



**Esker Educate Together National School
Healthy Eating Policy**

Aims of our Healthy Eating Policy

- To promote a whole school approach to healthy eating and nutrition
- To promote an awareness of the importance of a balanced diet
- To positively effect healthy eating among school-age children
- To raise levels of concentration within class through the consumption of healthy food
- To support and encourage healthy eating habits in children, which is hoped will become lifelong habits
- To provide members of staff, parents and those involved in school activities with clear information
- To protect the health and safety of children with serious food allergies.
- To encourage the children to be aware, alert and responsive to litter problems.

Benefits of a good diet

- Ensures the development of healthy hair, skin, teeth, muscles and strong bones
- Provides energy and aids concentration
- Strengthens the immune system

Breakfast

A nourishing breakfast is the best start to your child's day giving him/her the energy needed to concentrate and learn. Research has shown that children benefit both nutritionally and behaviourally from eating breakfast.

Lunches

- We are very lucky that our school is part of the Free Hot School Meals Program funded by the Department of Social Protection and our provider is Carambola.
- As part of the Carambola meals program your child will receive a hot lunch which will be eaten at big break and two snack items which will be eaten at little break.
- The hot lunch and two snack items will be delivered, free of charge, fresh to our school each morning.
- Children and parents can choose their preferred hot meals and two snack items from a menu each week on the Carambola website <https://order.carambola.ie/> and login details can be found on the sticker on your child's lunch bag.
- Children should bring water to school each day and are provided with a refillable water bottle from Carambola at the start of the school year. Our tap water is filtered and safe to drink.
- The Carambola portion sizes are the recommended amount for your child's age and your child doesn't need to be supplemented with any additional food for the day.
- Should you decide that you would like to supplement your child's lunch please see below list of food items not permitted.
- Should you decide that you do not wish for your child to take part in the Free Hot School Meals Program please let the school know ASAP, so as we can report this to Carambola to avoid unnecessary food and packaging wastage.
- The children will bring home uneaten snack items and food packaging/ leftover food waste to reduce waste in line with our Green School status. The containers and leftover food from the children's hot lunches will be collected and disposed of by Carambola.

Items Not Permitted In School

- Nuts (**of any kind** including peanut butter) **due to allergies**
- Individual classes may have other food items not permitted if there is a specific allergy identified within the class, this will be communicated to parents at the start of the school year or as soon as the school is informed in the case of serious allergies.
- Fizzy drinks, sports drinks and drinks/ juices with high sugar content
- Chocolate/ cereal bars
- Crisps
- Other salted products
- Popcorn
- Sweets
- Other sugary products eg. Biscuits/ cakes/muffins/ traybakes
- Chewing gum

- Processed food eg. Hotdogs/burgers

Special Treats

On specific days during the school year the children will be permitted special treats:

- End of term parties
- School Trips

Timeframe for Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner, if required. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management at a properly convened meeting of the Board on 27th September 2021