

# Packed Lunch Policy Bowburn Primary School

## School Food – Policy for Packed Lunches (brought in from home)

### Introduction

To grow and stay healthy children need to eat a nutritionally well balanced diet. Schools are an influential setting and can contribute significantly to improving the health and well-being of pupils.

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.

### Aim

To ensure that packed lunches (brought in from home) reflect the new standards for school meals introduced in September 2006.

### Rationale:

- Schools are required to positively promote the health and well being of its pupils. Work around healthy eating is a high priority of the Every Child Matters agenda.
- **The content of lunchboxes needs to reflect the requirement of schools to meet minimum food and nutrition standards for school meals.**
- The contents of lunchboxes in some schools can be extremely unhealthy, recent audits of lunchboxes have shown that in the main they contain foods with high levels of fat, sugar and salt, and very few fruit and vegetables.
- To encourage healthy eating habits from an early age and improve the overall nutrition of pupils
- The short term effects of unhealthy packed lunches and food intake can include poor growth, tooth decay, obesity, anaemia, constipation, poor concentration and behavioural problems which may have an impact on a child's learning.

- The longer term effects of a poor diet in childhood can be an increased risk of stroke, cancer, heart disease and diabetes in adulthood.

## Objectives

- To improve the nutritional quality of packed lunches in schools and the eating habits of children at lunchtimes
- To develop an awareness in pupils, parents, staff and the wider community that the school takes a pro-active approach to promoting healthy eating.
- To encourage healthy eating habits in childhood that can influence health and well being in later life.
- To ensure that food brought into school (packed lunches) reflects and meets food standards for School Food (2006).

## Implementation

This packed lunch policy fits within a wider context of promoting a whole school approach to food and healthy eating.

- Children's packed lunches should be based on the 'Eatwell Guide' model which shows items the 5 main food groups; (Food Standards Agency).

### **For a balanced packed lunch, select these healthier foods.**

- **Fruit & Vegetables Meat, fish etc.** Oily fish Starchy food Dairy food Drinking water Include at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad every day. Due to a possible choking hazard, we request that grapes are cut lengthways before they are sent into school.
- **Meat, fish or another source of protein** should be included every day. Sources of protein include lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas and hummus. Include oily fish, such as salmon or mackerel at least once every three weeks.
- **A starchy food** such as any type of bread or pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other cereals should be included every day.
- **Include a dairy food** such as cheese, yoghurt, drinking yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day.
- **Free, fresh drinking water is available at all times.** Children are provided with water every lunch time, please do **not** send drinks in from home.

### **Avoid including these foods in packed lunches:**

- **Snacks**  
Snacks such as crisps should not be included every day. Instead include vegetables and fruit (with no added salt, sugar or fat). Savoury crackers or breadsticks served with fruit, vegetables or dairy food are also a good choice.
- **Sweets**  
Chocolate bars, chocolate coated biscuits and sweets should not be included. Cakes and biscuits are allowed but please encourage your child to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.
- **Meat products**  
Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned beef pasties and sausages should be included only occasionally.
- **Nuts**  
Due to the rise in allergies to nuts, we ask that nuts and seeds are NOT included in packed lunches. This includes Nutella spread or products. We are a NUT FREE school.

**(Additional information is available with ideas and examples of foods that can be included in packed lunches).**

[www.schoolfoodplan.com](http://www.schoolfoodplan.com)

### **Waste and Disposal**

The school will, within reason, 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.

### **Promotion of Healthy Packed Lunches**

There will be ongoing promotion of the need to provide healthy packed lunches through:

- Pupil, parent / carers newsletters
- School prospectus / brochure
- Whole School / Packed Lunch Policy
- Health weeks / healthy eating activities
- Curriculum content
- Parents evenings / parent consultations
- Discussion through School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG)
- School Council and Chartwells (School Meals Service)
- School website
- Reward schemes
- Professional development for school staff
- Workshops for parents
- School involvement in National Healthy Schools Programme
- 'Pack A Punch In Your Lunch' guide to healthy packed lunches

### **Packed Lunch Containers**

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. Parents are advised to include an ice pack. Food products prepared and stored in ambient temperatures after a period of time can have increased levels of bacteria in them.

### **Storage of Packed Lunches**

The school will provide storage area / facilities for packed lunch bags, 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.

### **Dining Facilities for Pupils Bringing Packed Lunch**

The school will provide an appropriate area where pupils who choose to bring packed lunches can eat.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school will carry out monitoring of packed lunch provision - where there may be concerns over a child's food / nutrition intake and / or content of packed lunches, this can be dealt with in a timely and sensitive way.

Ofsted are required to report on how the school promotes the personal development and wellbeing of all pupils – this may include food provision including packed lunches brought into school.

The Local Authority will work with the school to review packed lunch provision and will provide advice and support to members of the school community.

### **National Healthy School Programme (NHSP):**

In order to achieve National Healthy Schools Status, schools are required to:

- “ensure healthier food and drink options are available and promoted in breakfast clubs, at break and at lunchtimes – as outlined by Food in Schools guidance”
- “monitors pupils’ menus and food choices to inform policy development and provision”

Schools that have achieved National Healthy School Status (NHSS) may be monitored as part of a national and local quality assurance process.

### **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.

### **Endorsement**

The School Governing Body, Pupils, Parent / Carer Representative and Staff endorse this policy for implementation. This policy will be reviewed annually.

**Ratified by Governing Body on (date) November 2023**

Signed.....(Headteacher or School representative)

Signed..... Governor

Signed..... Pupil Representative

Signed.....Parent /Carer Representative

**Review date** November 2023