

## Healthy Lunch Policy

As parents and educators, we are all very conscious of the importance of our children's diet and how it impacts on their health, development and well-being. Children spend a significant part of the day in school, and therefore it is very important that they eat healthy nutritious lunches. **This is much easier to encourage when every child is eating the same kinds of food.** A representative group of parents and teachers have formed a Healthy Lifestyle Committee and worked together to draw up a Healthy Lunch Policy. This is in response to a survey in which you, the parents, showed your overwhelming enthusiasm for healthy eating in the school. The successful implementation of this policy is an important step in encouraging a healthy lifestyle for our children. As well as promoting healthy eating at school, the committee has been involved in other projects throughout the school year. Each month we go for a walk across the Curragh

Every term we choose a topic e.g. a healthy heart, good oral hygiene, diabetes/ food choices. Professionals may come into the school and give talks and bring in exhibits when possible. Children also have a fruit break each day and have been introduced to circuit training and "Bizzy Breaks", a ten minute exercise program which can be carried out in the classroom. All families and pupils are asked to co-operate with the implementation of the Healthy Lunch Policy.

### Why does our school have a Healthy Lunch Policy:

- We are a Health Promoting School and this means that we attempt to concentrate on all aspects of health and well-being as we teach our children
- As part of a Health Promoting School initiative we encourage our pupils to be active and we strive to accentuate good habits at all times
- Eating healthily is all about good habits
- The combination of healthy eating and being active guards against obesity and the onset of certain illnesses
- The combination of a healthy lifestyle, which includes healthy eating, exercising and getting enough sleep assists pupils in reaching their potential academically
- As with other aspects of school life, home support is crucial if our Healthy Lunch Policy is to be effective
- Sometimes it can be a battle to encourage children to eat healthily at home! When they eat healthily in school it makes it easier to win this battle!

## NUT MINIMISATION POLICY

This policy was drafted as an interim guide to school personnel and other members of the school community in response to the risk posed to certain children by nuts and foods containing nuts. Some children in Scoil Bhríde have severe anaphylactic allergies triggered

by nuts. Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction and is potentially life threatening. Scoil Bhríde is committed to providing a safe environment that meets the needs of our children. To minimise the risk posed to these children the school has developed the following strategies.

- **Please do not send nuts or peanuts to school.** There is an increased risk of other food allergies in peanut allergic children and because of the risk of cross contamination it is usually recommended that peanut allergic people avoid **all** nuts.
- Please do not send in foods with active nut ingredients or which **may contain traces of nuts or peanuts** to school. In particular peanut butter, hazelnut spread (nutella), certain muesli bars, chocolate bars and biscuits containing nuts. No nut oils such as peanut oil.
- Please encourage thorough washing of hands and face with a damp cloth if children have eaten these foods before coming to school.
- Provide drink containers and lunch boxes which are clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended.
- Discourage any trading or sharing food.
- Continue vigilance when there is a change from usual routines e.g. tours, family picnic days at school, sports days.
- Be conscious if some-one else is making your child's lunch that they are aware of the nut-free policy

### **Monday - Thursday**

#### **Healthy Lunch Choices:**

- Bread and rolls, especially whole wheat
- Sandwiches
- Pitta bread, naan bread, wraps and all bread products (not containing nuts)
- Crackers
- Rice cakes
- Pasta and rice
- Cheese and yoghurt - for infants use small yoghurt
- Nutritious cereals and muesli - not cereal bars (not containing nuts)
- Meat
- Peeled carrot, celery, salads
- Bananas, oranges apples, kiwi, nectarines, pears, strawberries etc.
- Drinks - milk, water, soup
- Dried fruit i.e. Sultanas, mango, pineapple, apricots
- Popcorn
- Home baking (not containing nuts)

The items listed underneath should not be included in school lunches, but may be included on treat day:

- Biscuits, funsize bar, small bun, funsize mini jellies, home baking
- Diluted squash drinks

### **Friday is "Special Treat Day"**

We all enjoy a treat from time to time. To encourage children to abide by this healthy lunch policy, Friday is designated Special Treat Day. Children can bring one item from the list above, in addition to a nutritious lunch.

**The Following items should never be included in school lunches:**

- All crisps and all related products, - Snax, Pringles etc.
- Fizzy drinks
- Chewing Gum
- Lollipops - due to health and safety i.e. Running in the yard

### **Children with special dietary requirements**

Children with special dietary requirements and / or allergies will at all times be facilitated to choose foods to suit their own individual requirements. Parents should discuss this with the class teacher to avoid misunderstanding. **Please inform the school if your child has or develops allergies.**

### **Preparation of lunches**

It encourages children to eat when the lunch is prepared attractively and in a convenient to eat manner. Oranges should be peeled, especially for younger children. Cheese could be grated and mixed with a few grapes or cherry tomatoes. A spoon should be included for eating yoghurts or cereals.

The responsibility for providing healthy lunches lies with you the parents and we would ask you to cooperate with us and comply with this policy which is in the interest of all our children.

Failure to do so will result in contact being made with you. This will involve a non-conformity letter being sent for you to complete

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your generosity and support in the past and we look forward to a successful Healthy Lunch Policy.