

DEAR ..... (Teacher's Name)

I am \_\_\_\_\_ mammy and I would like to take this opportunity to make you aware that my child has **coeliac disease**. This is a medical condition which causes my child to react to gluten which is a protein found in wheat, barley, oats and rye. General food examples are bread, biscuits, chocolate, chips, gravy, sauces etc.....

In the classroom there are some risks which I would like to point out to you, in order to help keep my child safe and to help the school understand my child's condition and symptoms if gluten is infested and the harm it can do.

It's important to know that there are other times beyond lunchtime, where a child can come in contact with **gluten** such as:

- Art Class (play dough, pasta & cereal)
- Class treats, birthday parties, school trips
- Baking/Bake Sales (flour)
- If **glutened** by ingestion or cross contamination my child can experience – vomiting, diarrhoea, headaches, cramps, blisters on tongue, fatigue, paleness, rash to name a few. Long term can be as severe as osteoporosis, miscarriage or cancer.

As a member of the Coeliac Society of Ireland we receive a Food List which contains in detail a list of supplier's/supermarket products that are safe. We also have updates emailed to us if a product is removed from the book, as no longer considered safe to eat under the guidelines. Therefore, I have enclosed a list of foods that are safe and I will inform you accordingly of any amendments,

Each year our List is updated, so please only use the most current information from me/us. Product ingredients or manufacturing processes can change without that being apparent from labels.

**Coeliac disease is more than a food allergy.** It's an autoimmune disease and it's not contagious. The only treatment is a strict gluten-free diet for life after diagnosis is made. Medicine or drugs are not required. If a coeliac eats gluten the lining of the small intestine becomes damaged reducing the ability to absorb the nutrients from food.

**A sense of normality is crucial.** Although coeliac disease is a serious condition, it's important my child feels as normal as any other pupil. Please be sure that my child's school life is as normal as possible by having him or her take part in all aspects of the classroom.

**Cross contamination.** As much as a crumb can be damaging my child. Please remember to:

- Wipe down table and counter surfaces after lunch time and check for stray crumbs.
- Clean down surfaces after art and crafts when using gluten containing products.
- Use separate utensils or wash the utensils thoroughly after working with unsafe foods.
- Do not let children share lunches.

**Birthdays/Special treats.** I/we would be happy to provide you with gluten-free food items or materials if advance notice is given. Please notify me/us of special treat days so that a

GF option can be arranged for my child. If requested, I can arrange for an extra copy of the Coeliac Society of Ireland's Food List to be kept in the classroom.

**Class presentations.** If you wish to talk to the class about my child's condition, please speak to me first. Talking about coeliac disease is a great way to create awareness and understanding. I would be happy to put together a short program about the condition that my child is comfortable with.

**Communication.** Please feel free to contact me/us anytime if you have any questions or concerns, no matter how small they may seem. We all want the best for my child at school!

***Thank you!***

**Name 1:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Num:

\_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Name 2:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Num:

\_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_