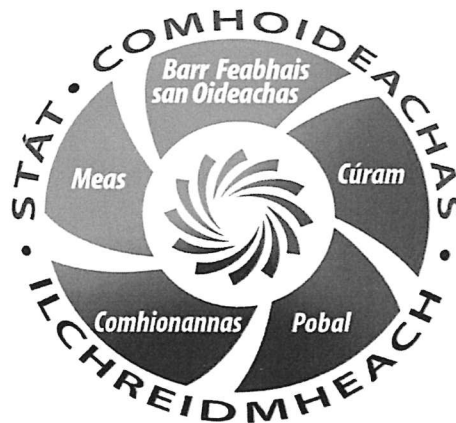




Healthy Eating Policy

2024-2026



This policy was adapted by the BOM on



1. Our Mission Statement

We acknowledge the uniqueness of students in our care: each with individual needs and potentialities. The realisation of each student's potential is our mission. We recognise the importance of self-esteem. It is our mission to engender, foster and protect a positive self-image and wellbeing for each person in our care.

Our mission is to create an effective educational environment, where our school community will thrive. This environment, managed with fairness and firmness, will allow each person in our care to develop personally, educationally, socially and spiritually. Our School Motto "Ar Thrial Na Tuiscine" translates to in Search of Understanding.

2. Ethos

ETB Schools' Ethos

As set out in the Admissions Policy, Bush Post Primary School is an ETB school which is a state funded, co-educational, multi-denominational schools underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence in Education
- Care
- Equality
- Community
- Respect



INTRODUCTION

Bush Post Primary School is a co-educational school managed under the patronage of Louth Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB). The school's mission statement states that "Bush Post Primary aspires to create an effective educational environment, where our school community will thrive."

The student population is drawn from the Cooley Peninsula and there are 12 feeder primary schools. The school is a designated DEIS school due to its rural status and offers the following programmes - Junior Cycle (JC), Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP), Transition Year (TY), Established Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA).

Scope

The Healthy Eating Policy involves all aspects of school life and as such it is a whole school activity. The Healthy Eating Policy applies to all school staff, the board of management, parents/guardians, students, and others (including prospective or potential students and their parents/guardians and applicants for staff positions within the school) insofar as the measures under the policy relate to them. While the Leadership and Management Team has the overall responsibility for coordinating and compiling the policy all members of staff have a contribution to make. The school educational team aims to provide students with the best possible service. Members of this team include:

- School Management
- Year Heads
- Class Tutors
- Subject Teachers and Departments
- Special Needs Co-ordinator
- Special Needs Assistants
- Programmes Co-ordinator
- School Completion Programme
- Home School & Community Liaison Officer
- Guidance Counsellors
- Parents / Guardians
- School administration
- School maintenance
- School food provider / canteen staff
- Student council

- School prefects

What people eat is known to be one of the key factors influencing long term health of students 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 Bush Post Primary School aims to help all those involved in our school community e.g. students, staff and parents in developing positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health.

Young people need to be aware of the importance of good nutrition for health to optimise their growth, health, and developmental potential through their teenage years and beyond. By developing a Healthy Eating Policy that reflects and represents the whole-school community, Bush Post Primary School hopes to contribute to this.

Rationale: Why is it necessary to devise a policy?

For young people to achieve their full potential, it is essential that they eat healthily as healthy eating provides the building blocks for lifelong health and well-being. Adolescence is a time of physical growth and development – the most rapid since infancy. It requires adequate intake of energy and nutrients. Eating a nourishing breakfast and a healthy school lunch allows children to take full advantage of the education provided for them.

Young people spend a large part of the 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. It is recommended that a whole-school approach be taken in developing a Healthy Eating Policy. This creates a strong sense of ownership among students, staff and parents and a commitment to sustain the improvements.

Aims of Policy

- To encourage the nutritional and overall well-being of all pupils in the school.
- To heighten an awareness of the importance of a balanced diet.
- To encourage pupils to make wise choices about food and nutrition.
- To recognise the dietary needs of all pupils and aim to ensure that all pupils' individual and cultural needs are met.
- To support pupils to develop life-long healthy eating practises and a positive approach towards food.
- To raise levels of concentration within class due to consumption of healthy food.
- To inform students on the benefits of healthy eating and the link it can have with academic achievement in school.
- To monitor and review the schools practise and policy and, if necessary, make amendments

Action Plan

a) Whole-school context

Bush Post Primary School provides a physical and social environment that encourages healthy eating. It ensures that lessons learnt in the classroom are transferred into school life and that healthy-eating messages are consistent throughout the school.

In order to implement a Healthy Eating Policy consideration must be given to the following:

- Promote and Market Healthy Eating:**
 - Fizzy drinks, energy drinks and high-caffeine drinks are not recommended within the school grounds.
 - Survey students to ascertain their preferences regarding food choices.
 - Consult with parents through the parents' association.

