

# Drumacrutin National School

## Healthy Eating Policy



*What people eat is known to be one of the key factors influencing long term health of school children and staff. The school day provides the opportunity for having at least one of the daily meals within the school. Food is often a feature of school celebrations. The curriculum provides an opportunity to learn and explore about food and healthy lifestyles. Through these guidelines Drumacrutin N.S. aims to help all those involved in our school community, e.g. children, staff and parents in developing positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health.*

1. Parents should ensure that children have a balanced breakfast to help them learn and concentrate better in school.
2. A healthy lunchbox includes a helping of food from the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid.
3. Some of the healthy snacks that we encourage for the small break include; fresh fruit, vegetables, cheese, standard yoghurts (non dessert), cream crackers and plain rice cakes.
4. All pupils are encouraged to avail of the school plain milk scheme (plain milk only will be offered and *all milk cartons are stored in the refrigerator.*) Milk is an excellent source of calcium which is the main mineral present in bones and teeth. For children aged 9-18 years, 5 servings of calcium rich foods are recommended due to the importance of this mineral during this life stage.
5. Pupils are encouraged to bring a bottle of water to school. Water will be made available throughout the school day. Pupils will be able to top up their water bottle at breaktime and lunchtime using the filtered water tap. If children do not drink enough water, they may become dehydrated, thirsty, weak and tired. Therefore pupils will be permitted to keep a water bottle on their desk during class.

6. We wish to make our first break a fruit and vegetable break with everyone in school having one of their 'five a day' at this time. We also wish to make our first break a water or milk drink only break.
7. Pure unsweetened juices or well diluted sugar free squashes (1:10) may be included with packed lunches but only as part of their main lunch meal, to reduce the risk of tooth decay.
8. Chocolate spreads, chocolate/cheese dips and chewy/sticky bars, sweets, chewing gum, nuts, crisps, cereal bars, fizzy drinks and juice drinks are not permitted. Foods which have wrappers are to be kept to a minimum and disposed of properly to reduce litter and protect our school environment.
9. Fridays and special occasions (as decided by teacher) are treat days. On these days one can have one item from the top shelf of the food pyramid.
10. When refreshments are provided at school related events, the school should ensure that healthy choices are on offer.
11. Nutrition and healthy eating will be included as part of the school curriculum.
12. Teachers and staff will provide positive modelling and support attitudes to encourage healthy eating including providing non-food related rewards.
13. Healthy Eating Awareness Events' will be held annually as an incentive to encourage healthy eating at school and at home.
14. The '*Healthy Eating Guidelines*' will be reviewed every two years and the policy will be visibly displayed in the school. Our HPS committee will monitor that lunches are in line with the schools Healthy Eating Policy.