

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.

This policy was revised in September 2025, to include the School Hot Lunch Programme. It is reviewed as necessary in tandem with all stakeholders.

School Lunch Programme:

As a DEIS school we avail of the Free School Lunch Programme. From the first week of October 2025, we will start using the hot school lunches programme. 'Fresh Today' is the chosen school lunch company. This runs from the first week of October each year. The children can opt out of this programme and bring in their own lunch if they wish. The school lunches cater for a healthier lifestyle.

Please note for the first month of school all children must bring in their own lunch until the free school lunch starts.

Healthy Lunch Options:

If a child chooses to opt out of the free school lunch or brings in any additional lunch items then we encourage children to choose from the following foods:

Food:

- Wholemeal bread
- Pitta bread
- Fruit
- Raw vegetables
- Cheese
- Meat/Tuna
- Yoghurt
- Raisins

Drinks:

- Water
- Milk
- **No juices, cordials, energy or fizzy drinks (including Prime)**

Not allowed:

- All nuts including any type of chocolate spread, nut butter, peanut butter and bars with nuts. There are pupils with a severe allergy to nuts in the school. This a whole school approach including the staff room as some allergies are very severe.
- In some classes parents/Fresh Today will be informed if there is a specific allergy such as bananas, citrus fruits etc. so the class does not bring in/choose those items for lunch.
- Chewing gum, crisps, fizzy drinks (including Prime), juices/cordials, energy drinks, chocolate, sweets, lollipops, jellies etc.

Children will be encouraged to make healthier choices.

Please note:

Certain children with complex needs may have restrictive diets and if the above can not be adhered to then the parent and teacher must discuss. This includes children with medical needs such as diabetes.

Please note, on occasion teachers may give out a Friday jelly, or end of term treat.

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, allergies and make sure all necessary medication is sent into the school and signed off by the Board of Management.
- To implement school policy by not allowing their children to bring chewing gum, crisps, fizzy drinks, juices/cordials, energy drinks, chocolate, sweets, lollipops, jellies etc. to school.
- To provide lunch boxes (if not availing of school lunch) and re-sealable drink containers.

Role of Children:

- To eat their lunch
- To bring home any uneaten lunch and wrapping
- To help make their lunches (if not availing of school lunch) and remind parents of the Healthy Lunch Policy.
- Not to bring chewing gum, crisps, fizzy drinks, juices/cordials, energy drinks, chocolate, sweets, lollipops, jellies etc.

Role of School:

- To promote and encourage healthy eating.
- To promote the Breakfast Club to target families (run by the Lions Club & SCP in the school on Mondays and Fridays)
- School provides fruit and milk for those children who have forgotten lunch (sponsored by Bray Town Council)
- If children are hungry and have missed the Breakfast club, toast, fruit and yogurt may be available in the Headlamps Project Room.
- During particular weeks/events, the school may provide a treat to all children.
- As part of the Social Personal and Health Education curriculum, reasons for healthy eating will be discussed with the children regularly by staff.
- Children attending The Headlamps project room will be taught how to make healthy snacks.
- Teachers may take classes to the Parents' Room for cooking with the emphasis on healthy eating.
- To promote the use of fresh vegetables by growing them in the school garden and eating them in school.

Implementation:

This policy was implemented from September 2023 and updated in September 2025 to incorporate the start of the hot lunch programme in October 2025.

Minor changes are made as necessary in accordance with the context of the school- ie allergies.

Teachers may 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. Sweet treats used prudently by teachers will not interfere with the health of the children. For birthdays, there will be no birthday cakes or party bags allowed.

Chairperson of the Board of Management:



ANN QUINLAN

Date: 17th September 2025