



Ashfield Girls' High School

Food in School Policy





FOOD IN SCHOOL POLICY

Ashfield Girls' High School

Rationale

A Food in School Policy is an overarching policy advocating a whole school approach to all food provided and consumed in school and should help develop knowledge and skills in relation to healthy eating and lifestyles.

A healthy balanced diet is vital for the students' growth, development and for their long-term health and well being. This policy should encourage, promote and support students in Ashfield to make healthier choices throughout and after their school life.

The policy will be an evolving document benefiting everyone in the Ashfield school community.

Change is needed because:

- Most school children have a diet that is too high in fat, sugar and salt.
- Only 11% of pupils achieve the target of at least 5 portions of fresh fruit or vegetables a day.
- A high percentage of dental decay is attributed to the frequency and amount of sugars consumed in both foods and drinks.
- Cardiovascular disease and cancer are Northern Ireland's biggest killers.
- Levels of obesity are rising in children and young people which significantly increases the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer and type 2 diabetes. Nearly a quarter of all primary school children are overweight or obese.

Our school environment, the attitudes of staff and pupils, as well as what children learn in the classroom, will all have a major influence on their knowledge and understanding of health. If we encourage our students to enjoy healthy food and drinks, it is likely we will reinforce positive behaviours that will remain with them throughout life.

Policy Development

The policy is based on addressing issues established by a range of methods including pupil surveys, those raised at student council meetings and parent surveys. These results will be used to inform decision making and planning.

The policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed on a yearly basis. It will be formulated and implemented by:

Healthy Eating Coordinator

School Canteen manager and staff

School Nurse

Teaching Staff (including extracurricular club coordinators)

*Date of next review - January 2017

Policy Sections

1. Aims

2. Food provided in school

- a) *School Canteen provision* –
Mandatory nutritional standards for
Breakfast
Break time
Lunches

- b) *Breakfast Club*

3. Food brought in to school

- a) Break
- b) Packed lunch policy
- c) Water provision
- d) Nut allergy
- e) Energy drinks

4. Food in the curriculum

Home Economics

Links with other subjects

5. Role of the Healthy Eating Coordinator

Aims

The policy aims to:

- ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition in school promote the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and the school community.
- help students develop knowledge and skills to be able to make healthy food choices.

Link to School Development Plan

A healthy, balanced diet makes an important contribution to student's growth and development, to their educational performance and attainment and to their long-term health and well-being. The relationship between poor health, nutrition and low school achievement is well documented. With this in mind our School Development Plan states strategies that aim to promote Health and Well-being. The role of the Healthy Eating Coordinator is central to this and the initiatives have been planned to implement The Food in Schools Policy (Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes 2013).

Food provided in school

School Canteen provision

- All school meals in Ashfield must be compliant with **the Nutritional Standards for School Lunches** which have been compulsory since September 2007.
- School meals provision will be reviewed regularly and the issues of nutritional standards, choice, balance, access, availability and cost will be addressed.
- Some religions and ethnic groups can have different dietary requirements because of specific food rules and observances. School meals will accommodate those beliefs. (A resource is available to support this at www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/guidance-food-religious-faiths).
- Flexibility will be allowed where a student has a special dietary requirement as a result of a disability, medical condition or allergy.
- Both the school catering service and the school will take steps to ensure that children that are entitled to free school meals avail of this entitlement and that anyone who is eligible is encouraged to apply. (Recent research shows 21% of pupils do not take up their entitlement. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds tend to eat more foods that are high in fat, sugar and salt. They also eat less fresh fruit and vegetables).

The Nutritional Standards for School Lunches can be found at:

http://www.deni.gov.uk/de1_09_125640_nutritional_standards_for_school_lunches_a_guide_for_implementation_3_-2.pdf

Issues arising from consultation with canteen staff, pupils or parents concerning implementation of these standards will be addressed at the SNAG meetings with the Healthy Eating Coordinator.

Nutritional standards for other foods and drinks in school: A guide for implementation is also available at:

www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/nutritional-standards-other-food-and-drinks-schools-guide-implementation.

Breakfast Club Provision

Eating a healthy breakfast is important for a healthy balanced diet. The Breakfast Club at Ashfield is funded through the extended schools programme and aims to help prepare students for learning by improving levels of concentration, attendance and punctuality.

Relevant information can be found at :

http://www.deni.gov.uk/de1_09_125653_school_food_the_essential_guide_-_healthier_breakfast_clubs-2.pdf

Provision will be monitored and issues addressed at the SNAG meetings with the Healthy Eating Coordinator.

