

# **ST COLUMBA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **STRAW**

### **Healthy Breaks Policy 2015**



At St Columba's we want to encourage healthy eating among staff and pupils.  
We have consulted with parents and staff and as a result have adopted a Healthy Breaks policy.  
We have worked with health professionals to develop this policy.

## **RATIONALE**

Childhood is a time of rapid growth and development. Good nutrition during this time is important, as it impacts on children's general and dental health now and in the future. Children usually need to eat more frequently than adults to meet their nutritional requirements, so it is also important that snacks should be beneficial to their health.

Research has indicated that eating patterns developed in childhood tend to be continued into adulthood, and that poor dietary patterns can store up problems resulting in obesity and heart disease later in life (British Nutrition Foundation, 2002).

At St Columba's we aim to encourage children to adopt and sustain healthy eating patterns from an early age. The pupils will be encouraged to take only a healthy snack such as fruit, vegetables, bread, water or milk at break time.

The current state of children's health in Northern Ireland highlights the need to encourage and support schools to promote healthy eating.

By adopting a Healthy Break policy at St Columba's Primary we will actively encourage the pupils to only eat a healthy snack at break time.

Our school environment is well placed to promote the ideals of healthy eating. The effect of diet on health is taught to children at various stages throughout the curriculum and having healthy food to eat within the school environment supports this teaching.

We recognise that the ultimate success of Healthy Breaks depends on the support of parents, pupils and teachers.

## Promoting Healthy Breaks in our school

As part of our Healthy Break policy the children will be encouraged to have only healthy foods and drink at break time.

Children may order breaks from the school kitchen.

Breaks available are soda, toast, baguette or fresh fruit. Drinks available are milk or water. Milk is available in the school - and pupils can order it at the start of each term.

Children may bring in their own healthy snack from home if they do not wish to purchase a break in school.

Children may bring in fruit or dried fruit, any bread product such as wholemeal, granary or white bread. Examples: scones, wheaten, bread muffin, soda, pancake or crumpets.

Foods containing nuts are NOT allowed at any time in our school as some children may have allergic reaction to them.

As part of our Healthy Breaks Policy, parents/guardians are provided with information on the foods and drinks that are suitable for a break time snack.

The foods and drinks recommended for the Healthy Break Policy may be suitable for some therapeutic diets. However the child's dietary requirements devised by their dietician should be adhered to. If any issues arise teachers will consult parents/carers or relevant health professionals for advice.

Water will be available / allowed in the school as a break time drink and throughout the day. We have 2 water fountains inside and outside that provide the children with clean, fresh water. Fizzy drinks are not allowed in school at any time.

The healthy eating messages will be reinforced throughout the child's school day. During break times, weather permitting, children will be encouraged to be as active as possible.

The school will monitor the policy regularly and will consider the possible extension of healthy eating options at lunch time. At lunch time children may only drink water, milk or fruit juice. The school kitchen will only provide chips one day a week.

This Healthy Break Policy will be reviewed regularly.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman of Board of Governors)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016