

Infant Lesson Plan 2

Keeping Active

Objective

To develop pupils' awareness of the importance of physical activity to their health.

Duration: **30 minutes** (approximately).



Curricular Links

SPHE:

Myself ⇨ Taking care of my body ⇨ Food and nutrition / Knowing about my body

Words of the Day

Dairy – Milk and foods made from milk, such as cheese and yogurt.

Bones – Our bones make up our skeleton.

Muscles – Muscles cover our bones and help us to move.

Calcium – Calcium helps to keep our muscles, bones and teeth healthy. Milk, yogurt and cheese are sources of calcium.



Class Discussion

Begin by asking pupils to recall how dairy contributes to maintaining a healthy diet from Lesson 1 (Dairy in my Diet).

Inform pupils that:

- Physical activity is also important to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- An active lifestyle* is important for healthy bones and muscles.
- Particular exercises ('weight-bearing' exercises) are important for helping to keep bones healthy.

**Inform pupils that it is recommended that children and young people (aged 2–18 years) should be active for at least 1 hour every day.*

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/health/physical-activity-guidelines/>

Now ask pupils to think about ways in which we can help to look after our bones. Discuss the following points:

- Our bones grow and get stronger during childhood, so it is important to look after them. We can help build strong and healthy bones by eating the right foods and by being active.
- Calcium is important for the growth of our bones. However, over one third of Irish children are not getting enough calcium in their diets.
- Milk, yogurt and cheese are good sources of calcium. Three servings a day are recommended from the 'milk, yogurt and cheese' food group for children aged 5–8 years.
- A serving includes a 200ml glass of milk, a 125g pot of yogurt, or a 25g piece of cheese, e.g. Cheddar cheese. If possible, show the pupils an example of each measurement of food.
- Vitamin D is also very important for bone health.
(see Dairy in My Diet to find out more about Vitamin D)



Group Activity

Explain that exercises which put all your weight on your feet and legs, like jumping and running, are good for your bones. Ask your pupils in groups to think of, and draw, examples of these types of exercises. Ask each group to share their ideas with the class.

Class Activity

As a class, ask pupils to think of ways in which they can enjoy being active every day and create a class poster.

We can...

- Walk/cycle to school (or part of the way).
- Play games outside with our friends.
- Create new outdoor games with our friends.
- Take part in after-school activities.
- Agree a time limit for 'screen time' (TV, computer, phone, tablet etc.) with Mum/Dad/ adult at home.
- Check our school is signed up for the Active School Flag - www.activeschoolflag.ie.

Remind your pupils that most of their time in school is spent sitting at a desk, so it's important to get up and stretch their muscles when they can!

Encourage pupils to make the connection between food and energy needs. Explain that they need to eat to help them to be active during the day.



Extension Activities

- 1 In the hall or playground, set up a circuit of simple and fun weight-bearing exercises (running on the spot, jumping jacks, skipping etc.) and ask pupils to do each exercise for 30 seconds. Explain to your pupils how these simple and fun exercises can be done quickly and easily anywhere by almost everyone.
- 2 Ask pupils to draw a picture of themselves doing their favourite weight-bearing exercise.

Bring it Home

Encourage your pupils to take home the message of the importance of physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle. As a homework activity, you can ask your pupils to:

- 1 Organise a family walk.
- 2 Walk their own dog or a neighbour's dog (with an adult).
- 3 Play a team sport with their family.