Drinking Water Provision

Fresh, chilled drinking water will be freely available every day. This will help contribute to improved nutrition, tackle tooth decay and assist in improving levels of concentration. Encouraging students to drink water in school should be a priority.

Guidance is detailed at:

http://www.deni.gov.uk/de1_09_125685_school_food_the_essential_guide_-_water_provision-2.pdf

Energy drinks are banned at Ashfield due to their detrimental effect on health. The dangers of energy drinks are outlined to students in assembly and posters are displayed around the school.

Healthy Breaks and Packed Lunch policy

Many pupils bring snacks and packed lunches to school. Students and parents will be provided with guidance as to how to ensure these are healthy options.

The healthy eating coordinator will encourage good habits through a variety of strategies.

- Information about healthy packed lunch ideas distributed to all parents yr 8-10 during September.
- Leaflet on Healthy packed lunches provided to all year 7/8 parents in induction pack.
- Information in school pupil planner about water, nut free school, healthy breaks, banned energy drinks and packed lunch ideas.
- Home Economics lessons promote key messages within SOW.
- Promotion of healthy eating messages throughout school year via a range of initiatives.

http://www.deni.gov.uk/school_food_the_essential_guide_-_healthier_lunch_boxes.pdf

http://www.deni.gov.uk/are_you_packing_a_healthy_lunch_-_january_2013.pdf

http://www.deni.gov.uk/healthy_breaks_for_schools_-_a_guide_for_pupils_and_parents_-_english.pdf

http://www.deni.gov.uk/healthy_breaks_for_schools_poster_-_english.pdf

Our aim is to ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school provide the pupils with healthy and nutritious food that is similar to the food served in school, which is now regulated by national standards.

- The school will provide facilities for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.
- The school will work with the pupils to provide appropriate dining area arrangements.
- The school will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.
- As fridge space is not available in school, pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with ice packs.

Packed lunches should include:

- at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day.
- meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. sliced cooked meat, hardboiled egg, hummus spread) every day
- oily fish, such as salmon, tuna or mackerel at least once a week.
- a starchy food such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereal every day.
- dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt or fromage frais everyday.
- only water, still or sparkling, fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies.

Packed lunches should not include:

- high fat snacks such as crisps. Instead, crackers or breadsticks.
- confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits and sweets. Cake and biscuits should be eaten in moderation.
- meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages / chipolatas should be included only occasionally.
- high sugar fizzy drinks in cans or glass bottles. All energy drinks are banned and should not be brought into school. Drinks should not be in glass bottles to prevent accidents.
- any products that contain nuts. We are a nut free school and packed lunches should not contain nuts or products that contain nuts.

Special diets

The school recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For these reasons pupils are also not permitted to swap food items at break or lunch time.

After Schools Clubs

Any clubs providing food to pupils will as far as possible follow the healthy eating agenda that is being promoted by Ashfield.

The Cook-e-club at Ashfield will also promote healthy eating messages and develop skills to allow pupils to plan and cook healthy dishes.

Food in the curriculum

There must be a consistent message between learning in the classroom and eating in school. The curriculum will allow the students adequate opportunities to obtain knowledge and understanding of nutrition and healthy eating and to develop skills in preparing and cooking food.

- Health messages are an integral part of the personal development programme for years 8-12.
- The Home Economics curriculum is compulsory at Key stage 3 as a strand of the Learning for Life and work area. The statutory minimum content for Home Economics includes the requirement to provide students with opportunities to explore ways to develop a healthy diet and to develop practical skills in the safe, hygienic, healthy and creative use of foods to plan, prepare, cook and serve a range of meals.

Information on the statutory requirements for Home Economics are provided in **Guidance for Home Economics at Key Stage 3 (CCEA 2007)** at www.nicurriculum.org.uk

The key concept of healthy eating is delivered throughout the Home Economics scheme of work for years 8-12 and includes, as its foundation, The Eatwell Guide and Eight Tips for Eating Well.

Other curriculum areas that are involved in delivering healthy eating messages include Science and PE.

The Healthy Eating coordinator will monitor and review the consistency of the delivery by collaboration with relevant heads of department. As new research is revealed and healthy eating messages are promoted in the media the Healthy Eating coordinator will update the scheme of work and healthy eating noticeboard in school.

The Role of the Healthy Eating Coordinator

- To design, implement and evaluate a whole school food policy that will improve the health and wellbeing of the school through a targeted, coordinated approach.
- To raise awareness of healthy eating messages throughout the school community by creating an action plan of initiatives. Yearly Action Plan is submitted to BOG.
- To coordinate a SNAG – School Nutrition Action Group.









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