



KNOCKEVIN SPECIAL SCHOOL

HEALTH PROMOTING FOODS POLICY

Target audience

Parents, School staff, Governors

Policy Date

June 2025

Policy Review Lead

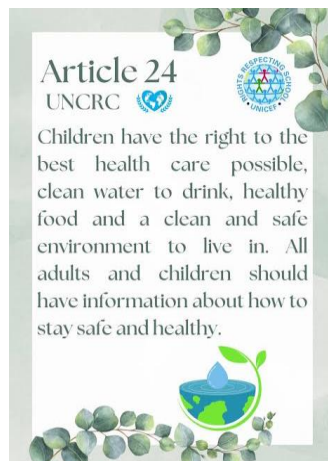
S Liddell

Date ratified by BoG

June 2025

Date to be reviewed

June 2029



Mission Statement

At Knockevin School, our ethos and vision are firmly rooted in the principles of **inclusion** and the promotion of pupil **rights**. We are committed to creating a school environment where children feel safe, valued, and happy, fostering positive emotions through nurturing relationships and a strong pastoral framework. This in turn creates the **best possible environment for learning**.

Background

At Knockevin, we know that children learn best when their basic needs are met. Access to food and water throughout the school day helps pupils stay healthy, focused and ready to learn.

Healthy eating habits developed in childhood can have a positive impact on lifelong health and wellbeing. As our pupils progress towards greater independence and prepare for adult life, we aim to support them in developing important life skills, including making choices about food and drink and participating in food preparation.

The purpose of this policy is to :-

- Encourage pupils to develop healthy eating habits.
- Inform parents and the wider school community about our approach to healthy eating.
- Promote a healthy and supportive school environment for all.

Our healthy eating guidelines are :-

- we offer healthy choices at break and breakfast each day
- we should drink plenty of fluids throughout the day
- milk is available in school for those who would like it

Good Morning Knockevin

We recognise that, for a variety of reasons, some pupils may arrive at school without having eaten breakfast. In addition, long journeys to school can mean that pupils are hungry on arrival.

To support pupils' wellbeing and readiness to learn, we provide a daily "**soft start**" for pupils in Years 1 to 15. This gives pupils time to settle, connect with others and enjoy breakfast if they wish.

Breakfast options typically include:

- Milk and water
- Fruit
- Cereal
- Bread-based products such as toast

There is no charge to parents for this provision.

Promoting Healthy Breaks in School

Each class prepares a break-time snack with pupils. Healthy options may include:

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Bread-based products

These are served alongside milk or water.

Parents are welcome to send additional break-time snacks for their child and are encouraged, where possible, to support the school's healthy eating approach by providing healthy choices.

Special Diets and Food Tolerances

We recognise that some pupils have specific dietary requirements, allergies, medical needs or sensory-related difficulties with food.

Where a pupil follows a therapeutic or medically prescribed diet, guidance from parents, carers and healthcare professionals, including dietitians, will always be followed.

If any concerns arise regarding a child's diet or food intake, school staff will consult with parents, carers and relevant health professionals to ensure appropriate support is provided.

We also recognise that some pupils have a very limited range of foods they are able to tolerate. While we will encourage and support access to healthy food options wherever possible, we will always take an individualised approach and ensure that pupils have access to foods they can eat comfortably, avoiding unnecessary hunger or distress.

Drinks from Home

Reusable bottles

As an Eco-School, we encourage pupils to bring a full, **reusable** water bottle to school each day where appropriate (recognising that some pupils require specialist cups/supervision while drinking). Water is available throughout the school day, and staff will support pupils to refill their bottles/access a drink as needed. Access to drinking water helps pupils stay hydrated, healthy and ready to learn while also reducing single-use plastic waste.

Medication in School

For the safety and wellbeing of all pupils, medication must never be sent to school in a drink or mixed with food.

If a pupil requires medication in food or drink during the school day, parents/carers must discuss this with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) before any medication is brought into school. This ensures that appropriate arrangements can be agreed for the safe sending, storage and administration of medication.

Where medication is required in school, parents/carers will be asked to complete the school's Administration of Medication Form and provide any necessary supporting information. Medication will only be administered in accordance with the school's medication procedures.

Celebrations and Events

As a nurturing school, we are keen to recognise and celebrate important events including pupil birthdays. Parents can send a shop bought cake to school for the class to enjoy (we ask that cakes are not homemade and are in original packaging so that we can refer to ingredient and allergy information). We would appreciate advance communication to the class teacher to ensure that they can plan for any individual dietary requirements or needs. Parents are asked not to send additional party food or drinks.

Food and Drink not permitted

For health and safety reasons, the following items are not permitted in school:

- Nuts and products containing nuts
- Coconut and products containing coconut
- Chewing gum
- Fizzy drinks

Life Skills

Breakfast, break times and cookery activities provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop independence and practical life skills.

Pupils are encouraged to take part in age and ability-appropriate food preparation activities such as buttering toast, preparing snacks and helping to serve food. These experiences help develop confidence, independence and everyday life skills, regardless of whether the pupil chooses to eat the food being prepared.

These skills are further enhanced through planned cookery activities during the school week.

Further Information

Information on healthy foods for children can be found at the following websites:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/healthy-breaks-school-children-guidance>

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/healthy-breaks-schools-leaflet-english-and-irish-translation>

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/healthy-choices-choose-wisely-advice-parents>

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/are-you-packing-healthy-lunch-english-and-irish-translation>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/5-a-day/>

Healthy breaks for schools

At this school,
we are committed
to healthy eating

At break time we enjoy healthy snacks
because they help us grow properly, do
our best in school and make us healthy
and happy in the future.



Milk

All whole,
semi-skimmed
or skimmed
unflavoured milk



Water

Tap water or
unflavoured, still,
bottled water



Fruit and vegetables

All fresh fruit
and vegetables



Bread based snacks

White or
wholemeal breads
spread thinly with
a little low-fat
spread, plain
breadsticks or toast



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Find us on:

