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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 (Type 2). A low salt intake reduces the risk of heart disease in later life). It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that children have a healthy lunch at school daily.

To promote healthy eating habits in our school, we introduced a healthy eating policy a number of years ago.

### 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.

Scoil Cholmcille is a nut free school. We ask that parents/guardians avoid giving children peanuts, peanut butter sandwiches, other spreads containing nuts such as Nutella and snacks/bars containing nuts or labelled "may contain nut traces" in school lunches.

The following guide is designed to help you provide quick, appetising, and nutritious lunches for your children. Children are encouraged not to share lunches in school.

<p><b>Bread &amp; Alternatives</b>          Bread or rolls, preferably wholemeal          Rice – wholegrain          Wholemeal Scones          Pasta – wholegrain          Breadsticks          Crackers          Pitta bread</p>	<p><b>Savouries</b>          Potato Salad          Lean Meat          Chicken/Turkey          Quiche          Cheese</p>
<p><b>Fruit &amp; Vegetables</b>          Grapes          Cucumber          Sweetcorn          Tomato          Coleslaw          Mixed salad          Apples, Banana, Peach          Mandarins, Orange segments,          Fruit Salad, dried fruit,          Plum, Pineapple cubes</p>	<p><b>Drinks</b>          Milk          Fruit juices          Squashes, i.e. low sugar          Yoghurt</p>

**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
- Nut products including Nutella

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

**Hot School Meals**

Every child in Mount Hanover N.S has access to a free school lunch under the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection’s School Meals Programme. This lunch is provided by an external Lunch Provider. Parents/guardians and children can choose their lunch menu online. Lunch menus are set up to encourage variety. Even if pupils are availing of this lunch scheme, they will need to bring something for the first break.

**Treat Days**

Occasionally there may be treat days in school e.g. Halloween, Christmas, Easter, school tour day. The children are encouraged to eat the treat AFTER their lunch is eaten. On these days, children can bring ONE small treat to school.

**Green Flag School**

Our green school motto is: ‘Pack it up, bring it home, our school is a Litter Free Zone!’

With this in mind, children are also asked to:

- take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons
- put only fruit peel into the compost bins
- do not bring in cans and glass – for safety reasons

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