

Newpark Comprehensive School

HEALTHY EATING POLICY



1. INTRODUCTION

The Board of Management of Newpark School accepts that parents are first and foremost the primary educators of their children in relation to food choices. This policy is designed to ensure that Newpark can support the work of parents in relation to encouraging students to eat healthily. This policy was formulated in consultation with teachers, students and parents of Newpark.

2. ETHOS

This Healthy Eating Policy is influenced and guided by the mission statement and ethos of Newpark.

By working to promote the health of students, we are contributing toward the provision of a healthy learning environment. Each student is encouraged to reach their own potential, to demonstrate a respect and sensitivity to the needs of others and hopefully develop into responsible, active participative citizens and lifelong learners after school.

3. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

This policy will serve to further promote the development of our students and is mindful of all parties. It is created in a respectful community which embraces inclusion in terms of social, cultural, religious and ethnic diversity.

4. RATIONALE

- 4.1.** For young people to achieve their full potential, it is essential that they eat healthily. Adolescence is a time of physical growth and mental development. It requires adequate intake of energy and nutrients.
- 4.2.** The Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children 2010 report (Health Promotion Research Centre, NUI Galway and the Department of Health) states that up to 16% of teenagers skip breakfast. This lessens their concentration levels and makes learning more difficult.
- 4.3.** Research has also shown that the foods eaten at lunchtime can affect behaviour in the classroom during the afternoon.
- 4.4.** Poor food choices in teenage years can develop into unhealthy food habits in adult life and may lead to diseases such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease.
- 4.5.** Young people spend a large part of their day in school where they eat at least one of their main meals. The home plays the major role in determining healthy eating habits. However the school, in partnership with parents, can make an important contribution.
- 4.6.** Newpark takes a whole school approach to developing this Healthy Eating Policy. This creates a strong sense of ownership among all in the school community, with a commitment to sustain the improvements.

5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The policy aims to help all parties in Newpark develop a positive attitude towards healthy eating. The policy will:

- Promote healthy eating habits with a view to improving concentration and learning in the school community.
- Actively encourage all members of the school community to avail of the healthy alternatives available to them.
- Help all involved to understand the link between a healthy diet and a healthy, active lifestyle.
- Encourage all in the Newpark community to experience a wide variety of foods.

6. ACTION PLAN

- 6.1.** The promotion of healthy eating in Newpark will be addressed through a range of subjects at both Junior and Senior Cycle including Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Science, Home Economics, Life Skills and Physical Education (PE).

- 6.2. Form Period and Pastoral Care will be used where possible to reinforce the message of positive food choices on students' physical and mental wellbeing.
- 6.3. Promotion of healthy eating will be achieved through the use of visual displays throughout the school.
- 6.4. Information on healthy eating practices will be available on the Newpark app, school website and in the school journal.
- 6.5. Students will be actively encouraged to take part in extra-curricular activities to ensure a balanced lifestyle is achieved. There is a wide range of activities on offer in Sport, Music and the Arts.
- 6.6. Visitors and guest speakers will be invited where possible to offer their expertise on physical and mental health.
- 6.7. Consultation with the Student Council will take place on an ongoing basis to further develop and promote healthy eating.
- 6.8. The food sold on the school premises, currently contracted to private catering company *The Lunchbox*, will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that it is in alignment with the Healthy Eating Policy. From Monday to Thursday, no processed junk food will be on sale in the school. On Fridays, treats will be available for sale.
- 6.9. Fizzy drinks (including isotonic and energy drinks) and chewing gum are not permitted on the school campus. Water fountains at which students can refill bottles with clean drinking water are available on each floor of the main school building.
- 6.10. Parents will be made aware of relevant Healthy Eating information via the Newpark website, school app and through the PTA.

7. MONITORING

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.

8. RATIFICATION

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Newpark at its meeting in June 2016 and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Signed: _____ Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____ Secretary, Board of Management