

# St Brendan's NS

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Principal: Marie Hurley



## Healthy Eating Policy

### Introduction

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at St. Brendan's NS, we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food and nutrition for their overall health and wellbeing, but also to help develop a healthy brain that can concentrate and learn at school.

St. Brendan's NS was announced as a DEIS 2 school in June 2022 and commenced the free school lunch service in September 2022.

It is still necessary for parents to provide a small packed lunch for the first break.

We also made changes to our break times which now comprise of 2 x 20 min breaks.

We have updated our healthy eating advice as a result of these changes.

### Aims

1. To promote the personal development and well-being of the child
2. To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.

### Objectives

1. To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy
2. To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

### **ST. BRENDAN'S NS IS A NUT FREE SCHOOL**

**N.B. Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school.**

### **Lunch 12.40-1.00 pm**

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. 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).

Fresh Today provide a nutritionally balanced hot lunch to each child each day across the whole school. Parents can pre-order online using their child's QR code. To avoid disappointment and waste, parents are advised to discuss with their child regularly which meals they are enjoying. Children should also be encouraged to try out a new meal every now and then, so as to increase the variety and range of healthy foods that they like to

eat. There are no nut products in any of the meals. Children with additional dietary requirements eg coeliacs, dairy allergies etc can be catered for. The exact nutritional content of each meal is available to read on the Fresh Today website.

## **Drinks**

Water from a dispenser is provided in each classroom as part of the free lunch scheme. Children have been given a container to fill as they need and this is the primary source of hydration across the whole school. Parents do not need to send additional drinks.

## **Small Break 10.50- 11.10 am**

Children should only be given one or two small healthy items for this break, as the emphasis is on having a movement break in the fresh air rather than spending a long period eating indoors. A drink is not needed as there is water available from the class dispenser.

Teachers and parents are concerned that it is difficult to come up with convenient but popular healthy alternatives to the unhealthy snack foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits. We have put this list together to help:

**Healthy snacks:** Fresh fruit eg apple, pear; rice cakes, crackers, small healthy yoghurt, small healthy smoothie, vegetables eg carrot sticks, cucumber, tomatoes, cereal

## **NO NUTS ALLOWED**

**We ask that children do not bring the following to school:**

Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including the following:

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)
- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc)
- Sweets
- Chocolate
- Biscuits/cookies
- Unhealthy cereal bars
- Chewing gum
- Fruit winders/rolls
- Lollipops
- Jellies
- NUTS OR PRODUCTS CONTAINING NUTS
- Popcorn (choking hazard)

Your child will be asked to bring these unhealthy snacks home, so that you can see that they were not allowed to be eaten in school.

## **Rewards**

So as to take a proactive approach to healthy lunches, teachers will from time to time, reward children who can show a piece of fruit or other healthy foods in their lunchboxes.

## **Treat Day**

Friday will be our treat day. On this day, children can include one small food item from the 'not allowed' list. Crisps, lollipops, chewing gum and popcorn are not allowed on treat days for health and safety reasons.



## **School Organised Trips, Tours, Parties, Prizes**

When a class is going on a school trip or tour or there is a party organised for a special occasion eg First Communion, parents will always be notified about what lunch, snacks or drinks are required or permitted. While there may be a relaxation of the healthy eating rules on these special occasions, moderation will be expected eg no 2 litre bottle of fizzy drinks.

***On these special occasions, the school will make careful arrangements to ensure that any child with an allergy or specific dietary requirement is adequately catered for and protected from risk while ensuring equal participation. All staff are alerted to known allergies at the start of each school year. It is the responsibility of parents to complete a standard template and fully inform the school of their child's specific dietary needs (see Policy on Chronic Health Conditions and Administration of Medication)***

## **Sharing Food**

We do not share unwrapped treats with the class that have been sent in from home, due to the risk of contaminants or allergic reactions to unknown substances. On the rare occasion, that parents send in a home-baked treat eg birthday cake or buns, the treat will be sent home at the end of the day so as not to disappoint the child who brought it in, but to also give parents a choice about whether to allow their child to eat it or not.

## **Environmental Awareness and Care**

St. Brendan's NS is a Green School. We aim to reduce, reuse and recycle as often as possible. Fresh Today have a recycling and waste management plan in place for the free school lunches.

All children are also asked to take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons. We hope that this measure will encourage pupils and parents to reduce the amount of packaging waste.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management 13/10/2022.

It will be reviewed in June 2023.

Signed: Noel Rooney

Fr. Noel Rooney,  
Chairperson on behalf of the BOM.

Marie Hurley

Marie Hurley,  
Principal