

## Gaelscoil Bhrian Bóroimhe: Healty Eating Policy

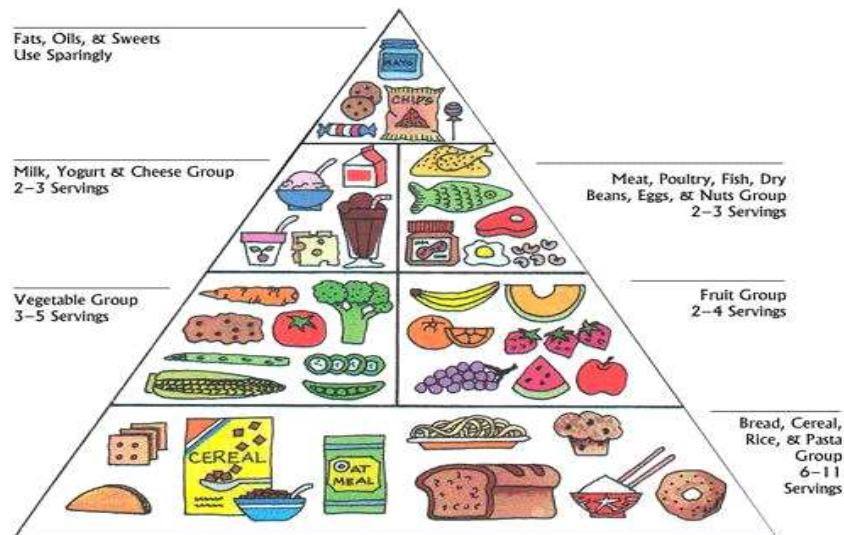
### Aims of Healthy Eating Policy are to:

- Support and encourage healthy eating habits in children, which will become life long habits.
- Promote nutrition awareness.
- Improve attention levels in class



### Creating a healthy lunch box:

- Children need small amounts of a variety of good food.
- Always base your choice on the food pyramid and try to choose the most pure and unprocessed forms of food.
- Use butter and spreads sparingly and use those low in saturated fat.
- Read labels carefully. Watch out for disguised sugars such as glucose, sucrose and fructose in foods.
- Try to choose a variety of different fruit and veg based on their colour. For example, green veg contain nutrients for a healthy heart. Yellow or orange coloured fruit/veg are high in vitamin A and C. All fruit contain soluble fibre which helps digestion.
- Many Irish children are not meeting their calcium requirements. Give your child milk as a drink and look for yoghurts with added calcium.
- Recycle! Choose a lunch box with several compartments which is easy to open. Re-use plastic bottles for water.



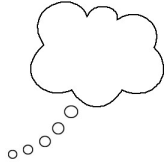
The Food Pyramid

### Drinks:



- Milk or water. Keeping children's teeth in mind and to improve concentration in school, we ask that each child has a bottle of water with a non-spill flip top which they can keep on their desks and take a sip during class. These bottles can be recycled and reused by filling them with tap water. Tap water is better for teeth because it contains fluoride.
- Avoid diluted fruit squash. Many juices are little more than sugary water, are made from concentrate and are not good for developing teeth. Instead choose freshly squeezed juice.

### Ideas for little break: “Fruit Break”



- Yoghurts that have added calcium (natural yoghurt is highest in calcium)
- Cubes of cheese
- Vegetable sticks eg carrot, celery, petit poids, pepper (red, yellow, green)
- All fresh fruit – apples, mandarins, peaches, pears, plums, bananas, kiwis

### Highly recommended foods for lunch:

- Different breads. Wholegrain brown bread, bagels, breads with added seeds. Avoid white bread as it is very low in fibre.
- Rolls of all sizes – brown, wholemeal, petit pains, wholemeal burger buns
- Pita breads, naan bread, bagels, tortilla wraps
- Wholegrain/wholewheat crackers
- Pasta, spaghetti, cous cous and rice could be included in salad boxes.
- Dried fruits – raisins, sultanas, apricots, figs. Dried fruits should be eaten with bread to avoid them sticking to teeth.
- Variety foods such as pizza or quiche.

### Fillings for sandwiches:



- Tinned or fresh tuna, salmon, sardines (omega 3 fish oils)
- Salad vegetables: lettuce, tomato, sweetcorn, cucumber.
- Lean ham, chicken, pork etc. remember, the less processed, the more nutritious.
- Sausages and salami are low in protein and iron so try to avoid these.
- Cheeses – cubes, sticks, slices
- Boiled egg

### Foods that are not allowed:

- Fizzy drinks
- Cakes and sweets of any kind including Fruit Winders.
- Crisps and biscuits
- Cereal bars because they belong at the top of the food pyramid and are made of up to 50% sugar.
- Chocolate spread and peanut butter spread (belong at the top of the food pyramid)
- Popcorn as it is high in salt. You can make your own at home.

### General Rules:

- Children are not allowed to share their lunch due to allergies
- If a child has an allergy to a specific food eg. nuts, that food will be banned within the class.

If you have a fussy eater, don't worry, when he/she sees his/her peers eating the same he/she will soon join in!

### Success Criteria *We will know that the policy is effective by:*

- Observing what children have in their lunch boxes
- Doing surveys
- The feedback from parents/guardians and school staff



### Useful information:

The Health Promotion Unit have a booklet called “Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Primary Schools” [www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie).

The VHI website have a section on children returning to school which includes advice on healthy lunches. [www.vhi.ie/hfiles/hf-011.jsp](http://www.vhi.ie/hfiles/hf-011.jsp).

The Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute have a vast amount of information on nutrition and diet and have suggestions on what to include in school lunch boxes. [www.indi.ie](http://www.indi.ie).