to healthy and balanced eating.
- A healthy lunch is defined as something taken from each of the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid which is in line with the Department of Health directive on Healthy Eating. Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School  
Presentation Primary School is committed to promoting the wellbeing of all of the pupils in our care, developing the spiritual, emotional and physical potential of each individual. The school strives towards developing the full potential of every pupil in communication, literacy, numeracy and relevant life skills.

There is an important connection between a healthy diet and a pupil's ability to learn effectively which results in improvements in concentration and behaviour. This in turn assists pupils in achieving their full potential.

It is important that pupils have a good breakfast as this aids concentration and helps pupils to remain alert during class.

## **Aims**

The aim of this School Food Policy is to ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in Presentation Primary School promotes the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and visitors to the school.

Presentation Primary School can also play a role in the wider community to promote family health.

Through the promotion of healthy eating Presentation Primary School aims to:

- Improve the health of pupils, staff and their families by helping to influence their eating habits through increasing their knowledge and awareness of food issues.
  - Present consistent informed messages about healthy eating within school and encourage pupils to make wise choices about food and nutrition.
  - Raise levels of pupils' concentration within class due to consumption of healthy food.
  - To encourage pupils to eat a healthy lunch.
  - To encourage pupils to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems caused by junk food, pre-prepared food, juice cartons etc., and to recycle all food and drinks products.
- 1) Guest speakers are invited to our school, through the Parent's Association, to do cookery displays for children and parents.
  - 2) Birthday treats of any sort are not to be sent into school by parents.
  - 3) Pupils are not allowed to swop lunch items.
  - 4) Food treats will not be used as rewards at school – suggested rewards are: certificates, pencils, fruits, go to the field, playground, have a quiz, homework off, sing a song of the children's choice.

Presentation Primary School will work towards these aims with the school health promoting committee, parents(s)/guardian(s), teachers and health professionals.

## **Guidelines**

### A Healthy Lunch

At present we encourage all members of the school community to bring a healthy lunch daily. A healthy lunch is defined with the Department of Health directive on Healthy Eating. Lunches should be composed of a variety of foods and include at least one item from the different food groups.

There should be something in the lunch box from:-

1. Fruit and vegetable group – Some typical choices are a whole fruit, a salad or cooked/raw vegetables.
2. Cereal group – Foods such as bread, rice, pasta, potatoes or pitta bread.
3. Dairy group – Milk, cheese or yoghurt.
4. Protein-rich food – Meat, chicken, fish, egg, beans, peas, lentils or cheese.

The following foods are suitable for lunches:

Whole fresh fruit chopped fruit wraps and rolls milk.

Homemade fruit salad rice cakes water.

Dried fruit potato salad yogurt.

Slices/Batons of raw vegetables, pasta salad, fromage frais, sandwiches, rice salad, yogurt drinks, salad vegetables in sandwiches, bean salad, smoothies, chicken/turkey/ham/beef, plain popcorn (not sugary kind) nutritious cereal bars\*, tinned fish in brine crackers, diluted drinks, cheese bread sticks, fruit juice, egg, sesame sticks, non fizzy drinks.

\*children are encouraged to bring nutritious cereal bars instead of overly sweet cereal bars to school if needed. The sweeter kind of cereal bar could be used as your child's optional Friday lunchtime treat.

Please note: we encourage water as the drink of choice. We also encourage that all drinks be kept in a reusable plastic bag inside the schoolbag in case of spillages.

One of the following foods is allowed only as a Friday treat (optional):

Small packet chocolate sweets/a danish pastry/small packet biscuits/ a bun/1 slice of cake/small packet sweets/a muffin/a croissant/a doughnut/treatsize chocolate bar/1 packet of sweetened popcorn/1 sweet cereal bar.

To date, the following foods are not allowed at any time:

Fizzy drinks, caffeinated drinks, sports drinks, chewing gum, crisps/pringles/tortilla chips etc..

Parents will be made aware of any changes to the food policy.

Re. Common Allergies: Parent(s) of a pupil with a serious allergy are to inform the school. If upon medical advice, the school will immediately review the policy and ban such allergens if needed.

Pupils are encouraged to bring healthy lunches. Pupils, who bring healthy lunches are praised and encouraged. Food from the top shelf of the food pyramid-as an optional "treat" from home – are allowed on Fridays, or at end of term parties/special occasions determined by the school.

The school takes part in the Food Dudes Programme, where children get to try out fruit and vegetables as well as gain prizes and certificates for their continued efforts to eat healthily.

We encourage all parent(s)/guardian(s) to support the policy in the interest of their own child's health, nutrition and the benefits of healthy eating.

A copy of the School Food Policy will be included as part of the enrolment pack for new pupils enrolling at Presentation Primary School and will be on view in school and on school website.

The Parents' Association of Presentation Primary School also promote this policy through lots of healthy initiatives held throughout the year.

**Success Criteria**

We will know that the School Food Policy is effective if there is a general ethos in the school around healthy eating and good food habits.

**Roles and Responsibility – by all parties involved**

The School Food Policy will be supported and developed. The school will co-ordinate the progress of the policy, encourage and accept feedback from parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils on its implementation.

**Timeframe for Implementation**

The School Food Policy has been fully implemented since January 2016.

**Timeframe for Review**

The School Food Policy will initially be reviewed annually or as the need arises.

**Responsibility for Review**

The Board of Management will be responsible for the review.