

**PORTLAW N.S.  
HEALTHY LUNCH POLICY**

**Aim:**

The aim of this policy is to ensure children eat a healthy, well-balanced lunch, thus promoting a healthy lifestyle. By encouraging healthy eating patterns we educate children for later life. Many of the choices made for children today will influence their health in the future. One decision parents make everyday involves the choice and preparation of meals, particularly school lunches.

Healthy eating habits started in childhood will stay with children forever and promote a healthier lifestyle. Healthy eating commences daily with a well balanced breakfast which helps improve concentration and behaviour and balances energy levels.

**Objectives:**

- As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) Programme, we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.
- To enable the child to appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy.
- To enable the child to accept some **personal responsibility** for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet.

**Healthy Lunch Options:**

Lunches should be composed of a variety of foods and include at least one item from the different food groups. For example there should be something in the lunch box from:

**1. Fruit and vegetable group**

Some typical choices are a whole fruit, a fruit juice drink, vegetable soup, salad, or cooked/raw vegetables. Small apples preferable - consider the time spent chewing.

**2. Cereal group**

Foods such as bread, rice, pasta, bagels, pancakes, pitta bread, crackers or rice cakes.

**3. Dairy group**

Milk, cheese or yogurt.

**4. Protein-rich food**

Meat, chicken, fish, egg, beans, peas, lentils or cheese.

We encourage children to choose from the following foods regularly

- Bread/scones
- Pitta bread
- Fruit
- Raw vegetables
- Cheese, lean meat, eggs, fish, salad
- Fruit Juice
- Yogurt Drinks / Fromage Frais
- Milk
- Water
- Soup

**Treat Foods :**

We recommend foods such as:

- Fresh fruit
- Raisins
- Yogurt or Yogurt drinks
- Wholegrain/ Digestive biscuits – maximum 2 plain biscuits per lunchbox.

The following 5 Cs are not allowed : Chewing Gum, Crisps, Chocolate bars, Candy, Cereal Bars (including Nature Valley and Belvita)

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

**Role of Parents:**

- Provide a healthy well-balanced lunch for children
- Encourage healthy eating
- Inform the school of any child's special dietary needs
- To implement school policy by not allowing their children to bring chewing gum, crisps, chocolate bars, candy, cereal bars, fizzy drinks or any nut related product to school.

**Role of Children:**

- To select a small snack for mid-morning break.
- To eat their lunch
- To bring home any uneaten lunch
- To help make their lunches and remind parents of the Healthy Lunch Policy
- To adhere to the Healthy Lunch Policy.

**Role of School:**

- To promote and encourage healthy eating.

- If children bring items not allowed under the Healthy Eating Policy they will not be allowed to eat them while in school.

**Implementation:**

A copy of *The Healthy Food Pyramid* will be on display in every classroom.

As part of the Social Personal and Health Education curriculum reasons for healthy eating will be discussed with the children regularly by staff.

Teachers will continue to give children a sweet treat on occasions in recognition of work done, improvements in work or behaviour and in an effort to promote positive behaviour.

This policy shall be reviewed on a regular basis.

**The Golden Rules are:**

- **Vary lunches. Try something new.**
- **Ensure your son/daughter gives some assistance in making his lunch.**
- **Water is the recommended drink. No fizzy drinks. Isotonic drinks are not permitted. Try milk, flavoured milk drinks or a diluted fruit drink.**
- **No junk food (crisps, sweets or similar products)**

Date: October 2015