



*St. Colman's Boys' National School,  
Sleaveen East,  
Macroon,  
Co. Cork.*

**Healthy Eating Whole-School Plan St. Colman's B.N.S.**

This plan is intended as a guide for staff and students in creating a school environment that is conducive to promoting healthy eating choices. The plan will also support parents, as primary educators of their children (Education Act 1998), in encouraging their children to develop healthy eating habits at an early age.

A knowledge of what constitutes a nutritionally balanced diet is acknowledged as being important for students. In support of this rationale, nutrition education is considered to be an important element of the curriculum.

Healthy eating is covered in the following curricular areas:

**Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE):**

Strand Unit:

- Taking Care of my Body; Food and Nutrition (Curriculum: Junior Infants - Sixth Class)
- Making Choices (see Teacher Guidelines p11-13)

**Science:**

Strand Unit:

- Myself: Human life Processes (Curriculum: Junior Infants - Sixth Class) (see Teacher Guidelines p.10-11)

**School Self Evaluation**

As part of School Self Evaluation 2022-2026, St. Colman's B.N.S, strive to create a school environment that is conducive to promoting healthy eating

choices; where drinking water is freely available and rewards other than food are used to motivate children and young people.

### **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School:**

The Healthy Eating Whole-School Plan helps to promote the health of each child and to provide a foundation for healthy living. Our school aims to provide a holistic education for our children and health of mind and body is an ideal we aim for in all our pupils.

### **Aims:**

The aims of this plan are:

To support and encourage healthy eating habits in children which it is hoped will become lifelong eating habits.

To enable the children to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing, developing and staying healthy.

To enable the children to accept some responsibility for making wise food choices for their school snack/lunch in line with a healthy, balanced diet.

To ensure the staff and children acknowledge and respect the ethical and religious food choices of others while also being mindful of allergies e.g. vegetarian, vegan, coeliac, halal etc.

To raise levels of concentration and energy within class through the consumption of healthy food and easily available access to water during the day.

To provide members of staff, parents and those involved in school activities with clear information.

To encourage and promote the recycling of lunch packaging, the reduction of waste food and the reuse of food containers and bottles in conjunction with our Green- Schools' action plan.

## **Content:**

### **1. Healthy Lunches:**

From April 2024, hot lunches are being provided to all pupils free of charge. We encourage all pupils to avail of these hot lunches as children are receiving a healthy, well balanced meal every day. There is a great variety of food options available. Parents are encouraged to change the food choices regularly to keep children engaged.

It is advised to keep children's morning snack to a minimum to ensure they are hungry enough for their hot meal. Foods such as biscuits, cakes, sweets and chocolate bars are discouraged.

### **Beverages:**

Children are asked to bring their own recyclable beaker/bottle of water to school every day. Drinking water is freely available in school should children need to refill their bottle throughout the day.

### **2. Prohibited Foods:**

Chewing gum

Fizzy drinks/energy drinks/ high sugar content drinks/ drinks containing caffeine

Crisps, crisp products and flavoured popcorn

Large or Share bags of sweets or crisps

### **3. Special Occasions:**

On special occasions such as end-of-term, Christmas, Easter, school tours students may bring in a treat or staff may distribute treats.

### **4. Litter:**

Any fruit or vegetable leftovers from children's snacks can be placed in the compost bin available in each classroom.

Hot lunches will be given to students in a compostable box, with a compostable napkin, knife and fork. Once finished their meal, the meal leftovers will be sent home in a BPA- free container for parents to review. This allows parents to monitor their child's eating habits. The leftovers are not to be reheated. Children must bring this lunchbox to school each day.

### **5. Initiatives:**

The school will also take opportunities that may arise to participate in initiatives which promote healthy eating. (Food Dudes, Seedlings Programme, Incredible Edibles)

### **6. Implementation:**

Teachers will explicitly teach about healthy eating as part of the science and SPHE curriculum.

Relevant speakers may be invited to the school to carry out a workshop/ talk to parents/ guardians throughout the school year.

Children will be asked to put prohibited items away until after school.

If children persist in bringing unhealthy food to school, the class teacher or Principal may remind parents of the Healthy Eating Whole-School Plan.

### **7. Success Criteria:**

We will know the plan is effective by:

- observing the contents of lunchboxes.
- receiving feedback from parents/guardians and other school staff about the level of concentration and performance of children in the classroom.

### **Roles and Responsibility:**

- Parents/guardians have a responsibility to provide healthy lunches for their children.
- Children have a responsibility to eat their own lunch, and not to share or trade food or drink with others.

- The overall performance of the plan will be monitored and evaluated by the Staff and Board of Management.

**Timeframe for Review:** June 2027

**Useful Information:**

- The Health Promotion unit has a booklet called “Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Primary Schools”. It is available to download from [www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)
- The Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute has a vast amount of information on nutrition and diet and have suggestions on what to include in school lunch-boxes. [www.indi.ie](http://www.indi.ie)
- The Voluntary Health Insurance (VHI) has a section on children returning to school after sickness which includes advice on health lunches [www.vhi.ie/hfiles/hf-011.jsp](http://www.vhi.ie/hfiles/hf-011.jsp)

**Other useful links:**

<https://www.safefood.net/education/healthy-lunchboxes>

<https://www.bordbia.ie/nutrition/primary-school-children/>

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/heal/healthy-eating-guidelines/>

This Healthy Eating Whole School Plan has been communicated and ratified by the Board of Management on April 11<sup>th</sup> 2024.

Signed: *Olive O' Riordan*      Date: *11<sup>th</sup> April 2024*

Chairperson of the Board of Management