



WILLOW
BROOK
PRIMARY

Policy for Packed Lunches

Last Reviewed: December 2018

Reviewed Annually

This policy guidance has been developed with the aim of reducing childhood obesity, promoting the health and well-being of young people and the provision of catering services in schools.

Additional guidance and advice on providing healthy packed lunches is available from a number of sources including <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes> as part of the Government's approach to reducing childhood obesity.

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 standards for school meals.

Rationale:

- Schools are required to positively promote the health and wellbeing of its pupils. Work around healthy eating is a high priority
- 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 wellbeing in later life
- To ensure that food brought into school (packed lunches) reflects and meets food standards for School Food.

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 include items from the 5 main food groups;

Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta

These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Packed lunches should include 2 or more portions eg pasta salad, sandwich.

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, or more eg carrot/cucumber sticks, cherry tomatoes, a piece of fruit.

Milk and Dairy foods

These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Include 1 portion at lunch eg yoghurt, fromage frais, milk.

Meat, Fish, Eggs, Beans

These foods provide protein for growth. Packed lunches should include 1 portion of these foods eg boiled egg as filling in sandwich, mixed bean salad.

Drinks

ny drinks provided in lunch boxes **should only** include either plain water, milk (semi-skimmed), unsweetened fresh fruit juice, diluted fresh fruit juice, fruit or dairy based smoothies

Foods and drinks high in fat and / or sugar

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. This is why sweets, chocolate, crisps, cereal bars, fruit bars, toffee/salted popcorn, squash and fizzy drinks are no longer available in schools.

Restricted items

To ensure consistency and to keep packed lunches in line with food standards for school meals, packed lunches **should not** contain the following:

Fizzy / sugary drinks in cartons, bottles or cans

Chocolate-coated products / sweets / confectionary

Chocolate spread as a filling for sandwiches

Chewing gum

Sugared / toffee and salted popcorn

Crisps or any packet savoury snacks high in salt and fat

Salted nuts

Energy drinks

Policy for Packed Lunches

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
School website
Workshops for parents

Break time snacks

Children are welcome to bring snacks for break time. The following snacks are acceptable:

- Fruit