

# Newton Hill Community School



## Healthy Lifestyles & Lunch Box Policy

2021-2023

## Introduction and aims:

Newton Hill Community School is committed to teaching our children about how to make sensible food choices as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

This Healthy Lifestyle and Lunchbox policy has been developed using guidance associated with healthy eating and the school day, such as Change 4 Life and the Eatwell plate. The Eatwell plate demonstrates how to get the balance right by showing the proportion of each of the five food groups that should be eaten each day. The government provides regulations for healthy school meals and packed lunches and recommends that foods from the high fat and/or sugar group on the Eatwell plate should not be included in a packed lunch.



Newton Hill Community School aims to:

- Ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provides each child with healthy and nutritious food that is similar to food served in schools, which is now regulated by national standards.
- Provide a consistent programme of cross-curricular nutrition education (through the teaching of Science, PE, PSHE and DT) that enables children to make informed choices.
- Provide a 'whole school' approach to nutrition.
- Promote healthy eating and lifestyles
- Encourage children to choose a variety of foods to ensure a balanced intake in line with the National nutrition guide and nutrition standards.
- Encourage foods which are rich in vitamins, iron and calcium,
- Encourage starchy foods as a source of energy.
- Encourage the consumption of milk and water.
- Discourage sugary drinks and snacks between meals.

## Rationale:

The rise in childhood obesity and illnesses such as the early onset of Type 2 diabetes and heart disease has highlighted the dangers of unhealthy lifestyles. We, at Newton Hill Community School, believe

schools have an important role to play in encouraging children to make healthy life choices. Educating children on the benefits of healthy eating and regular exercise can bring about both immediate and long-term improvements to their quality of life.

A healthy diet is essential for maintaining and protecting children's health, for ensuring they perform to their full potential during the school day (both academically and physically) and for their growth and development. Our aim is to help them establish a healthy lifestyle that, we hope, will continue into adulthood.

Proper nutrition is essential for good health and effective learning.

#### The benefits of Healthy Eating:

- Help young people develop, grow and perform well in school
- Prevent childhood and adolescent health problems such as obesity, eating disorders, tooth decay and anaemia
- May help prevent health problems later in life, including heart disease and cancer
- Provide an understanding at a young age of how establishing healthy eating habits is critical for later life
- Sitting down to a meal with other children is an important part of a child's social education

#### Consequences of unhealthy eating include:

- Hungry children are more likely to have behavioural, emotional and academic problems at school
- Research suggests that not having breakfast can affect children's intellectual performance
- Poor eating habits and inactivity are the root cause of overweight and obesity. The percentage of young people who are overweight has almost doubled in the last twenty years
- Eating disorders are extremely common among young people

#### Drinks in school:

Research indicates that school children do not drink enough water during the school day and that this affects their concentration and behaviour. Our school recognises that children concentrate better, are healthier and more comfortable if they are not dehydrated, and the best way of ensuring adequate fluid intake is to provide access to water as needed.

All children are encouraged to bring a bottle of water to school each day. This is kept in an accessible place in their classroom. Water is also provided for children when eating during lunchbreaks.

Up to the age of 5, our children are given free milk each day. From the age of 5 onwards, children can pay for daily milk. Children in the Pupil Premium category have access to free milk each day if they opt in.

**Fizzy drinks and fruit drinks are not allowed to be consumed in school. Water is provided at lunchtime for all children.**

#### Snacks:

Children in Nursery up to Year 2 are supplied with a free healthy snack at break – fresh fruit or vegetables. Raisons are provided only once per half term.

In Key Stage 2, parents are asked to supply their child with fresh fruit/vegetable for a snack. Cereal bars of any kind are not permitted.

Please note that chocolate cereal bars, cereal bars with chocolate, biscuits and crisps are not accepted as healthy snacks and should not be brought to school for break times.

It is impossible for staff to check every child's snack. We rely on our parents to send an appropriate snack following the above guidelines. It is important that the snack sent to school is fresh as dried fruit contains high amounts of sugar.

### **Packed Lunches:**

Newton Hill Community School will provide facilities for children bringing packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.

Children are not permitted to bring hot food or liquids in packed lunches or food which requires heating.

The school will work with parents to advise that packed lunches follow the list below:

- **At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables** e.g. carrot sticks, cucumber, small apple or orange, banana, dried fruit, mini tomatoes.
- **Meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein** e.g. chicken, turkey, ham, beef, pork, tuna, lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas.
- **A starchy food** e.g. bread, pasta or rice, crackers, rice cakes, oat cakes, pitta bread, tortilla wraps.
- **Dairy food** e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt or fromage frais.
  
- **Water is provided** – please do not send any juice to school.

Our alternative suggestions to snacks such as crisps include;

- Savoury crackers or breadsticks served with a dip.
- Vegetables and fruit.
- Dried fruit.

Our alternative suggestions to snacks such as bars of chocolate (which are not allowed) include;

- Sugar free jellies with fruit.
- Fruit, vegetables.
- Plain cookies and biscuits (biscuits that have a chocolate covering may be included weekly).

High fat meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages should only be included occasionally.

Sweets, chewing gum, chocolate bars, juice and fizzy drinks are not allowed in school. Water will be provided.

We ask that all uneaten food is kept in the lunch box so you as parents/carers can keep a check on what their children have eaten.

We currently have children in school with severe nut allergies so nuts and nut products are not allowed in School. The school recognises that some children may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents are to be responsible for ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For this reason, children are also not permitted to swap food items.

Packed lunches are reviewed by lunchtime staff as part of their supervision of the children. If packed lunches persistently fail to meet the expectations set out in this policy, parents may be contacted to discuss this further and support offered for healthy alternatives.

Special occasions at school may allow an exception to the above.

### **School meals:**

School meals for children until the end of Year 2 are FREE.

For many children, the lunchtime meal is the main meal of the day. It is important that meals served are nutritionally balanced. Under-nutrition, even in its milder forms, can have detrimental effects on cognitive development, behaviour, concentration and school performance.

The subtle message that children receive about food and health from the daily life of school are as important as those given during lessons, e.g. school menus, peer pressure to eat certain snacks in packed lunches. By working together, we can promote healthier eating habits.

Children with additional needs and allergies will be taken into consideration.

All children eat their dinner in the school hall.

The school recognises:

- The importance of lunchtime organisation on the behaviour of children.
- The value of promoting social skills.

Teachers, caterers and midday supervisors work together to create a good dining room ambience and the development of appropriate table manners. The school behaviour policy is followed to ensure high standards are followed during lunchtimes.

### **Curriculum, Teaching and Learning**

Healthy eating and the exploration of diet and health are covered at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in the Curriculum.

Through DT, Science, RSHE and PE, children are encouraged to think about diet, health and personal development. This is supported by visits and assemblies lead by our PE Leader and Sports Coaches from employed companies. A Healthy School's Week takes place during our annual Fitness Fortnight where we actively encourage our children to participate in extra-curricular activities through exposing them to new sports and games.

### **Physical Exercise**

Exercise plays an important role in the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. It not only brings physical benefits, but psychological ones too. Research has shown that it can help combat depression and raise self-esteem.

All children are encouraged to actively participate in two Physical Education lessons per week (one indoor and one outdoor). Children in Upper Key Stage 2 also take part in a weekly swimming lesson.

A variety of extra-curricular clubs are offered to children each half term as part of our Sports Premium spend. Additional information is available in the school's PE Policy and on the school website.