At Ballymena Nursery School, we believe that balanced nutrition is essential for good health and effective teaching and learning. Schools play an important role in establishing and maintaining life-long healthy eating and drinking habits. As such, at Ballymena Nursery School all messages about food and drink should be consistent and positive in approach.

**Aims**

To encourage the desire to make a healthy choice.

To involve the whole community in developing and maintaining healthy eating and drinking habits.

To have a pleasant and sociable dining experience which enhances the social development of all children.

To encourage foods that are rich in vitamins, iron, calcium.

To encourage a balanced diet.

To offer milk and water to drink.

To take into account and accommodate dietary requirements.

To ensure high standards of hygiene amongst the children.

To develop healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime.

Portion sizes are according to guidelines laid down by the PHA guidelines.

**Snack**

All children are offered the opportunity to participate in the snack routine and the food items on offer are in line with the Governments Healthy Breaktime Guidance.

Teaching and Learning Staff will encourage good manners and promote social interactions during snack time.

Milk or water is on offer at snack time.

A selection of healthy options is offered for snack. These include: Fresh fruit/vegetables/a variety of breads/ crackers/ cheese.

**Celebrations**

To celebrate their birthday, children will be permitted to bring in nut free cake or buns to share with their class at home time.

**Sweets**

Parents and children are asked not to bring or send sweets into school.

**Activities**

Food and cooking activities are used in a variety of ways to widen the children’s experience as they are given the opportunity to touch, taste, smell and feel a variety of foods.

**Parental involvement**

A copy of the Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy can be found on the school’s website and is available from the School Office on request.

**Equal Opportunities**

The healthy eating and drinking systems and strategies in our school will be accessible to all children and staff regardless of race, gender and Special Educational Need.

**Health and Safety**

Food will be stored according to instructions on packaging and common sense.

Advice will be sought from the Environmental Health Agency if necessary.

Healthy Eating Policy

Ratified by the Board of Governors

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

To be reviewed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_