

# Trinity Nursery School

## HEALTHY EATING POLICY



***Adopted by Board of Governors on: 10.06.21***

***To be reviewed on: 10.06.24***

***Signed by the Principal:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Signed by Chair of Governors:*** \_\_\_\_\_

Version	Date	Revision Author	Summary of Changes
1	10.05.21	S. Alexander	Renamed and formally known as Healthy Eating and Enrichment Policy (to be used in conjunction with the Enrichment Policy).



## Introduction

This document describes the schools Healthy Eating Policy and it is endorsed by the Board of Governors, used by all staff, both teaching and non-teaching and is available on our website.

## Rationale

Trinity Nursery School regards Healthy Eating as an important aspect of life in the nursery. We, as a staff, take seriously our responsibilities to encourage healthy eating habits from an early age as this will help children to reach their full potential in terms of growth and development. The Nursery, in our provision of healthy snacks and lunches, follows the Revised Nutritional Standards for Schools as laid down by Department of Education (D.E.) Sept 2020. There are a number of important reasons for bringing in the new standards and applying them throughout the school day:

- Many children's diets are unbalanced; they contain too much fat, salt and sugar, too little starchy carbohydrate (e.g. bread & pasta) and too few fruit and vegetables. An unbalanced diet is not only unhealthy, but it can lead to obesity.
- Research in N.I. shows that one in five boys and one in four girls is either overweight or obese. Children who are overweight or obese face greater risks of developing serious illnesses later in life, such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer.
- School-based approaches to supporting child health and well-being can be effective, but only as part of a whole-school approach. A whole-school approach to food and nutrition involves addressing the full range of issues that impact on childhood nutrition and on the food choices that children make in school including school meals, other food provided in schools and education on nutrition and healthy eating.
- Children who eat well behave better and perform better in class.

In addition to promoting healthy eating through snacks and drinks, lunch and special occasions the Nursery emphasises the many aspects of learning, (in particular, Personal, Social and Emotional Development) which evolve through eating together at snack and lunch times.

The Nursery has taken the advice of Nutritional Associates, appointed by ETI, as part of DE's contribution to the cross-departmental Investing for Health & Fit Futures initiative.

## General Aims

- To encourage every child to eat a varied and balanced diet including fruit & vegetables in line with the Nutritional standards devised by D.E.
- To encourage every child to drink either milk or still water. Fizzy drinks are not provided in the nursery, and we encourage the children to understand the damage which sugary foods and fizzy drinks can have on their teeth.
- To teach every child about healthy eating for general health, physical activity and strong teeth.
- To teach every child about the importance of good table manners and to develop a range of social and other skills through sitting together for snack and lunch.

## Guiding Principles

### Dinner Time

All children attend nursery on a full-time basis and do so on the understanding that dinner is provided as an integral part of the nursery day. This is a special time in the nursery day when small groups of children sit together with an adult and share a meal. There is much opportunity for learning during this time and our experience shows that children enjoy their meal, trying and liking foods which they might otherwise not taste. Gentle encouragement is given, and good table manners are reinforced.



Well balanced and nutritious meals are provided for the children with menus written by nutritionists and dieticians. A variety of foods are selected from each of the four main food groups every day:

- \* Bread, cereals, rice, pasta and potatoes
- \* Fruit and vegetables
- \* Milk & dairy foods
- \* Meat & fish

- Fresh fruit is always available and is given as a dessert at least twice a week.
- Any other puddings provided are based on fruit or milk.
- When sausages, burgers or chicken nuggets are provided healthier cooking methods are used.
- Rice, pasta and potatoes are encouraged with chips served only once during the week.
- Cultural dietary habits are respected. Parents are requested to provide details of foods eaten (and not eaten) by their child. Special dietary needs (e.g. of children with allergies) are respected. It is requested that parents provide a copy of the diet sheet provided by a State Registered Dietician and/or letter from Consultant Paediatrician.
- Meal- times provide an opportunity to encourage good social habits and table manners.
- School meals are transported to us from Kilcooley Central Kitchen, so we can only request variations to the menus and not influence them to any great degree.

### Snacks and Drinks

A buffet type snack is offered daily for all children in the nursery. Children self-register and enjoy a range of healthy options. Some examples are as follows:

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|------------------|----------------------------|
| * Fruit (daily)  | * Bread sticks             |
| * Small pancakes | * Cheese sticks            |
| * Toast          | * Carrot and pepper sticks |
| * Wheaten bread  |                            |

- Children are given a choice of water or milk. Fizzy drinks and juices are not routinely offered.
- Water bottles should be accessible for the children both in the classroom and outdoors in warmer weather.
- Where possible snacks are sugar free, to avoid causing damage to teeth.
- Children are encouraged to serve themselves at snack time, such as, pour their own drink, butter their toast, clear away their cup and plate, thereby developing and reinforcing a range of self-help and independence skills.
- Children brush their teeth after dinner time and the nursery takes part in the Time to Brush Programme organised by our local Health Trust.

### Special Occasions

- We celebrate each child's birthday with a cake provided by the nursery (made in a nut-free environment). Celebration of other special occasions, e.g. Easter or Christmas, focus on the sense of occasion rather than the provision of rich, sugary food and drinks.
- The nursery provides all foods/drinks for special occasions and gratefully decline offers made by parents to provide food, sweets, etc. This is because we, in the nursery, constantly monitor children's food intake and additives as well as ensuring that those children with food allergies are not put at any risk.

***The nursery receives and requests advice on all matters pertaining to Healthy Eating from D.E. sources (in particular, Nutritional Standards), from EA Catering Service and from our EA Cook at Kilcooley Meals Central Kitchen.***

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