South Ossett Infants Academy

School Lunch box Policy

Overall aims of the policy:

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 setting a trend for lifelong changes.
- To contribute to the self-evaluation for review by Ofsted.

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.

School meals conform to government nutritional guidelines with less sugar, fat and salt and more fresh fruit and vegetables. School lunches also provide a good balance of "complex carbohydrates" such as pasta, rice, bread or potatoes with dairy and other protein foods. There is no reason why a packed lunch cannot provide the same nutrition as a cooked meal. Please visit www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk for more information.

Food and drink in packed lunches
The policy

- The school will provide facilities for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times. **Please note water is the only acceptable drink.**
- 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.
- Lunch box trolleys are kept in a cool area adjacent to the school hall although pupils could use insulated lunch bags with freezer blocks in warmer months.
- Children must only eat their own food and not other children's.
- Nut or nut products are not permitted.
- 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.
- Glass bottles and tins are not permitted due to safety issues that could arise.
- Your child's lunchbox should be clearly labelled with their name.

Packed Lunch Criteria

Packed lunches should include:

- Fruit and Vegetables - at least one portion of fruit **and** one portion of vegetables or salad.
- Non-dairy source of protein - meat, fish, egg, beans or pulses (lentils, kidney beans, hummus and falafel).
- A starchy food like bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles or potatoes
- Dairy foods such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais
- Drinks - the school provides water. NO other drinks are required.

Packed lunches should not include:

- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits, sweets, sugary cereal bars and anything containing chocolate for example mousse.
- Chocolate spread, honey, jam, sugar or marmalade as a sandwich filling.
- Fizzy / sugary drinks or fruit flavoured squash or water. This includes diet drinks and energy drinks which can contain high levels of caffeine and other additives and are not suitable for children.
- Any form of nuts because of the danger to other children with allergies.

Packed lunches could occasionally include:

- 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.
- Small cakes and plain biscuits are allowed but children should be encouraged to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.
- Cereal bars and fruit bars (try and make sure these are 1 of your 5-a-day and are low in calories/sugar)
- Children are allowed to bring in crisps **on a Friday** and on school trips.

Special Diets /Allergies

The school recognises that some pupils may have verified medical conditions requiring special diets or cultural/religious beliefs which may impact on diet. These may not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents/carers are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible.

NOTE For these reasons pupils are:

- **Not permitted to swap food items.**
- **Not permitted to bring nuts and nut products in packed lunchboxes.**

KS2 children can bring fresh or dried fruit/vegetables in for playtimes. Cereal bars, bread sticks and fruit winders are not permitted.

Health and safety

It is the responsibility of the parents / carers to provide an appropriate packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period. Grapes should be cut in half to avoid choking.

Assessment, evaluation and reviewing:
Packed lunches are reviewed by lunchtime staff as part of their supervision of the children.
Please note:
Pupils with special diets will be given due consideration.
We rely on parents/carers to support this policy and work with the school to ensure that their children are provided with a balanced healthy lunchbox. **If a child brings a packed lunch that does not conform to the policy then the school may place a slip in their lunchbox and if this is happens regularly then they will contact the parents to discuss this.**

Rewards
However, children respond to rewards and to encourage them to bring a healthy lunchbox from Monday to Thursday, children can bring a packet of crisps in their lunchbox on a **FRIDAY** and on school trips.

Children eating healthy lunches will be rewarded by e.g. stickers, certificates, House Points.

Dissemination of the policy:
The school will write to all new and existing parents/carers to inform them of the policy via the school newsletter. The policy will be available on the school's website and will be incorporated into the school prospectus. It is also given out to new parents of Lower Foundation new starter meeting held annually. It is part of the new starter packs for parents. The school will use opportunities such as parents' evenings to promote this policy as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating.

All school staff, including teaching and catering staff, will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the schools agreed policy review process. In addition any major legislative or governmental changes regarding school food may lead to this policy being amended.

Date of Policy: September 2022

Review date for the policy: September 2025

Why are we concerned about the content of children's packed lunches?

About half of all school children take a packed lunch to school rather than eating food prepared at school. In some Local Authorities children have no option but to have a packed lunch. Recent reports, however, have shown that the food typically eaten in lunchboxes provides too much fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt - and not enough fruits and vegetables and essential nutrients.

The packed lunch represents approximately a third of the child's daily food intake and therefore it is important that it offers a meal in line with the Eatwell food profile to ensure that all the nutrients needed are provided.

What is in a typical lunchbox?

About 70% of children's lunchboxes contain crisps, cheese products, chocolate bars and biscuits and only half of all lunchboxes contain a fruit or vegetable - with very few containing both. In almost a fifth of lunchboxes there is no starchy food such as sandwiches, pasta, rice or an equivalent and therefore lacking healthy starchy foods. Many packed lunches contain soft drinks, increasing the sugar content of the packed lunch.

Government packed lunch advice

The UK government produced packed lunch guidance to support the implementation of new school food standards for school lunches and ensure that all children benefit from eating quality food during the school day.

The guidelines are:

- One portion of fruit and one portion of vegetable or salad every day to be included in packed lunches
- Meat, fish or another source of non-dairy protein should be included every day. Non dairy sources of protein include lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus, peanut butter and falafel
- An oily fish, such as salmon, should be included at least once every three weeks
- A starchy food, such as bread or pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other cereals, should be included every day
- A dairy food, such as semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard should be included every day
- Free, fresh drinking water should be available at all times
- Include only water, still or sparkling, fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies
- Snacks such as crisps should not be included. Instead, include nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit (with no added salt, sugar or fat). Savory crackers or breadsticks served with fruit, vegetables or dairy food are also a good choice
- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits and sweets should not be included. Cakes and biscuits are allowed but these should be part of a balanced meal
- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies corned meat and sausages / chipolatas should be included only occasionally

What's in a healthy packed lunch?

A child at school should have about a third of their daily nutrient requirements at lunchtime. This means they need foods that are going to provide them with enough energy, protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

A healthy packed lunch should contain a mix of foods from the EatWell Plate. The EatWell Plate shows how much should be eaten from each of the 5 food groups.

A good packed lunch contains:

- A starchy food, such as bread, rolls, pitta bread, naan bread, potatoes, rice, noodles.
- These foods are good for children to fill up on.
- A good source of protein, iron and zinc such as meat, fish, beans, nuts or eggs.
- A good source of calcium such as milk, cheese, yoghurt or fromage frais.
- And one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetable or salad to provide all the other vitamins and minerals. A piece of fruit could be a 100% juice or piece of fresh fruit, dried fruit or tinned fruit in fruit juice. A piece of vegetable could be a fresh vegetable such as carrot stick, salad or a vegetable soup or vegetable dish.

No single food contains all the essential nutrients the body needs to be healthy and function efficiently so it is important that the content of the packed lunch is varied.

What about snacks such as crisps, cakes, pastries and sweets?

These foods should only be given occasionally. Children will then appreciate them more.
If these foods are included in packed lunches they might eat these first and not have the appetite to eat the other foods that will provide them with the important nutrients they need to grow and develop, be healthy and active.