



SANDBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

HEALTHY LUNCH BOX POLICY

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Author /owner	HEADTEACHER		

POLICY:

It is our policy to:

- Ensure all children bring in a healthy lunch box that meets the same standards food provided in school dinners. This includes the following:
 - A good portion of starchy food e.g. wholemeal roll or bread, wraps, pitta pocket, pasta or rice salad.
 - Plenty of fruit and vegetables e.g. an apple, orange, banana, carrot sticks, small box of raisins or any other fruit or vegetable.
 - A portion of lean meat for example: ham, chicken, beef, tuna, eggs or beans.
 - A portion of milk or dairy food e.g. yoghurt.
 - A drink e.g. a small carton of milk, fruit juice or a bottle of water.
 - One small biscuit e.g. kit-kat, penguin, club, cake bar etc. – This is equivalent to a school meal dessert.
- Abide by the regulations of the British Nutrition Foundation.
- Inform and educate children and families so that they can make healthy food choices;
- Promote healthy eating;
- Promote the eating of fruit and vegetables;
- Actively monitor lunch box choices.
- Actively return any unsuitable food choices.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all staff and children.

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND:

Why is healthy eating important for children and young people?

A lunch box provides a valuable contribution towards a child's nutritional requirements for a day. According to the Department of Education's 2008 school census, over 127,000 children in Northern Ireland (42% of pupils present) took a packed lunch to school. An all-island study (2005) looking at the nutritional balance of over 2,500 school children's packed lunches found that 9 out of every 10 lunch boxes (92%) contained foods high in fat and sugar. Almost half of all packed lunches (47%) had no

portions of fruit and vegetable and over two thirds of lunch boxes (71%) did not meet the compulsory school meals standards for Northern Ireland. Similar research conducted by the Food Standards Agency in 2004 also indicated that children who take a packed lunch to school are eating far too much fat, saturated fat, salt and sugar in one meal.

Clearly, there is a need to make lunch boxes healthier and more appetising to pupils. But this does not mean that they should miss out on all the things that they enjoy eating. Variety is the key to a healthier lunch box. It is all about getting a balance and a good variety of foods over a period of time, no single food can provide all the essential nutrients that the body needs.

NHS Eatwell plate guidelines

A healthier lunch box should be based on the eatwell plate food groups (see www.eatwell.gov.uk), which promote balance and variety in the diet. Parents and pupils should try to include something from each of the eatwell food groups in the lunch box and ensure that this includes a drink.

(This can be downloaded in full here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>)

Eat at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables a day.

Base meals on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates. Choose wholegrain where possible.

Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks and yoghurts). Choose lower-fat and lower-sugar options.

Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein. Aim for at least two portions of fish every week – one of which should be oily, such as salmon or mackerel.

Choose unsaturated oils and spreads and eat in small amounts.

Eat foods high in fat, salt and sugar less often and in small amounts.

Drink plenty of fluids – the government recommends 6-8 cups/glasses a day.