



'Together everyone achieves more.'

Healthy packed lunch policy.

Introduction

What children eat at school is important and school lunches have to meet strict standards to provide one third of a child's nutrient requirements.

In 2013 the government-commissioned school food review found that 57% of children are not eating school lunches, but bring a packed lunch, have snacks, or buy their food elsewhere. The report indicated that the majority of these meals are unhealthy. In fact, in contrast to what most parents think, only 1% of packed lunches meet the nutritional standards.

In addition to affecting child health, there is substantial evidence that poor nutrition affects cognitive performance.

Aim

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with parents, pupils and staff with the following aims:

- To improve the nutritional quality of packed lunches and other foods taken into schools.
- To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the child with healthy food that is similar in its nutritional value to food served in schools.
- To make a positive contribution to children's health by encouraging healthy eating habits in childhood therefore setting a trend for lifelong changes.

This policy applies to all pupils and parents providing packed lunches and other foods to be consumed within school or on school trips during normal school hours. This packed lunch policy fits within a wider context of promoting a whole school approach to food and healthy eating and forms part of the overall healthy schools policy.

The policy

- The school will work with the pupils to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements.
- The school will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.
- The school will ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.
- Pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible to stop the food going off.
- Glass bottles and tins are not permitted due to safety issues that could arise.
- The school will trial ways in which will ensure packed lunch and school dinner pupils will be able to sit and eat together.
- All uneaten food and waste will be kept in the lunchbox and returned home with the child so that parents are able to monitor their child's food consumption.

Food contained in a packed lunch

Packed lunches should be based on the 'Eat Well plate model' and should include the following every day (more information is available at <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood>):

- **Fruit and Vegetables** - at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad, these can be dried fruit too.
- **Non-dairy source of protein** - meat, fish, egg, beans or pulses such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel.
- **A starchy food** like bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals.
- **Dairy foods** such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais.
- **Drinks** - the school provides water but a healthy drink could include 100% pure fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk.
- **Oily fish**, such as salmon or sardines, should be included at least once every three weeks.

To keep packed lunches in line with the food based standards for school meals, packed lunches should **not** include:

- High fat, high salt, high sugar snacks such as crisps, sweet popcorn, other high fat / salt packet savoury snacks such as crisps.
- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits, sweets or chewing gum.
- Chocolate spread, honey, jam or marmalade as a sandwich filling.
- Cereal bars and fruit bars as these can contain high levels of sugar.

- Fizzy / sugary drinks or fruit flavoured squash. This includes diet drinks and energy drinks which can contain high levels of caffeine and other additives and are not suitable for children.

Occasionally, the following may be included:

- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages / chipolatas should be included only occasionally due to their high fat and salt content.
- Cakes and plain biscuits are allowed but children should be encouraged to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.
- As fish and chips is offered as part of the school dinner every Friday. We support the concept of 'treat Friday' in which children could choose an item to add to their packed lunch such as a packet of crisps or a cake bar.

Special diets and allergies

The school also recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For these reasons no pupils are permitted to swap any food items in their packed lunch with other children. Please see our Healthy School policy for more information on diets and allergies.

Storage of packed lunches

The school provides storage areas for packed lunch boxes in the most convenient and appropriate place possible. However the school cannot provide cooled storage areas and therefore cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

Assessment, evaluation and reviewing:

- Packed lunches will be reviewed by teaching staff, midday supervisors and the healthy school coordinator (HSC).
- Healthy lunches will be acknowledged and rewarded with stickers (KS1) and

verbal praise and recognition (KS2).

- Our aim is always to support parents and pupils in ensuring packed lunches are healthy. If we are concerned about a child's packed lunch contents over a period of time the school will contact the child's parents. They will be invited to a packed lunch workshop and will receive support and encouragement to provide healthy pack lunch options their child can eat but also enjoy.
- Pupils with special diet or food allergies will be given due consideration.

Dissemination of the policy

- The school will ensure the healthy packed lunch policy is available on the website for parents to view.
- The school will use opportunities such as parent's evenings/meet the teacher sessions to promote this policy as part of the whole school approach to healthier eating.
- Leaflets outlining guidelines for healthy pack lunches will be made available in the school entrance hall.
- All school staff, including teaching and catering staff as well as the school nurse will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.
- HSC to undertake a whole school audit of both school dinners and packed lunches via a computer survey.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed in two years alongside the healthy schools policy.

In addition any major legislative or governmental changes regarding school food may lead to this policy being amended.