□ **Healthy Eating Events:**

Hosting a Healthy Eating Day/Week offers an ideal opportunity to provide a variety of healthy eating activities for students, staff, and parents. Healthy Eating Week activities may include:

- A healthy eating noticeboard.
- Highlight the importance of healthy eating at assemblies / tv screens around the school.
- Inviting guest speakers into the classroom.
- Hosting a healthy-eating cookery demonstrations/competition.
- Holding art/slogan competitions.

The activities deemed to be the most beneficial may be repeated at appropriate times throughout the school year and integrated into school life.

Involving a group of students and offering them specific roles in promoting and marketing healthy eating helps to influence the wider student body.

- **Support and Advice for Parents:** To encourage parents to play a role, it is important to offer them support. This may take many forms for example being kept informed via the school newsletter. Providing an information leaflet to parents /guardians provided by Healthy Ireland called “Healthy Food for Life”.
- **Involve the Wider Community:** This helps to provide support and expertise to the school and may help to generate heightened interest in healthy eating locally.

b) Teaching and learning

The classroom should be used to inform the whole-school practice and help instigate change. Health education is not only about delivering information but also about developing the skills and confidence required to make healthy choices.

- **Subject areas**

The subject of healthy eating is addressed to varying degrees in many subject areas that offer a unique opportunity for teachers to influence young people in this regard. Home Economics, LCA Social Education, Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE), Science, Wellbeing , and Physical Education (PE) are subjects on the curriculum that address aspects of diet, nutrition, physical activity, and health.

- **Wellbeing in Bush Post Primary School**

Wellbeing is an integral to everything we do in our school. Student wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community

- **Cross-curricular projects**

These provide valuable learning opportunities. Examples of cross-curricular links including Home Economics, Wellbeing, English and Art.

Success Criteria

The success of this initiative will be measured in terms of how the pupils participate and are enthusiastic about the project.

- That all families are more aware of and improve their food choices.
- That teacher's continue to note the knock-on effects in terms of good learning.
- That by taking a cross curricular approach to this initiative, there are benefits to promoting healthy food for healthy minds.

Roles and Responsibility

- The policy is promoted by the teaching staff in the school in their classroom work.
- Specific guidelines are presented to pupils at general assemblies and to parents at the first year information night to encourage a healthy lunchbox/healthy eating. Feedback will be presented to the principal at staff meetings and at parent association meetings in terms of the implementation and success.
- All special dietary requirements will be respected inclusive of dietary needs and cultural dietary habits. These requirements must be communicated to the Principal/Deputy Principal as soon as possible.
- Canteen personnel will ensure that healthy options are available to students each lunch time and are consumed in the assembly area.
- Canteen personnel will ensure that healthy snacks are available to students each break time and lunchtime.
- Students are encouraged to bring a bottle of tap/ still water to school. Water will be available before school and at break and lunchtime.
- Staff have the right to confiscate fizzy drinks and high-caffeine drinks or any other foods deemed inappropriate, from students on school grounds.
- The year head will regularly inform pupils in school assemblies of the importance of healthy eating and healthy lunches.
- The food pyramid and healthy eating guidelines will be displayed in students diary.
- Teachers and staff will provide positive modelling and support attitudes to encourage healthy eating including provision of non-food related awards or healthier food options.
- The initiative will be monitored by the senior management having considered feedback from staff and parents on its continuation and on how the initiative can be further enhanced and improved.

Timeframe for Implementation

The policy will be fully implemented immediately following discussion with The Parents' Association and the Board of Management.

