

m

***HEALTHY EATING and LIFESTYLE POLICY***

**Article 24:**

*Every child has the right to the best possible health.*

**Curriculum Leader: Mrs M Bates**

**Policy Updated: MARCH 2023**

**Approved Date: MARCH 2023**

**School Ethos and Mission Statement**

# Spires Integrated Primary School strives to promote primary education of the highest quality for all children, in an integrated and caring environment.

**Rationale**

We, at Spires Integrated Primary 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.

**Aim**

The school aims to educate and promote the health of children and well-being of pupils and staff through all aspects of food, exercise and nutrition.

**WHY IS A HEALTHY BREAK IMPORTANT?**

• Childhood is an important time to establish good eating and drinking habits for future health.

• School healthy eating schemes give pupils the knowledge and opportunity to make healthier choices.

• Teachers have suggested that a healthy snack at break time can help with pupils’ concentration and behaviour in the classroom.

 • It encourages suitable drinks and snacks to help prevent tooth decay.

• It helps to meet our target of five or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

**This policy addresses the following issues: -**

• Mid-morning breaks will consist of fresh fruit/vegetables or bread-based products at break times on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

• Water is the only drink permitted during mid-morning break and in class on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

**Fizzy drinks are not permitted in school**

• Parents are requested to only send snacks and drinks with their children that comply with those listed above

• Special dietary needs are respected. Parents are asked to provide a copy of the diet sheet provided by a State Registered Dietician

• Praise and attention are used to reward positive behaviour and help to develop children’s self-esteem.

**Promoting Healthy Breaks**

As part of our Healthy Break Policy:

**Children** should eat fruit, vegetables, No fruit juice or fizzy drinks are to be consumed during snack-time.

Staff are also encouraged to follow the policy.

**Recommended Healthy Snacks**

Local health professionals have developed this list of healthy nutritional snacks. As part of the Healthy Eating and Lifestyle Policy we will be encouraging parents to only select items from the list below for their child to eat at snack time.

Water

Bread sticks and Wholemeal Crackers

Fruit or chopped up fruit and vegetables e.g. apple, satsuma, strawberries, halved grapes, melon slices, carrot sticks

Cheese

Ham

Bread Based Snacks –malt loaf, tea cakes, fruit bread

(Try to restrict yoghurts/frubes to lunches as these are messy in the classroom.)

**Nut-Free School**

It is school policy that pupils and staff do not bring nuts or nut-based products to the classroom or hall. We have children enrolled at our school that may suffer an anaphylactic shock if they come into contact with nut products or nut based products.

**Reward System**

The Healthy Break Policy will be reinforced throughout the child’s school day. In P1 to P4 children will receive a stamp for their healthy eating chart for bringing a healthy snack on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

**Water**

Research indicates that school children do not drink enough water during the school day and that this affects their concentration and behaviour. The school recognises that children concentrate better, are healthier and more comfortable if they are hydrated.There are a number of water fountains around school for the children to use at break time and lunch time. All children have access to water in the lunch hall (both school dinners and packed lunches). Drinking water is therefore available to all pupils, every day. Pupils are encouraged to bring in their own water bottle and are encouraged to drink regularly.

**School Meals**

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 pupils 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.

**Packed Lunches**

Parents and carers are encouraged to provide well balanced healthy packed lunches. Fizzy drinks are NOT allowed as part of the children’s packed lunches. Packed lunches should include some fruit or vegetables e.g. a piece of fruit, dried fruit, cherry tomato, raw carrot, cucumber wedge. All uneaten food is kept in the lunch box so parents can keep a check on what their children have eaten.

**Curriculum, Teaching and Learning**

At Spires Integrated Primary School, healthy eating and the exploration of diet and health are covered in the curriculum. Through topic work, TWAU, NSPCC and PDMU, children are encouraged to think about diet, health and personal development. This is supported by visits and assemblies by other agencies such as UberHeroes, Smokebusters, The Dairy Council, Action Cancer and Action Mental Health and Counselling services.

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 Physical Education and swimming lessons. A variety of extra-curricular clubs including activities of a sporting nature are available for children to join. (Please refer to the school’s PE Policy for further details.)

**Use of Food as a Reward**

Spires Integrated Primary School does not encourage the regular eating of sweets or other foods high in sugar or fat, especially as a reward for good behaviour or academic or other achievements. Other methods of positive reinforcement are used in school.

**Inclusion**

All pupils have access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. There is excellent provision for pupils with religious, ethical and medical requirements.

**Working With Pupils**

The Pupil Council in Spires Integrated Primary School is very active and has been consulted in the writing of this policy. All pupils are free to offer suggestions on health issues.

**Monitoring And Evaluation**

This policy will be monitored annually and will be reviewed every two years unless changes in guidelines or legislation requires an earlier review. All school staff, including teaching, pastoral and catering staff will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.

**Related Policies**

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Child Protection/Safeguarding

P.E.

TWAU

PDMU

RRS

RSE

We would value the support of everyone involved in helping us to carry out this important school policy.