

Wallace Fields Junior School

Healthy Packed Lunch Policy



Aim:

To make sure that children who bring lunch from home to eat in school (or on school trips) have food which is just as healthy and nutritious as food now served in school and regulated by Surrey County Council standards; and to ensure that it complies with our Healthy Schools status.

Why do we need a policy?

As part of the Government's approach to reducing childhood obesity a Cross Government Strategy for England, Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives was launched in January 2008. This strategy outlines an expectation on all schools. To promote a culture of healthy eating the government now expects all schools – in consultation with parents, pupils and staff to adopt whole school food policies. In particular, schools will be expected to develop healthy packed lunch policies, so that those not taking up school lunches are also eating healthier.

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. Therefore a packed lunch should provide the same nutrition as a cooked meal.

Eating healthily is important because it will help children to:

- Be aware of healthy lifestyle choices.
- Be fitter and healthier now and later in life.
- Learn more quickly and concentrate for sustained periods.

Good nutrition in childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many children are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables.

Packed lunches can contribute to almost a third of a child's weekly food intake and therefore need to be balanced and nutritious.

Who does it apply to and when and where?

To all pupils and parents providing packed lunches to be eaten 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 has cross-curricular links e.g. with Design and Technology (DT).

Implementation:

- The school provides dining facilities for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensures that fresh drinking water is always available.
- It is the responsibility of the parents to provide an appropriate packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until lunchtime.

It is advisable to include an ice pack as food products prepared and stored in ambient temperatures, after a period of time, can have increased levels of bacteria in them e.g. cooked meats and dairy products such as yogurts.

- The children keep their lunchboxes in the classroom. As the school cannot provide cooled storage areas it cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.
- Children must only eat their own food and not other children's.
- The school will send any uneaten packed lunch food items back home. The rationale for this is that parents can also monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake with the school.

Guidance:

Children's packed lunches should be based on the 'Eatwell Plate' model which shows items from the 5 main food groups; (FoodStandards Agency 2007).

Suggestions for food to include in a healthy packed lunch:

A Starchy Food: for example, bread, rice, potatoes, pasta, noodles or another cereal. These foods are a healthy source of energy.

Fruit and Vegetables: These foods provide vitamins, minerals and fibre. Lunches should include at least 1 portion of fruit and 1 portion of vegetables / salad.

Meat, Fish, Eggs or Other Source of Non-Dairy Protein: (e.g. lentils, beans, soya or hummus,) every day. Oily fish, such as pilchards, salmon or tuna should be included occasionally. These foods provide protein for growth

Dairy Food: for example, milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais. These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth.

A drink: water is best followed by semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, fruit juice, drinking yoghurt, milk drinks or smoothies.

Suggestions for food to include less often in a healthy packed lunch:

1 item / snack may be chosen from the following list:

Crisps and similar snacks.

Chocolate coated biscuits or wafers.

Cakes and cookies

Meat and pastry products such as sausage rolls or pies

Jam or chocolate spread used for sandwich filling

Desserts such as chocolate mousse, fruit pies and tarts, cheesecakes

It is important not to fill up on too many foods that are high in fat and / or sugar at the expense of other more nutritious foods. Limiting high fat and sugar foods will help protect young people from becoming overweight as well as helping prevent tooth decay, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

Please do not include:

Confectionery such as chocolate bars. Sweets are not allowed at lunch or any other time.

Nut or nut products (although they can be very healthy) because of the danger to other children with allergies.

Fizzy and sugary drinks as these are mostly very unhealthy.

Please support your school by not including these items in your child's packed lunch.

Special diets:

The school recognizes that some pupils may have verified medical conditions requiring 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.

Monitoring and evaluation:

Packed lunches are reviewed by lunchtime staff as part of their supervision of the children. Where there may be concerns over a child's food / nutrition intake and / or content of packed lunches, these can be reported and dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner by the lunchtime supervisor.

Pupils on special diets following verified medical advice will be given due consideration.

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

Additional guidance:

Further advice and guidance on providing healthy packed lunches is available from a number of sources including the School Food Trust.

www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk