**Healthy Eating Policy**

**Introduction**

Crinkill N.S. supports the recommendations of the HSE in relation to healthy eating habits at school lunch breaks. The HSE recommends that children's lunches should consist primarily of items from the bottom four shelves of the food pyramid. Healthy Eating is promoted by the staff as part of our Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme. Healthy eating habits which are developed at home and supported by the school will benefit the children for the rest of their lives.

**Rationale**

Children who eat a balanced diet while in school have constant energy, are more alert, have better concentration and healthy teeth. It is hoped that this policy will provide clarity for parents when preparing a packed lunch.

**Content**

Foods recommended for school lunches include the following:

* Sandwiches
* Crackers
* Rolls or Pitta Bread
* Scones
* Small tub of Pasta
* Potato Salad
* Fruit - Fresh or Dried
* Cheese
* Yoghurt including frubes
* Homemade buns/scones or fruitcake without icing

Treat day: As a reward for adhering to the healthy eating policy and to allow parents extra freedom when preparing lunches, children can bring a treat day on Friday. Appropriate treats include a fun size chocolate bar, cereal bar, small portion of popcorn, kinder bar, one or two biscuits etc. These items should not be included in lunches during the week. The school also reserves the right to give children a treat on a special occasion e.g. Christmas.

Foods that are prohibited

Crisps, chewing gum, lollipops and fizzy drinks are not acceptable as treats for school lunches.

Drinks

Milk and plain water are best for school lunches. Many of the commercially produced fruit drinks contain a lot of sugar and therefore contribute to tooth decay. Fizzy drinks are not allowed in school lunches.

Water

Still non flavoured water is the most suitable drink and can be consumed throughout the day. Children are frequently dehydrated because they do not drink enough water. When children are dehydrated, they can have headaches, lose concentration and become irritable.

The HSE recommends that children are allowed to have a bottle of plain water on their desk so that they can drink as required throughout the day. The school authorities support this recommendation. It is desirable that children bring water in a resealable bottle with preferable a sports cap to place on their desks. Older children may require two bottles particularly in hot weather. Plain water is the only drink allowed on desks.

Guidelines for Healthy Lunchtimes

* Children bring a healthy lunch in a secure lunch box.
* Children are asked to bring their drinks in a plastic bottle with a screw top/sports cap, no cartons please.
* All lunch boxes and drinks bottles are to be labelled with child's name.
* Lunch times are supervised by a teacher. Children are given adequate time to eat lunch.
* Children are expected to remain seated while eating lunch.
* Children are asked to bring their own spoon if required.
* Teachers will assist small children with opening of boxes etc.
* Bin is provided for all fruit waste e.g. skins, cores, which is recycled in school.
* Children are requested to put wrappers, cartons, bottles etc., into their lunch box and take them home.
* Children may only bring fruit into the playground where bins are provided for waste.
* No bottles or drinks to be brought into the playground.
* Every effort will be made to contact parent if child forgets or loses their lunch.
* If your child has a food allergy, please inform the school.

Lunches and Litter

Crinkill NS is a Green School and lunch packaging creates a waste disposal problem in the school therefore we ask children to bring home their packaging each day.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed in the month of September each year.

**Ratification**

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management.

**Signed:** *John Bergin Sandra Nolan*

 **Chairman BOM Principal**