



Bennekerry National School Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme, at Bennekerry National School 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 influencing factor on their 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 habits in our school, we introduced a healthy eating policy starting from September 2022

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 to provide quick, appetising and nutritious lunches for your children:

Bread & Alternatives

Bread or rolls, preferably wholemeal
Rice - wholegrain
Pasta - wholegrain
Potato Salad
Wholemeal Scones
Bread Sticks
Crackers
popcorn

Savouries

Lean Meat
Chicken/Turkey
Tinned Fish e.g. tuna/sardines
Cheese
Quiche
Pizza
Pitta Bread

Fruit & Vegetables

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

Drinks

Milk
Water
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 milk daily, encourage him/her 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 and lollipops.
- Chocolate bars.
- Chewing gum.
- Nuts or products containing nuts e.g. Nutella /chocolate spread– (some children in the school are allergic to nuts).
- Some cereal bars are very high in sugar. Be mindful of the sugar content of cereal bars before packing your child's lunch.



Treat Day

Friday will be treat day. On this day, children can include one food item that may not be on the healthy eating plan (for example; **small fun size chocolate bar, small bun, small piece of chocolate cake**).

Large bars of chocolate, share bags of chocolate or sweets and lollipops are not permitted during treat day.

Green Flag School

With this in mind, children are also asked to:

- Take home (in lunchbox) all uneaten food, silver paper, wrappings, containers and cartons.
- Not to 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.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management & Parents' Association on_____.

It will be reviewed on _____.

Chairperson
Bennekerry National School