

## **Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh, Bishopstown, Co. Cork**

Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh National School, Bishopstown became a Health Promoting School (HPS) in 2002. As part of its development the whole school community (staff, parents and students) was consulted to identify the health-related issues of most concern. The results of this consultation were used to develop a written plan of action that took a whole school approach to all aspects of health. One of the main areas identified in the action plan was nutrition.

### **Development of a Whole School Nutrition Policy**

A whole school nutrition policy was developed following consultation with all members of the school community. This nutrition policy looks at healthy eating within the school, giving recommendations to children and parents based on the food pyramid. It is reviewed every couple of years to ensure that it remains up to date. The nutrition policy has looked beyond encouraging healthy lunches, to incorporate the development of a school garden, food safety and hygiene, education on nutrition and waste disposal/composting.

In the classroom, through the SPHE curriculum, children are educated on nutrition and encouraged to eat healthy and nutritious foods. Linking in with the development of the nutrition policy, a school garden was created. The garden is divided into lots with each class having responsibility for a specific lot. The children have planted spring bulbs and vegetables as well as an apple tree, a blueberry bush and strawberries in pots. Here, the children gain first-hand knowledge of growing and cultivating nutritious foods, ensuring that what they learn in the classroom is further reinforced by what they can see growing in the garden.

Composting is also performed in the school. Pupils collect peelings and skins daily from all the classes in the school and use them to make compost for the garden and to allow new growth. The school grounds are inspected by pupils on a daily basis for litter and every pupil is encouraged to pick up their litter to maintain a clean and healthy school environment. Emphasis is placed in every class on good hygiene practices such as hand-washing after using the bathroom and before meals.

Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh also encourages and facilitates participation in regular physical activity, with sports such as swimming, GAA, tennis, athletics and cooperative games which are built into the school day. To reinforce the healthy messages, each year the school is involved in Happy Heart Week which promotes all aspects of physical and mental health within the school.

The school continues to strengthen its capacity as a Health Promoting School and its HPS Committee is constantly looking at new ways to develop as a healthy setting for living, learning and working.

Want More Information?

Contact: Mary Tobin, HPS Coordinator, Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh, Curraheen Road, Bishopstown, Co. Cork.

Tel: +353 (0)21 454 3305. Email: [spnaoimhc.ias@eircom.net](mailto:spnaoimhc.ias@eircom.net)