

Ardcoil Mhuire

Mackney, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.
H53CP40


Principal: Mr. Pauric Hanlon
Dep. Principal: Ms. Lilian Hynes



Telephone: 090 9642206 / 9643307

Email: office@ardscoilmhuire.ie

Website: www.ardscoilmhuire.com

   @ardscoilmhuire

Ardcoil Mhuire App



Healthy Eating Policy



CEIST
Catholic Education
An Irish Schools Trust



Scoileanna Cothaithe Sláinte
Health Promoting Schools

Ardscoil Mhuire Ballinasloe

Healthy Eating Policy

1.Introductory statement

1.1 This policy was formulated after a survey was carried out among the parents, staff and students of Ardscoil Mhuire. The Board of Management of Ardscoil Mhuire Ballinasloe, accepts that parents are first and foremost the primary educators of their children in relation to food choices.

1.2 The focus of this policy is to support parents, staff and students in relation to healthy eating habits. Addressing health issues requires a multi-faceted approach that involves the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes that influence behaviour on food selection and food consumption.

1.3 Our School acknowledges the fact that our food choices are largely determined by the food environment we find ourselves in –if there is only healthy food available, healthy food will be eaten.

2.Rationale

2.1 This policy has been developed to promote Health Eating in Ardscoil Mhuire.

2.2 Adolescence is a time of physical growth and mental development. It requires adequate intake of energy and nutrients necessary for daily activities.

2.3 Global research indicates a strong link between student diet and school performance. According to the Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance (IUNA,2008) Irish teenagers are consuming foods high in fat, sugar and salt. These foods include carbonated drinks and confectionary and are often very low in iron, calcium and essential vitamins. Consequently, the consumption of such “junk food” is leading to an increase in health problems such as anaemia, osteoporosis and obesity.

2.4 In addition, The Health Behaviour in School Aged Children (HBSC, 2010) report highlighted the fact that 16% of teenagers never eat a breakfast. Skipping breakfast and making poor food choices at lunch can have a serious effect on concentration levels and makes learning more difficult.

2.5 A healthy diet promotes concentration, lessens hyperactivity and reduces health risks in later life. As part of Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.), Science and Home Economics, students are encouraged to become more aware of the need for healthy food and drinks at break time and lunch time.

2.6 For young people to achieve their full potential, a healthy diet is essential. Healthy eating provides the building blocks for lifelong health and wellbeing. According to the Department of Education Circular on the Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles in Post Primary Schools “research shows that healthy lifestyle behaviours can improve academic performance, educational behaviour and students’ cognitive skills”

3. Aims

3.1 This policy aims to help all involved in our school – students, parents and staff, to develop a positive attitude towards healthy eating and an appreciation of the contribution that good food makes to our physical and mental health. The policy will:

- Promote healthy eating habits and create an awareness of the need to eat healthily.
- Promote the health of students and provide a foundation for healthy living
- Promote the personal development and wellbeing of students to provide a foundation for healthy living.
- Enable the student to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing, developing and staying healthy
- Enable the student to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy balanced diet by equipping the student with the key skills and knowledge to make healthier food choices.

4. Objectives:

- To help students, staff and parents make healthy food choices
- To improve the student's concentration and energy levels and general health.
- To develop an awareness of nutrition i.e. the ingredients found in food.

According to the Department of Education's Circular on "*The Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles in Post Primary Schools*", the healthy eating policy should outline how the school supports healthy eating practices through the promotion of healthy lunches, healthy snacks and other means.

5. Action Plan

5.1 Ardscoil Mhuire will endeavour to provide students with a supportive environment conducive to healthy eating.

5.2 A "*Get Healthy Week*" will be held each September by the Health Promoting Schools committee and the Home Economics Department to increase knowledge, promote awareness and generate interest in healthy eating.

5.3 Subjects such as Home Economics, Social Personal Health Education (SPHE), Science, and Physical Education (PE), and Transition Year and LCVP programmes will be used to promote healthy eating.

5.4 Increased awareness will be achieved through the use of the healthy eating notice board in the central area, the use of posters and displays throughout the school and through the school App.

5.5 Tutor time and Year group assemblies will be used where possible to reinforce the message of positive food choices on students' physical and mental health especially around exam time and for exam years.

5.6 Engagement with the Student Council will take place on an ongoing basis to promote healthy eating.

5.7 Students will be made aware of the location of water fountains where they can fill their water bottles.

5.8 In keeping with Department of Education guidelines on "*The Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles in Post Primary Schools*" Ardscoil Mhuire will endeavour as far as possible that the food and beverage products available for purchase on the school premises will be:

- In the category of “Better Choice” products, that is, a product must contain less than 150 calories(Kcal) per item.
- Snack food or beverage products that contain more than 250 calories (kcal) per item will not be available for purchase on school premises. These will include crisps, sweets and chocolate bars.

The following foods are **not** permitted:

- Chewing gum
- Chocolate bars
- Crisps
- Sweets
- Fizzy drinks/ energy drinks
- Biscuits, cakes and buns.

Breakfast/11am Break

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day

- Low sugar/ high fibre breakfast cereals should be served e.g. porridge, Weetabix
- Fruit
- Low sugar yoghurts
- Low sugar smoothies
- Selection of scones (wholemeal, fruit)
- Nuts
- Wholemeal toast
- Introduction of herbal tea

Healthy Lunches/Canteen

Lunch is an important meal for students. 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).

Lunches should incorporate a good variety of nutrients and contain all health promoting foods:

e.g.

- To change from white to brown (bread, rice, and pasta)
- To increase the fresh vegetable content in current dishes
- To have fruit/salad bowls available

If students bring in their own lunch it must follow the healthy eating policy guidelines. A healthy lunch should include a variety of the following:

1. Wholegrain breads or cereals
2. Fruit and vegetables
3. Milk, cheese and yoghurt
4. Meat, chicken, fish (tinned salmon, tuna) or alternatives

School Treats/School Trips

In general school treats and school trips will support the healthy eating policy, but with management discretion.

N.B.: Parents/guardians of any student with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school e.g. nuts, gluten, dairy, eggs.

6. MONITORING

6.1 This policy will be reviewed regularly. It will take into account any legislative changes, new policy and strategy documents either in the school or from the Department of Education and Skills, changes in school facilities and feedback from parents, students and staff. The review will be carried out by the Healthy Eating Committee comprising of representatives from the students, staff, and catering providers. Parental views will be acquired through the Parents' Council.

Signed:  18/9/2018

(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

REVIEW TO BE COMPLETED

Date: June 2019 