



BALLYCASTLE HIGH SCHOOL

Healthy Eating Policy

- *Approval by the Board of Governors: 25 June 2015*
- *The implementation of this policy will be monitored by: Senior Management Team*
- *This policy will be reviewed every two years*





Ballycastle High School is dedicated to providing an environment that promotes healthy eating and enabling pupils to make informed choices about the food they eat. We believe that what you eat affects how you learn, how you feel and how you behave.

This policy sits in conjunction with the school's policies on Child Protection, Confidentiality, and complaints procedure.

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious, and complies with dietary and religious requirements. Nutrition is a significant factor in the growth, development and overall functioning of a child. Good nutrition provides the energy and nutrients essential to sustain life and promotes physical, emotional and cognitive development.

The development of healthy eating practices and physical activity can prevent disease and support a lifetime of good health. Good nutrition is critical to optimizing each child's potential for success. Meeting nutritional requirements throughout childhood is essential to full intellectual development. Research documents tell us that under nutrition impacts on children's behaviour, performance and overall quality of development. Children require sufficient energy and essential nutrients each day to concentrate on accomplished learning tasks. Even mild and under nutrition and short term hunger are barriers to learning. Meals and snacks served should meet children's nutrition needs, provide models of healthy eating patterns, and help children establish good eating patterns at an early age.

Healthy Eating Policy Aims

- To work in partnership with families and other professionals to support children in developing healthy eating practices which will become embedded for life.
- To enable pupils to make healthy food choices through the provision of information and development of appropriate skills and attitudes.
- To provide healthy food choices during the school day.
- To ensure that drinking water is available to the children.

Objectives

- To provide children with positive healthy eating experiences in order to promote their well-being.
- To respect the different dietary, cultural, religious and health needs of all our children
- To encourage children to develop positive attitudes towards food through the curriculum and all the other learning opportunities that are provided in the school.



- To promote an understanding of a balanced diet in which some foods play a greater role than others.
- To develop children's understanding of the importance of the social context in which eating takes place.
- To raise awareness with children, parents and carers in developing a positive approach to food, nutrition and oral education.
- To encourage responsibility and accountability of all parents and carers in offering healthy choices to children.

Food and drink

All snacks provided at the school are nutritious, avoiding large quantities of sugar, salt, saturated fats, additives, preservatives and colourings. Menus are planned in advanced and food offered is fresh, wholesome and balanced. We offer a balance and variety of snacks to provide a range of cultural and nutritious experiences for the children.

Our school caterers adhere to the nutritional guidelines laid down by the National Nutritional Standards for Healthy School Lunches. They provide lower fat alternatives to foods and dishes with ingredients in the proportions depicted in the Balance of Good Health (BOGH). Staff have undergone appropriate food hygiene training and the kitchens meet food safety requirements.

The school encourages parents and carers to provide children with healthy packed lunches using the principles of the BOGH. Children are also taught these principles.

Availability of water

- We have fresh drinking water and suitable cups readily available for children and staff
- We support the children in recognising that they need to drink water when they are thirsty, hot or tired, or feeling unwell.

Special dietary needs and food allergies

We are sensitive to the catering needs of children with specific dietary needs, including religious considerations. Parents will be asked about any special dietary requirements their child has before their child starts school. Parents of children who have special diets (for example a gluten-free diet) or who have food intolerances are responsible for providing the school with information about their diet and choices available to the child. We update our records regularly.

The school provides food in accordance with pupils' religious and cultural practices. School caterers offer a vegetarian option at lunch every day. Individual care plans are created for pupils with food allergies or diabetes. Staff are made aware of such

children.

Food hygiene

The kitchen facilities at the school are inspected on an annual basis in relation to the Food Safety Act. The school adheres to the recommended guidelines and good practices for the preparation and storage of food. Appropriate food safety precautions are taken when food is handled, prepared or stored in school. These include ensuring that adequate storage and washing facilities are available and protective clothing are available. Any food safety hazards are identified and controlled. Staff directly involved in cooking and the preparation of food in the school, have successfully completed a Food Hygiene Course.

Festivals and celebrations

At Ballycastle High School we celebrate different festivals and celebrations. We recognize that festivals can provide a valuable opportunity for children to experience diversity from a wide range of cultures and nationalities and the contribution they make to the variety of foods eaten in Northern Ireland today.

Being Healthy

- Eat breakfast every day
- Eat fruit and vegetables daily
- Choose snacks that will provide nutrients to compliment meals
- Avoid snacks and drinks with a high sugar content between meals
- Drink plenty of fluids to avoid becoming dehydrated
- Be physically active every day
- Brush teeth twice a day and visit your dentist regularly

A display area frequently reflects the healthy eating message.

Nutritional guidelines

Young people require a varied and balanced diet to maintain health and promote proper growth and development. A good diet in childhood can also help prevent ill health in later life.

The National Diet and Nutrition Survey of 4 to 18 years olds found that although the majority of young people in the UK are getting all the nutrients they require, they are not eating a balanced diet. On average, sugar in carbonated drinks and sweets, which can cause dental caries, provided 16% of food energy, which exceeded the recommended average intake of 11%. Also the intake of saturated fats from pastries and cakes was higher than the recommended average intake. These findings suggest that young people could benefit from consuming less food and drinks high in sugar and fat, and more fruits and vegetables and bread, other cereals and potatoes.





The Balance of Good Health

The Balance of Good Health (BOGH) is a pictorial representation of the recommended balance of foods in the diet, which aims to help people understand and enjoy healthy eating. It shows the types and proportions of foods needed to make a well-balanced and healthy diet. It is suitable for all children of school age, adults, vegetarians and people of all ethnic origins.

The five food groups that make up the BOGH are:

- Bread, other cereal and potatoes
- Fruit and vegetables
- Milk and dairy foods
- Meat, fish and alternatives
- Foods containing fat, foods containing sugar

The BOGH contains the healthy eating guidelines that this school will apply through its food policy. The BOGH will be used to teach about and promote healthy eating, and in menu planning.