***Healthy School Policy:***

Members of Health Promotion Committee
Jackie Meagher – ACE Co-ordinator

**Rationale**
A healthy lifestyle 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**
Our aim is to help the students develop a healthy lifestyle that, we hope, will continue into adulthood.

**Benefits of a Healthy Lifestyle**

* Helps young people develop, grow and do well in school
* Encourages the development of self-esteem and a sense of self-worth
* Prevents childhood and adolescent health problems such as obesity, eating disorders, tooth decay and anaemia
* May help prevent health problems in later life, including heart disease
* Developing good eating habits at a young age is vital as changing patterns in adulthood can be very difficult.

**Consequences of an unhealthy lifestyle**

* Hungry children are more likely to have behavioural, emotional and academic problems at school.
* Skipping breakfast leads to poor performance and concentration.
* Poor eating habits and inactivity are the root cause of weight problems and obesity.
* Eating disorders are extremely common in young people
* Research suggests that overweight children are the largest group of bullying victims in schools
* Many children are overfed but undernourished.

**Healthy Lunches Policy**

A healthy diet is one that allows for a balance of different foods that sustain the wellbeing of the individual. Different lifestyles result in different dietary needs and individuals need to be aware of the effects of different foods on their bodies. In Camross Primary School we are implementing a Healthy Lunch Policy to encourage the children to have a suitably balanced diet.

The following foods may be included in lunches/snacks: Sandwiches, fruit and vegetables, yoghurt and cheese, crackers and plain biscuits. To drink we allow water, pure fruit juices and milk. Foods high in fat, salt, and sugar, are strongly discouraged during school.

Fizzy drinks, crisps, sweets, chocolate or chocolate biscuits are not allowed in school. Foods with artificial additives or high sugar content, i.e. cereal bars, fruit winders, etc will be discouraged. Chewing gum is strictly forbidden.

Pupils are encouraged to drink water during the day. Pupils can have a plastic bottle on their table which can be taken home and refilled each day. We encourage children to use a sports bottle as it is environmentally friendly. Juices and milk are to be drunk at recreation time only. Sweets and treats will only be consumed on special occasions or party days.

Lunchtime is a “priority time” within the school. All pupils sit at their desks to eat their lunch and then go out to the yard for playtime. This will ensure each child eats his/ her lunch and will help teachers monitor lunches.

At break time Fruit and Vegetables is greatly encouraged. Focus will be on those who make the effort to bring in fruit or/and vegetables for this break and in this way encourage all to make some effort.

**Physical Activity**

Every child will be enabled to achieve a minimum of 30 minutes physical activity each day. Playground games will be taught and revised at the beginning of each school year and playground markings will be familiar to all classes. In fine weather various leagues for all ages will be run at lunchtimes.

One hour of physical education will be provided each week. These lessons will be given by class teachers or other suitably trained and qualified staff. The qualifications of coaches and facilitators will be checked prior to lessons.

The school will use the new Move Often, Move Well programme to try and develop the children’s Fundamental Skills.

The School will provide physical and social environments that encourage and enable physical activity in a safe setting: Adult supervision, teaching in safe methods, safe facilities and the use of protective equipment are all components of a safe environment for physical activity.

The School promotes sport and physical activity by providing information on sports clubs and physical activity opportunities within the community via written notices.

There is an Active Week held in the school during the school year. During this time extra emphasis is placed on physical activity and its importance. A Sports Day is also held once during the year where a variety of sports are enjoyed by the pupils.

Go Noodle and Active Breaks: Every day the school will engage in 10-15 minute exercise in the yard or in classroom if weather inclement. Teachers will take turns leading the class. Some teachers do a dance routine and some do games, exercises etc. For indoor activities some teachers use the GoNoodle website or similar websites. Also the Busy Breaks booklet gives lots of ideas for indoor exercise.

**Dental Health**

Dental Health and disease prevention is important so children are encouraged to drink water during the school day. We acknowledge the importance of brushing twice a day and lessons will be taught in each class on dental health to encourage good dental care and hygiene. Tooth-friendly drinks, i.e. milk, water, pure fruit juices and dilute unsweetened fruit juices are the only beverages permitted during the school day.

The school will look into the availability of dental nurses to come to the school to give workshops on Dental Health.

**Mental Health**

The School recognises the importance of mental health and how it is an integral component of general health and well-being, allowing a pupil to fully realise his/her abilities.

The School promotes mental health education and has an anti-bullying policy in place which is enforced and which pupils are aware of. There will a “Worry/Thoughts Box” in some classroom where pupils can discreetly express any concerns.

It is especially useful for self-esteem, exam anxiety, fears such as injections, dentist, etc, traumas (for example falling in yard, etc). These techniques can be easily learned and will be taught to children as the need arises.

Mental Wellbeing in-service for whole school staff is organised.

To help highlight the awareness of healthy lifestyles the following will take place:

Teachers and children will discuss healthy eating and physical activity each term.
During the year all classes will receive a minimum of two lessons on nutrition.
Rewards such as stickers, merits, etc., will be given to children who have healthy lunches.
Our healthy lunch policy will be displayed where it is clearly visible to teachers, students and parents.
Teachers will provide positive modelling and supportive attitudes to encourage healthy eating.
The school has the Active Flag in place.
All pupils have the opportunity to learn to grow fruits and vegetables, and these lessons are linked with food/ nutrition classes.

**Priority lunchtime**
All children will be encouraged to participate in plenty of physical activity with a variety of active play equipment available for use at lunchtimes.
Staff members will be encourages to attend in-service courses and to participate in other forms of continuous professional development appropriate to their needs.

A Sports For All Day will be held in the final term, which will emphasise participation rather than winning.

Active Week will be held during the year.

Mindful Monday will happen on the 1st Monday of each month where children will get no homework but will be expected to do an activity with their parents or guardian and report back the following day.

The Health Committee and ACE committee will remain active and organise events each year to promote healthy lifestyles.

Senior class organise a “Thoughts Box”

**Timeframe for Implementation**

February 2019 – ongoing

Responsibility for Review

The policy will be reviewed by staff and the ACE Committee. The co-ordinator for this policy is Jackie Meagher

**Ratification and Communication**

The policy will be presented at the next BOM meeting for ratification and parents will be given details of its contents.

Ratified in February 2019

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Review in January 2020