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**Healthy Eating Policy**

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at Scoil Cholmcille we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

What people eat is known to be a key factor influencing health. Research indicates a strong link between diet and performance (e.g. a low sugar intake promotes concentration, lessens hyperactivity, protects teeth, and lessens the risk of diabetes. A low salt intake reduces the risk of heart disease in later life).

To promote healthy eating habits in our school, we introduced a healthy eating policy.

**Aims**

1. To promote the personal development and well-being of the child
2. To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.

**Objectives**

1. To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy
2. To enable the child to accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

Lunch is an important meal for school-going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre (roughage).

The traditional packed lunch of milk and sandwiches is under attack from a range of convenience foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, chocolate and soft drinks. Parents and teachers are concerned about this trend but some find it difficult to come up with popular healthy alternatives. We ask you to encourage a healthy lunch right from the start.

The following guide is designed to help you provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for your children

**Bread & Alternatives**

Bread or rolls, preferably wholemeal  
 Rice – wholegrain

**Savouries**

Lean Meat  
 Chicken/Turkey

Pasta – wholegrain  
Potato Salad  
Wholemeal Scones  
Bread sticks  
Crackers  
Pitta bread

Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines  
Cheese  
Quiche  
Pizza

### **Fruit & Vegetables**

Apples, Banana, Peach  
Mandarins, Orange segments,  
Fruit Salad, dried fruit,  
Plum, Pineapple cubes  
Grapes,  
Cucumber, Sweetcorn  
Tomato,  
Coleslaw.

### **Drinks**

Milk  
Fruit juices  
Squashes, i.e. low sugar  
Yoghurt

### **A word about Milk**

Growing children should get approximately one pint of milk a day, or its equivalent as cheese, yoghurt or milk pudding. This ensures that they get enough calcium, which is essential for healthy bones and teeth. If a child does not drink a glass of milk at lunch, encourage him to have a carton of yoghurt or a small helping of cheese instead.

### **We ask that children do not bring the following to school:**

Snacks known to be high in sugar, saturated fat, salt, additives and preservatives, including the following:

- Crisps (including crisp-style snacks)
- Fizzy drinks (including fizzy fruit-flavoured water, juices, etc)
- Sweets
- Chocolate biscuits/bars
- Chewing gum

So as to take a proactive approach to healthy lunches, teachers will from time to time, reward children who can show a piece of fruit or other healthy foods in their lunchboxes.

### **A very simple approach to healthy eating is to use the Food Pyramid:**

Fats, Sugar, Sweets etc.

Sparingly

Meat, Fish, Peas, Beans	2 portions per day
Milk, Cheese, Yoghurt	3+ portions per day
Fruit & Vegetables	4+ portions per day
Bread, Cereals & Potatoes	6+ portions per day

**N.B. Parents/guardians of any child with a medical condition which requires a special diet should contact the school.**