Timeframe for Review

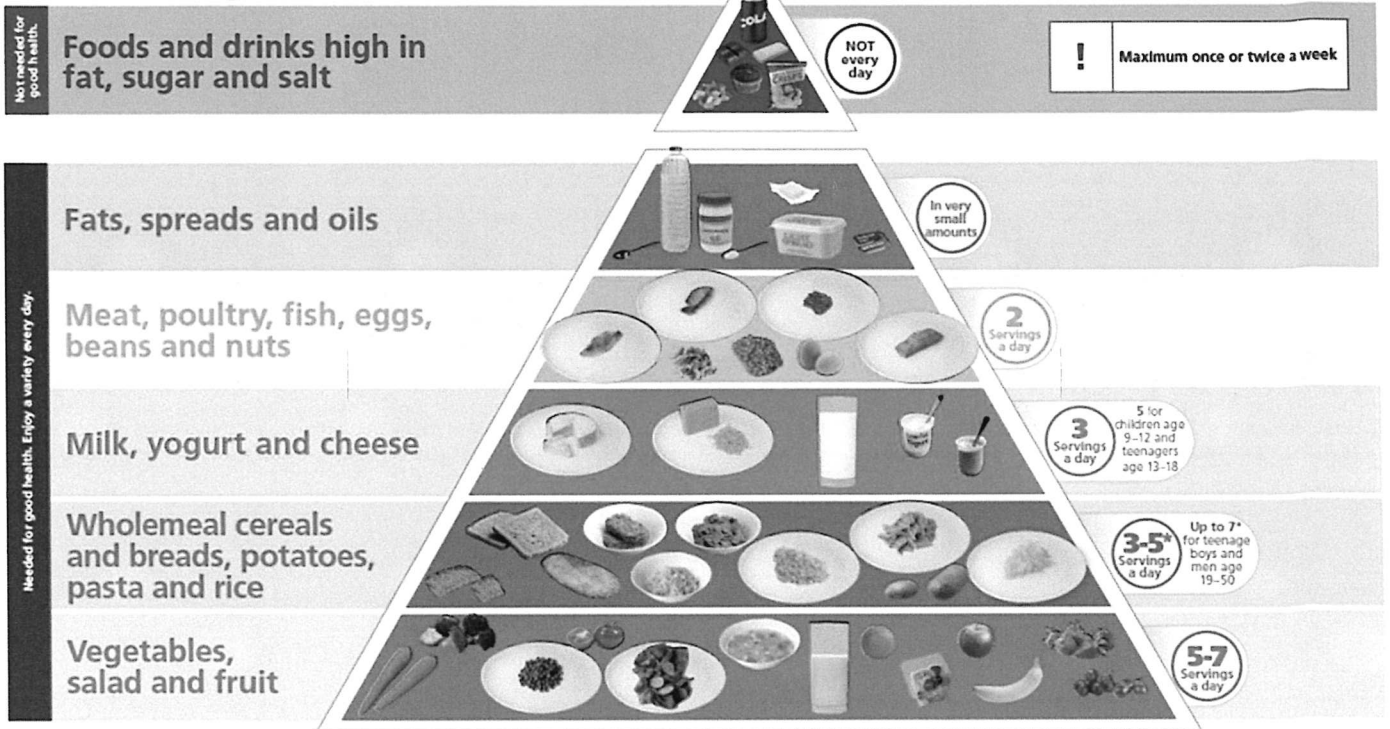
The policy will be reviewed as necessary with the whole school community and will consider any legislative changes, new policy and strategy documents, changes in school facilities and feedback from parents, students, and staff.

Responsibility for Review

- Staff; feedback on their classroom success or otherwise. This will be discussed at a staff meeting. Pupils will be asked to contribute to the review by offering suggestions on other healthy snacks/meals that could be included in the school menu.
- Parents: The Parent Association will be asked to comment on the policy and its implementation.
- The review will be co-ordinated by the Healthy Eating Policy Committee including the student council and school prefects.
- Annual review with the school canteen.
- The Board of Management will discuss the policy and any recommendations will be included in the review.

The Food Pyramid

For adults, teenagers and children aged five and over



*Daily Servings Guide – wholemeal cereals and breads, potatoes, pasta and rice

Active	Child (5-12)	Teenager (13-18)	Adult (19-50)	Adult (51+)	Inactive	Teenager (13-18)	Adult (19-50)	Adult (51+)
	3-4	4	4-5	3-4		3	3-4	3
	3-5	5-7	5-7	4-5		4-5	4-6	4

There is no guideline for inactive children as it is essential that all children are active.

Sources: Department of Health, December 2016.

Drink at least 8 cups of fluid a day – water is best

Get Active!
To maintain a healthy weight adults need at least 30 minutes a day of moderate activity on 5 days a week (or 150 minutes a week); children need to be active at a moderate to vigorous level for at least 60 minutes every day.

Ratification and Communication

Board of Management Policy Consultation BOM Ratification

School:	Bush Post Primary School
Policy:	Healthy Eating Policy

Staff Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	19/3/2024
Proposed By:	Ms Sarah Finnegan (Staff Member)
Seconded By:	Ms Emma Slowey (Staff Member)

Student Consultation:

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Date of Final Consultation:	19/3/2024
Proposed By:	Fionnuala McCann (Student Council)
Seconded By:	Eoghan Hughes (Student Council)

Parents Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	19/3/2024
Proposed By:	Ms Zoe Conway (Parents Association member)
Seconded By:	Mrs Melissa McCoy (Parents Association member)

Bush Post Primary Board of Management Ratification

Policy	Healthy Eating Policy
Date of Final Consultation	Date: 21/3/2024
Signed Ms Siobhan Greer
Chairperson of the Board	(Board of Management Member)
Proposed By: OLIVIA COSGROVE.....
Seconded By:	(Board of Management Member) MELISSA MCCOY.....

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Signed: Stewart Cooper

Date: 21.3.2024

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: [Signature]
(Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management)

Date: 21/3/2024

Date of next review: September 2026