**Healthy Eating Policy**

**Mission statement**

1. Kiltealy NS, through these guidelines, aims to help all those involved in our school community, children, staff and parents, to develop positive attitudes to eating and healthy living. We wish to promote ‘the personal development and wellbeing of the child and to provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects’. (SPHE Guidelines)
2. To help achieve this, our guidelines will reflect good eating habits. These should be established at an early age. As children have a right to learn about different foods so that they may make informed choices throughout their life.
3. The purpose of making healthy food choices enables children to attain their optimum growth, development and health potential.
4. Recent research (Department of Health and Children) has highlighted disturbing trends, including an increase in childhood obesity and diabetes so therefore our policy and guidelines are both timely and critical for the health and development of children.
5. Through a whole school approach and within the context of SPHE the children, parents and staff will learn about nutrition, healthy eating and healthy living.
6. Our healthy eating guidelines hope to enable the children to develop and understand of healthy living, and an ability to implement healthy behavior and willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health. This includes physical activity.
7. We feel that, in developing the policy, parents, children, teachers, school staff and the BOM should be involved in a collaborative way. We also hope to review these guidelines every two years.
8. All classes will receive healthy eating lessons each year.
9. School staff will provide supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.

**Guidelines.**

**Recommended: A healthy lunch box may include:**

1. Some food from the bread, cereals group.
2. Some food from the meat and the meat alternatives group.
3. Some food from fruits and vegetables.
4. Some food from the dairy products/alternatives group.
5. The following foods**do not support**a healthy lunch policy and should be **excluded**from your child’s lunch box; crisps, chewing gum, sweets, jellies, bars including chocolate cereal bars, lollipops, chocolate, chocolate spread, winders, crispy buns and especially peanuts. Exceptions to this list can be made through prior approval from Principal e.g. school party days/Friday treat or long term dietary requirements of a pupil. Parents are asked to get in touch with the school principal to discusss dietary requirements
6. **Due to the incidence of severe allergy to peanuts and mixed nuts amongst some pupils, we ask you to be highly vigilant in the following**:

* Avoid peanuts or any other type of nut in school lunches.
* Avoid giving peanut butter sandwiches, chocolate spreads containing nuts such as Nutella, nut based breads and cereal/health bars containing nuts or labelled “may contain nut traces” in school lunches.
* Ask children not to share their lunches.
* If your child has eaten peanuts/nuts before coming to school, please be sure your child’s hands and face have been thoroughly washed before entering the school.

**Healthy snack options (Lower in sugar and fat)**

Sometimes it can be difficult to think of alternatives to these. Here are some tasty alternatives.

* Fruit (for example, an apple or banana, handful of grapes)
* Washed, raw vegetable pieces (for example, sticks of carrot, celery, pepper and cucumber.
* Washed, raw vegetables (for example, cherry tomatoes)
* Half a tin of fruit (in its own juice)
* Plain breadsticks, unsalted plain or wholewheat crackers, crispbreads or water biscuits served with fruit or cheese.
* Plain rice cakes
* Natural or low fat yogurt with fresh fruit (fresh, frozen or tinned in its own juice)
* Wholemeal or plain scones.
* Homemade muffins/buns/scones.
* Popcorn
* Sugar-free jelly pots or fruit jelly.
* Pot of custard or rice pudding.
* Pasta or rice
* Cheese
* Hummus
* Olives
* **Healthy choices of drink** include water, milk and unsweetened natural juice. Children should be encouraged to use re-useable containers for safety and litter reasons. Cans and glass bottles are not permitted.

\*\*\*A **small** treat is permitted on a Friday, no share bag sized treats permitted.

Examples of acceptable small treats include:

* Buns/cookies/muffins/scones
* A small treat size bar
* A small treat size bag of jellies
* Crisps/Popcorn

Please adhere to the examples shown above as outrageous Friday treats will result in the discontinuation of this privilege.

This policy will be reviewed in 3 years.

**Ratified on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signed by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson Kiltealy NS)**