

St Bernadette's Junior School
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Principal: **Dónal Ward**
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Policy Summary Details:

Policy Title:	Healthy Eating Policy (incl. hot meal)
Version Number:	1
Written/Adopted Date:	December 2021
Written by:	Board of Management
Date Shared with Staff:	December 2021
Date Ratified by BOM:	10 th of December 2021
Review Date:	December 2026
Policy Implementation Date:	On date of introduction of Hot Meals (tbc.)

Introduction

The staff in St. Bernadette's Junior School are committed to enhancing to the best of their abilities, the overall well-being of the pupil in our school. In this document we set out our healthy eating policy which serves to assist us in reaching such goals. It outlines how the school supports healthy eating practices through the promotion of healthy lunches and healthy snacks.

1. Vision and mission statement

In St. Bernadette's JNS children are central to all we do. We provide a happy, safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment. Our aim is to help the children in our care achieve their potential both as learners and as unique individuals. We take a holistic approach to education. We cater for the physical, academic, social, emotional and spiritual needs of the children. This approach includes a strong focus on literacy, numeracy, the arts, and physical and mental well-being.

St. Bernadette's JNS is an inclusive school. We welcome children of all abilities, faiths and belief systems. We respect and celebrate difference. We recognise parents as the primary educators of their children. We work in partnership with parents towards creating a school community which nurtures children based on a vision of inclusion and achieving potential.

We see St Bernadette's JNS as a place where pupils can flourish and thrive. Key to realising such goals is acting to enhance the physical well-being of the children. We therefore see a healthy diet as playing a key role in providing nutrition and fuel to allow children gain optimum opportunity for growth and development every day.

2. Aims of the policy

Through the implementation of this policy we seek as far as possible to:

- Promote a whole school approach to healthy eating and nutrition
- Understand the benefit of a healthy well-balanced diet
- Develop an awareness that good eating habits formed in early childhood influence health and wellbeing throughout our lives
- Develop awareness of the importance of food for growth and development

3. Breakfast

A nourishing breakfast is the best start to your child's day giving him/her the energy needed to concentrate and learn. Research has shown that children benefit both nutritionally and behaviourally by eating a healthy breakfast.

4. Lunch

Parents can choose to avail of one of two options for school lunches. Which are detailed below.

5 Option 1: The “School meals” option

5.1 Hot meals

The children in St. Bernadette’s Junior National School can avail of the free hot meals programme. We encourage all families to avail of this. Glanmore is the provider of these meals and offer diverse, healthy menus with excellent choice for all pupils. Parents can pick a different hot meal from a menu, along with snacks for their child every day. All meals are designed to fall within recommended nutritional guidelines.

5.2 Examples of hot meals in the school meals option are:

- Meatballs
- Curry
- Lasagne
- Fishfingers, beans and mash
- Roast beef and mash
- Vegetarian options

5.3 Examples of snacks in the school meals option are:

- Jacobs Cream Crackers
- Soft cheese
- Fruit cups
- Apple slices
- Pineapple chunks
- Brown pancake
- Breadsticks
- Peppers
- Carrot sticks
- Yoghurt
- Plain rice cakes (not sugar/chocolate coated)
- Yoghurt rice cake

5.4 Drinks

All children in the school are offered free milk every day. Children who select the school lunch receive a 250ml water.

6. Option 2 “Bring your own lunch” option

Parents who do not wish to avail of the school lunch may send in a healthy lunch along with healthy snacks for their child each day. **Prior to sending in a lunch with their child we ask that parents cancel the school lunch at reception.** This is to prevent waste and to prevent the children from over eating. We also ask that parents who select this option provide a lunch for their child every day.

Below we provide suggestions of what is considered healthy by the school:

6.1 Suggestions for your child’s school lunch:

- 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

6.2 Suggestions for healthy snacks

- 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 Fruit
- Crackers and soft cheese
- Pancakes
- Rice cakes (Plain or yoghurt not chocolate)
- Yoghurt

6.3 Drinks

All children in the school are offered free milk every day. Children who bring their own lunch should bring water to school.

7. Food items not permitted in the school

The following food items are considered unhealthy. Additionally, allowing such foods is seen as unfair to the children who have healthy lunches. If any of the following items manage to find their way into school, they shall be sent home again that evening.

- Unhealthy deli foods – popcorn chicken, sausages, wedges etc.
- Fizzy drinks, sports drinks, fruit drinks, juices, flavoured water
- Chewing gum
- Chocolate (including chocolate spread)
- Sweets & winders
- Crisps & popcorn
- Biscuits/cakes/muffins/tray bakes (including homemade)
- Cereal Bars as they can be high in sugar

Parents must choose to avail of either the school lunch or the bring your own lunch option. You cannot avail of the two at the same time, as this would incur great waste.

8. Special treats

On specific days during the school year the children will be permitted special treats:

- End of term parties
- School Trips

Children who have chosen the school meal option will receive party bags. Unfortunately, it is not possible to provide party bags to children who do not get the school meal.

9. Birthdays

While we understand that birthdays are a very exciting time in every child's life, we do not permit Birthday cakes to be sent in for the class to share. One reason for this, is there is no accounting for the ingredients in a Birthday cake and the allergies that children may have in any given room.

10. Success criteria

- Awareness by the pupils of what constitutes as healthy foods.
- The practice of healthy eating

11. Roles and Responsibility

- We encourage all families to avail of the school lunch option.
- Parents who avail of the "bring your own lunch option" are responsible for providing a healthy school lunch for their child(ren).
- Teachers will explicitly teach about healthy eating as part of the SPHE curriculum.

12 Timetable for Review

Every five years, or before then if circumstances dictate.

Ratified by the BOM

Michael Joyce

Date: 10/1/21

Dr. Michael Joyce (Chairperson)