Stokane National School
Enniscrone Co. Sligo F26C970

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Stokane NS Healthy Eating Policy

Aims of the Policy

- To work in partnership with families and professionals to support children to develop healthy eating practices & active living which will become embedded for life
- To work in partnership with parents and professionals working with children, to deliver an effective and consistent approach to healthy eating practices, and to ensure that individual cultural and dietary needs are met.
- To raise awareness with children, parents/carers, and other professionals, of the need to develop a positive approach to food, nutrition and oral health education.
- To encourage responsibility and accountability in parents/carers and professionals in offering healthy choices to children.
- To promote healthy eating and oral health as necessary and enjoyable aspects of the lives of children.
- To highlight the balance between food intake and physical activity in our daily living.
- To encourage parents to provide children with a full breakfast as research indicates that children benefit both nutritionally & behaviourally by eating a

healthy breakfast. It allows the child to take full advantage of the education provided by improving concentration levels and attention spans.

The Role of the School

- To strongly encourage and advise parents to, facilitate healthy choices; to provide children with sugar free lunchboxes; to minimise "sweet treats" after school hours
- To encourage parents to walk their children to school, when & where it's safe to do so
- Through the Social Personal & Health Education Curriculum and the Social Environmental & Scientific Education Curriculum to develop an awareness and understanding of healthy eating
- To position healthy eating in the broader context of healthy living, i.e. oral health, cooking, daily exercise etc.
- To provide children with a PE programme which is varied
- To encourage active and safe play in the playground at break times
- To encourage children to make healthy choices and to take responsibility for the choices they make.
- To promote the "5 A Day" message, by encouraging fruit / vegetables as important elements of the child's lunch box.
- To promote the consumption of water as much as possible and to provide children with opportunities to drink water on a regular basis at school.
- To promote a "sugar free" reward system in school, except on special occasions.
- To invite health care professionals, such as the dentist/dental nurse, the doctor/nurse to the school to speak to the children.

Allergies

If a child has a serious food allergy, the parents/guardians must notify the school and provide a doctor's report stating the implications of the allergy and listing the foods to be avoided. Parents/guardians will be asked to participate with staff in formulating an individual Allergy Management Plan. This plan will identify how best to minimise the risk of an allergic reaction for the child and it will outline the protocol to be implemented if an allergic reaction occurs.

Healthy Lunchboxes

In line with the Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Primary Schools, a Healthy Lunch for a child of Primary school age consists of the following:

- 2 or more pieces of bread or cereals
- 1 or more pieces of Fruit or Veg
- 1 serving of milk, cheese, yogurt
- Milk
- 1 serving of meat, fish or chicken (or vegetarian alternative)

Stokane National School's policy endorses these guidelines and recommends that parents adhere to them in preparation of school lunches.

- Drinks accompanying school lunches should be nutritious and must not be of the 'Fizzy' variety.
- Healthy snacks we can recommend to include in lunchboxes are as follows:
    - Fruit - Seedless grapes (please cut in quarters, lengthways in Junior Room), Mandarins, Bananas, Apples
    - Vegetables sticks
    - Scones

    - Raisins
    - Popcorn for children over 5
    - Crackers, wholegrain bread & pitta bread
    - Plain Rice Cakes

- The following foods do not support our healthy lunch policy and should be excluded from your child's lunch box:
    - Fizzy drinks, sports drinks and drinks or juices with high sugar content
    - Chewing gum
    - Sweets & winders
    - Crisps, sweetened popcorn + tortilla crisps
    - Biscuits, cakes, muffins
    - Cereal Bars
    - Chocolate
    - Chocolate coated Rice Cakes
    - Crunch Corner yoghurts or similar yoghurts with separate chocolate, sweets, or sugary toppings

Friday treats are permitted as part of our balanced approach to healthy eating; however, we kindly ask that these are small, treat-size items only. This helps to promote moderation and supports the development of healthy eating habits while still allowing children to enjoy an occasional treat.

In the interest of keeping the school environment clean & free from waste, it is recommended that as little packaging as possible is used in the preparation of school lunches.

Our school also offers the hot meals programme. More information in relation to Hot School Lunches will be shared before the school year begins.
Teachers and other staff members will model healthy eating patterns and provide support and encouragement to pupils and parents in cultivating healthy eating habits.

Implementation

If a pupil brings prohibited food or drink to school, they will be asked by the teacher to bring it home at the end of the school day, as such foods are not allowed. If the pupil does not have anything else to eat, the teacher will deal with the matter at his/her discretion. If a pupil persists in bringing unhealthy food to school, the teacher will organise a phone call/meeting with the child's parent/guardian to remind them of Stokane National School"s Healthy Eating Policy. School staff will consistently implement the Healthy Eating Policy to ensure that it is adhered to.

Policy Developed: 20th May, 2026 by Principal

Policy discussed, amended and agreed upon by staff: 28th May, 2026

Ratified by BOM on: 8th June, 2026

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Principal / Secretary of the Board of Management