**Rosstulla School**

**‘Together Towards Tomorrow’**



Healthy Eating

Policy and Guidelines

**Agreed by Governing Body September 2021**

**Chairperson’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Rosstulla School is a health promoting school. We encourage our pupils to make healthy food choices when they are in school and educate them about healthy food as part of our core curriculum. We recognise our role in influencing the eating habits of children whilst in school. Through our breakfast club, healthy break guide, nutritionally balanced school meals and Home Economics programme we hope to encourage children to try, choose and consume the right foods in order to form healthy food habits which will enable them to lead a healthy lifestyle long term.

**Research has shown that the benefits of healthy eating in school include:**

* Healthy growth and development
* Better physical health and lower illness rates
* Improved concentration
* Enhanced physical activity
* Improved behaviour

**Northern Ireland Curriculum**

Personal understanding and health is taught as part of the N.I. Curriculum under Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) for primary age pupils. For secondary pupils this is covered in Home Economics and Learning for Life and Work (LLW). These curriculum areas encourage pupils to learn how to stay healthy and make healthy choices. PDMU and LLW are an integral part of the curriculum in Rosstulla School and it is vitally important that staff and parents work in partnership to consolidate learning by encouraging pupil well-being through the promotion of healthy lifestyles both in school and at home.

**Healthy Choices at Breakfast Club**

Rosstulla runs a free breakfast club for all pupils who wish to avail of it. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day and is essential to kick start the day after a long night’s rest. The breakfast cereals that are offered are full of nutrients and vitamins and are served with semi-skimmed milk. Staple cereals at Breakfast Club are Weetabix, Rice Krispies and Cornflakes. If your child would like to attend breakfast club, but we do not offer a cereal he/she will eat, we are happy to purchase this cereal as long as is a healthy choice and low in sugar. There is always milk and cold water available to drink at breakfast club.

**Healthy Choices at Break Time**

Pupils are encouraged to bring a healthy break into school. Literature on our healthy break ethos is provided at the beginning of each new school year and encourages pupils to bring breaks primarily from the foods listed below:

**Drinks:**

Semi-skimmed milk or water.

**Food:**

Fresh fruit or vegetables with healthy dips, yoghurt, cheese and crackers, scone or pancakes, savoury breads.

**Food items containing nuts are not permitted in school due to allergies.**

Pupils are encouraged **not to** have jam, chocolate bars, sweets , crisps, dessert yoghurts or high sugar snacks.

We are aware that some pupils may have issues surrounding foods due to particular diagnoses. Staff in Rosstulla will work collaboratively with parents to attempt to overcome such challenges through the use of appropriate programmes and a range of strategies. If you wish to discuss this further, please contact your child’s teacher.

**Healthy Choices at Lunch Time**

The nutritional standards for school lunches were revised in 2007 and are based on The Eatwell Plate which was produced by the Food Standards Agency.

**Drinks:**

* A choice of semi skimmed milk or chilled water is on offer in the dinner hall.
* No other drinks should be sent in for your child to have in the dinner hall.

**Food**

* School dinners are carefully planned by catering staff in line with nutritional guidelines.
* Menus are available to parents on our website or via the class teacher.
* Pupils with very limited diets will be encouraged to try new foods in school in the hope we can extend their range of food choices.
* Parents are expected to pack a healthy lunchbox details of and suggestions for will be sent out at the beginning of each new academic year. Sauces should only ever be low sugar/salt and the use of sauces to accompany meals should be kept to a minimum. (Visit this link for more advice <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/eatwell-guide-master-digital.pdf> )

**Birthdays/Special Occasions**

* Parents have the option to send in a birthday cake for their child but this must be nut free. Parents may also send a small treat for the children in the class, for example a treat size packet of sweets.
* A small amount of party/seasonal/ethnic food will be purchased from school funds and will be available for pupils to celebrate special occasions throughout the year: Harvest, Halloween, Christmas, Pancake Day, Easter, Chinese New Year for example.
* We offer a food-based treat as a reward choice for the golden time system on a once a week basis: a small hot chocolate, popcorn, a fruit salad skewer made in class for example.

**Religious/Cultural Observances**

In Rosstulla we respect the different cultural and religious beliefs of our pupils. Should a child’s religious or cultural beliefs impact their diet, please make sure school staff are aware and we will inform the catering staff and plan accordingly for your child. We will do our very best to accommodate individual religious or cultural requirements.

**Medical/ Allergies**

Should your child have any medical issues which impact on the foods they are able to eat or the consistency of such foods, school staff must be made aware prior to the child’s entry into the school so they can plan accordingly and inform catering staff. If your child has a care plan for food related allergic reactions, a copy of this and any rescue medication must be left in school before the child enters the school building.

**Water Provision in School**

* Pupils are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day.
* Cooled water is available in the dinner hall.
* Parents may send in a named water bottle for their child.
* Staff are encouraged to lead by example when working directly with pupils.

**Home Economics and Educational Outings**

* Through Home Economics lessons we provide opportunities for pupils to develop a healthy attitude to food. Our aim is to guide and encourage pupils to build a cooking skillset and palate for a variety of healthy tastes and textures in order to embed a healthy lifestyle. Our Home Economics recipes are all carefully considered and nutritionally balanced.
* During educational outings, healthy food choices will be encouraged by staff whilst also recognising that on such occasions other food choices are acceptable.

**Monitoring /Evaluation/Review**

The whole school healthy eating programme will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed on an ongoing basis through consultation with staff, parents and the Board of Governors.