Contents

Healthy Eating Policy 2
1.0 Introductory Statement 2
3.0 Aims and objectives 2
4.0 Eating Time 3
5.0 Reward/ Celebration Systems 4
6.0 Food Talk 4
7.0 Green School Policy 4
8.0 Dietary Problems 4
9.0 Current Practices Which Promote a Healthy School 4
10.0 Roles and Responsibilities 4
10.1 Role of Families 4
10.2 Role of Children 4
10.3 Role of School Staff 4
11.0 Implementation and Review 5
12.0 Communication and Ratification 5

Scoil an Chlochair
Convent Primary School

Healthy Eating Policy

1.0 Introductory Statement
Food and drink are an essential part of our daily lives. They play a fundamental role in the development of the human being. Making the right choices to support our nutrition requirements satisfies our physiological needs and also contributes to our mental and emotional development. What we eat and drink is directly related to our state of health.

Childhood is a time for developing the skills to make informed choices and decisions throughout life. What we eat and drink is one such choice. Children need to be aware of the importance of good nutrition for health in order to optimise their growth, health and developmental potential through their early years and beyond.

This policy has been drafted to reflect the ethos of the school. It is also incorporates aspects of our Social Personal and Health Education, Physical Education, Green School and Health Promotion policies. This policy was reviewed by staff in May 2025.

Convent Primary is committed to facilitating the children's development of skills and attitudes to allow them to make informed decisions about their food intake. There will be a whole school approach, involving teachers, parents and children to ensure that healthy eating messages are a part of every aspect of school life. The children will continue to receive consistent messages regarding healthy eating both at home and at school.

2.0 Rationale for Developing A Healthy Eating Policy
For young people to achieve their full potential, it is essential that they eat healthily. In addition, healthy eating provides the building blocks for lifelong health and well being. Childhood is a time of physical growth and development. It requires adequate intake of energy and nutrients. Eating a nourishing breakfast and a healthy school lunch allows children to take full advantage of the education provided for them. Our rationale reflects our current good practice in relation to supporting parents and children in making healthy eating choices.

3.0 Aims and objectives
The school aims to:

- Provide opportunities for each child to access knowledge, understanding and skills related to healthy eating so that they may make informed choices
- Raise awareness of the concepts of "healthy eating" and balanced diet and their importance in maintaining good health
- Develop a positive attitude towards eating habits
- Provide opportunities within school to pursue a healthy diet
- Help children to understand that some foods should be eaten in moderation
- To work co-operatively with parents for the effective implementation of this policy

4.0 Eating Time

Lunch is an imprtant 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). It is school policy that each child has a healthy lunch in our school.

At **snack time**, children bring one snack to the yard with them. Food at this break should be easy to eat. Ideally a small sandwich or piece of fruit. Fruit should be of a manageable size, peeled/chopped if necessary.

At **lunch-time**, children eat their lunch in the classroom before/after going to the yard to play. At **lunch-time**, children eat their lunch in the classroom before/after going to the yard to play. The School Meals Programme was introduced to Convent Primary School in October 2024. Under this scheme, families have the option of ordering a hot meal for their child/ren to eat at big lunch in school. Following the mandatory tendering process, Lucey's was selected as the provider of this service. Meals are delivered hot and fresh out of the oven in compostable packaging. Meals are prepared by Lucey's in line with the Department of Education guidelines. A range of meals, adhering to various dietary and religious requirements are available to order. Pupils are required to bring their own cutlery and a suitable container to bring home their lunch.

Suggestions for your child's school lunch, if not availing of the Hot Meals Scheme:

- Breads – whole-grain breads, rolls, bagels, wraps, soda bread or pitta
- Bread substitutes – oatcakes, plain rice cakes, pancakes or crackers
- Fillings – cheese, tuna, hummus, cold meats, pate, egg, lettuce, spinach, cucumber, tomato, onion, peppers, coleslaw, salad, or banana
- Hot leftovers in a flask – curry, pasta (with or without sauce), soup/chowder, baked beans, rice, stew, lasagne or noodles
- Cold leftovers
- Fruit – apple, oranges, banana, grapes, pear, plum, peach, apricots, melon, grapefruit, pineapple, strawberries, raspberries, mango, blackberries or blueberries. Remember to peel and/or cut fruit and vegetables into bite-sized pieces for younger children.
- Raw vegetables – tomatoes, sweet corn, peppers, carrot sticks, celery sticks, broccoli, cabbage or cucumber

Food items **not** permitted in school:

- Fizzy drinks, fruit flavouring water, sports drinks and drinks/juices with high sugar content
- Chewing gum
- Chocolate (including chocolate spread)
- Sweets & winders
- Crisps including crisp style snacks
- Biscuits/cakes/muffins/tray bakes
- Cereal Bars

The policy acknowledges that exceptions to the above food items not permitted maybe necessary for children enrolled in our special classes. Such items may be allowed occasionally (e.g. school tours, trip to the cinema, end of term celebrations) at the discretion of the class teacher.

Children are not permitted to put food in the bin. This is to encourage the children to eat the lunch which is provided and to notify parents the lunch that was eaten. If a child persists in bringing an unhealthy lunch to school, the class teacher will contact their parents/guardians.

5.0 Reward/ Celebration Systems

School is an ideal place to teach children that not all celebrations need to revolve around sugary treats. Food is not used as a reward in our classrooms. We encourage alternative rewards. These include social rewards which involve praise or thanks or simple gestures and other forms of recognition. Stickers and stars are used by teachers are also used as rewards in the classroom.

6.0 Food Talk

Children are educated in school about making healthy choices. Discussions include, following the journey of food from farm to fork and growing and eating. This is taught during SESE and SPHE classes. It is also emphasised during Healthy/Active Week. Through our Green Schools Programme children learn how to grow their own fruit and vegetables.

7.0 Green School Policy

There is a policy of litter free lunches in our school. Pupils are not permitted to put food waste in the bin. The use of tinfoil is discouraged.

8.0 Dietary Problems

Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school office or principal. This includes allergies to certain foods.

9.0 Current Practices Which Promote a Healthy School

- Good Hand Hygiene
- Friendship Week to encourage mental health and wellbeing
- Active Week
- Outside experts invited to visit our school such as dental hygienist, Anti-bullying and mental health speaker and Community Garda
- Daily Mile
- Food Dudes programme

10.0 Roles and Responsibilities

10.1 Role of Families

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for child/children
- Encourage healthy eating
- Inform the school of any child's special dietary needs
- To implement school policy

10.2 Role of Children

- To eat their lunch
- To bring home any uneaten lunch
- To help make their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Lunch Policy

10.3 Role of School Staff

- To promote and encourage healthy eating.
- To educate children by teaching the appropriate content from the curriculum.

11.0 Implementation and Review

11.1 Implementation

Implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Principal and Staff of the school. This plan will be implemented in May 2025.

11.2 Review

The plan will be monitored and evaluated at ISM/Staff meetings and with the Pupil Health and Wellbeing Committee. This policy will be reviewed again in May 2028.

12.0 Communication and Ratification

12.1 Communication

This policy is made available as part of the whole school plan. The whole plan is also available in the school office for viewing. This policy will be communicated to the school community by the following means:

- Board of Management/Other Staff members via hardcopy in office, email, school website and SharePoint
- Pupils and Families via hardcopy on request from the Office and on the school website.

12.2 Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in 27th May 2025

Signed _____ Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Principal/Secretary, Board of Management