



## **Cara Community Special School**

### **Healthy Eating Policy**

## **Introduction**

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. The curriculum provides an opportunity for pupils to learn and explore about food and healthy lifestyles. Through the development and implementation of this Healthy Eating Policy, Cara CSS aims to help all those involved in our school community to develop positive and responsible attitudes to eating and to appreciate the contribution that good food makes to health.

## **Aims of the Policy**

The aims of Cara CSS's Health Eating Policy are as follows:

1. To promote the personal development and the wellbeing of pupils
2. To promote the health of our pupils and to provide a foundation for healthy living
3. To enable our pupils to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing, developing and staying healthy
4. To enable our pupils to accept some responsibility for making wise food choices and adapting a healthy, balanced diet

## **Cara CSS Healthy Eating Guidelines**

At Cara CSS we promote the following Healthy Eating Guidelines:

1. **Breakfast:** it is important that our pupils have a balanced breakfast before school. A good breakfast will help with concentration levels and therefore learning for our pupils. Healthy eating options for breakfast could include: wholemeal cereals, porridge, wholemeal bread or toast with low fat spread, a small glass of unsweetened pure fruit juice, fruit and or a choice of poached egg, scrambled egg or boiled egg
2. **Lunch:** A healthy lunch box will include helpings of food from the bottom four selves of the food pyramid (Appendix 1). Examples include: Wholemeal breads, pasta, milk, yogurt, cheese, vegetables, fruit, pitta bread, crackers and plain rice cakes
3. **Drinks:** Healthy choices of drinks for pupils at Cara CSS include milk and water. Milk is an excellent source of calcium which is the main mineral in bones and teeth. For children aged 9 – 18 years, five servings of calcium rich foods are recommended due to the importance of this mineral during this life stage. Water is important for hydration also. If pupils do not drink enough water they may become dehydrated, thirsty, tired and weak
4. **Foods not permitted:** At Cara CSS there are a number of foods which we do not permit including: chocolate spread, chocolate cheese dips, cereal bars, chewy sticky bars, chocolate bars, sweets, chewing gum, crisps, biscuits, cakes, doughnuts, nuts, fizzy drinks, juice drinks and squashes
5. **Food Wrappers:** Foods which have wrappers should be kept to a minimum and disposed of properly in the bins provided to reduce litter and protect our school and local environment

6. **Nutrition and Healthy Eating:** will be part of the curriculum at Cara CSS
7. **Modelling Good Behaviour:** Teachers and staff will provide positive modelling and support attitudes to encourage healthy eating
8. **Get Active:** All pupils will be encouraged to be active at a moderate to vigorous level for at least 60 minutes per day
9. **Food Pyramids:** will be visible around the school along with the school's Healthy Eating Policy
10. **Awareness Days:** Healthy Eating Awareness days will be held each term to create further awareness of the importance of healthy eating and physical exercise

### **Ensuring successful implementation of Cara CSS Healthy Eating Policy**

In order to ensure the successful implementation of the Healthy Eating Policy at Cara CSS, we recommend the following:

- Parents/Guardians are responsible for the health of their son/daughter. Where possible we encourage parents/guardians and children to prepare school lunches together
- Pupils attending Cara CSS must abide by the Healthy Eating Policy and hopefully as a result they will become more aware of healthy lifestyle choices
- Teachers and staff at the school will act as role models in the area of health eating and this will include provision of non - food related awards for pupils
- School management will support the school and wider community in developing a healthy eating culture by providing health options at events such as parents nights, school tours and by engaging in initiatives that promote healthy eating e.g. Food Dudes

### **What happens when pupils bring in food which they are not allowed**

When a pupil brings food to school which is not permitted the class teacher will issue a reminder to parents/guardians regarding the school's Healthy Eating Policy.

### **Supporting all pupils at Cara CSS**

Parents/Guardians are advised to keep in contact with the class teacher and advise if they need any specific support around the provision of and preparation of lunches for their son/daughter.



### **School Philosophy and Ethos**

Cara CSS is a multi - denominational school which welcomes pupils of all beliefs and none. The school is committed to inclusion, equality and fairness. In developing this Healthy Eating Policy we recognise and respect the racial and ethnic diversity among our school community and to this end we appreciate the different values and morals regarding the consumption of different types of food. This policy seeks to be cognisant and respectful of the cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of our school community.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to notify the school regarding any specific food traditions followed.

### **Allergies**

To ensure the safety of all pupil's at Cara CSS, sharing of lunches is also not permitted to ensure the safety of all attending the school.

### **Accessing copies of the school's Healthy Eating Policy**

A copy of the school's Healthy Eating Policy will be available to download on the school's website. A hard copy of this policy will also be available on request from the school's main office.

### **Monitoring and Review of this Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier, where deemed necessary or as required by legislation or Department of Education Circular.

**This policy has been ratified by the Single Manager of Cara CSS on 25 July 2024.**

Signed: *Livia Keadler* Single Manager

Date: *25/7/24.*

Signed: *Katie Callaghan* Principal / Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: *25/7/24*

# Appendix 1

