Healthy Eating Policy.

February 2026

Policy Document

Belclare National School

S.N. an Croí Ró Noafa, Belclare.

The aim of this policy is to ensure children eat a healthy well-balanced lunch, thus promoting a healthy lifestyle. By encouraging healthy eating patterns, we educate children for later life. The school participates in the hot meal scheme.

The children have 2 opportunities to eat during the school day- during snack (sometimes referred to a small break) and Lunch (sometimes referred to as big break). The children receive their hot lunches in school at lunch time.

Healthy lunch options.

We encourage children to choose from the following foods regularly as part of a Healthy Lunch:

1. A wholegrain carbohydrate

e.g., whole meal bread, brown roll, wholegrain wrap, wholegrain pitta

2. A protein food

e.g., egg, chicken, turkey, tuna, beans, hummus, cheese, yogurt, yoghurt drink

3. Fruit and/or vegetables

e.g., apple, banana, berries, carrot sticks, cucumber, peppers, salad

This list is not exhaustive and should be viewed in the context of a healthy balanced diet.

Please see the following link for further information-
https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/63ced64a-00132016-.pdf

Water is the default drink for school and Plain milk may also be included. Fruit juice, smoothies and sugary drinks are not part of everyday lunches and should be kept for home or special occasions. Fizzy drinks or energy drinks are not permitted in school.

Children with Additional Needs

School staff are mindful that some children have sensory difficulties related to food, which may result in restricted diets that do not fully align with the school's healthy eating policy. In these circumstances, the school recognises the need for flexibility and will respond appropriately to individual needs. These needs should be discussed with the class teacher and accommodations (where required) will be put in place.

The following foods are not allowed as part of school lunches:

- Chewing gum
- Chocolate bars
- Biscuits
- Sweets, Jellies
- Crisps
- Popcorn
- Fizzy drinks
- Energy Drinks

TREAT FOODS

On days where treats are allowed, parents will be requested to send these from home. We suggest the following treat foods- bar of chocolate, crisps etc. Please do not send excessive amounts of treat food with children to school.

SN An Croí Ró Naofa is a nut free school. Please do not send nuts to school or products containing nuts.

Parents are requested not to send treats into school for birthdays, holidays etc. There are many children with allergies in the school and not all parents wish their children to eat certain treat foods. It is important this is respected by all to avoid upset.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE OF PARENTS

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children
- Encourage healthy eating at home
- Inform the school of any child's special dietary needs and/or allergies
- To implement school policy by not allowing their children to bring chewing gum, crisps, chocolate bars, sweets etc. to school.
- To not sent treats to school for classmates of their children
- To ensure that on "treat days" a sensible amount of treat food is sent to school for sharing.
- If children bring chewing gum, chocolate bars, crisps or sweets to school (or any other foods that are not permitted) they will be told to leave them uneaten by school staff in their lunch box and take them home. If children have these foods and no others in their lunch box a lunch will be provided. *Parents are requested not to send these foods to school to avoid children becoming upset.*

ROLE OF CHILDREN

- To eat their lunch
- To use the time allocated in class for eating for this purpose
- To bring home uneaten lunch
- By not bringing chewing gum, crisps, candy or chocolate bars to school.
- To be mindful of the healthy lunches policy

ROLE OF SCHOOL

- To promote and encourage healthy eating in school through the education and through the implementation of this Healthy Eating Policy
- To provide children with hot lunches as per the School Meals scheme- details are available on www.schoolmeals.ie
- To allow children adequate time to eat their lunch/snack.
- Provide a copy of the Heathy Eating Policy to all parents/guardians on enrolment and after review/ratification of the policy.

IMPLEMENTATION

Reasons for healthy eating will be discussed with the children regularly. On a "treat day" parents / children will be informed and treats will be sent from home. The school holds an annual Ice Cream day once a year and pancakes are made in the school on Shrove Tuesday.

- At the beginning of each school year teachers will display the most up to date food period and refer to it regularly as part of the wellbeing curriculum.
- Reasons for healthy eating will be discussed with the children regularly.
- A Healthy Eating week will be held once a year in conjunction with the Parents Association in May.
- The Healthy Eating policy will be shared with temporary staff including student teachers.
- Outside parties who use the school will be asked to limit treats to special occasions throughout the school year.

Ratified by the Board of Management on _____

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

_____ _____

Sarah Molloy *Agnes Martyn*

Chairperson Board of Management Principal