

# Packed Lunch Policy

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05.01.21	0.1	Internal Lead Scheduled Review	Name & Logo update. Suggested change to review schedule. Further information on oily fish. Removal of nuts in acceptable foods due to allergies. J Bowman	SCC
09.02.21	0.2	Board Lead Scheduled Review	No changes made. P Lovern	
26.02.21	1.0	Board Scheduled Review	Policy ratified	

# healthier lunches for children



## Packed Lunch Policy

### 1. Introduction

At The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust, we are committed to teaching your child about how to make sensible food choices as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. This packed lunch policy has been developed by drawing on key government guidance associated with healthy eating and the school day, such as School Food Plan, Public Health England Eatwell Guide, and recommendations from The Children's Food Trust.

The Trust has introduced a packed lunch policy to:

- Create consistency between packed lunches and the food we provide in our school, which must adhere to [national school food standards](#).
- Help improve children's health and give them a consistent message about eating well
- Encourage a happier and calmer population of children and young people

Results from the National Child Measurement Programme 2015/16 showed over one in three children in Year 6 were overweight or obese<sup>1</sup>. The evidence shows that overweight children are more likely to become overweight adults, which is a risk factor for stroke, heart disease and type 2 diabetes<sup>2</sup>. Schools can provide an important contribution to improving the health and wellbeing of children and their families. It has been demonstrated that a healthy diet can improve students ability to concentrate in class, be more receptive to learning and have improved behaviour and attendance to school<sup>3</sup>. Supporting a pupil's wellbeing through healthy meals has the potential to improve their educational results and future life choices in addition to improving their health outcomes.

The Eatwell Guide demonstrates how to get the balance right by showing the proportion of each of the five food groups that should be eaten each day. School meals and packed lunches represent a third of a child's daily intake of foods and nutrients, which presents a great opportunity to promote healthy food choices for children. The government provides regulations for healthy school meals and packed lunches and recommends that foods from the high fat and/or sugar group on the Eatwell guide should not be included in a packed lunch.

This packed lunch policy is supported by what is taught in our curriculum where healthy eating is discussed and promoted in a number of subjects. See our Food Policy for more details.

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<sup>1</sup> National Child Measurement Programme – England 2015-2016 (2016). Accessed online: [www.content.digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB22269](http://www.content.digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB22269) (Dec 2018).

<sup>2</sup> GOV (2015). Childhood obesity: Applying All Our Health. Accessed online: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-applying-all-our-health](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-applying-all-our-health) (Dec 2018)

<sup>3</sup> Public Health England (2014) The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment: A briefing HT\_briefing\_layoutvFINALviipdf (Dec 2018). School Food Plan (2015). Accessed online: [www.schoolfoodplan.gov.uk](http://www.schoolfoodplan.gov.uk) (Dec 2018).

## **2. Aims**

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 our 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 our schools
- To give clear guidance to parents/carers, pupils, Directors, and staff on providing a healthy packed lunch
- To make a positive contribution to children's health by encouraging healthy eating habits in childhood, 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 Trust approach to food and healthy eating.

## **3. The Policy**

- Our schools will work with pupils to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements.
- Our schools will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.
- Our schools will promote a healthy lifestyle across the curriculum, and staff will be expected to comply with the policy when bringing in packed lunches and eating these with pupils.
- Our schools will ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.
- Pupils eating packed lunches, and pupils eating school lunches are able to sit together.
- Glass bottles and tins are not permitted due to safety issues that could arise.
- 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.
- Parents will follow the advice given in this policy and in the Trust's 'Healthier Packed Lunches for Children' leaflet.

#### 4. Food contained in a packed lunch

Packed lunches should be based on the EatWell Guide (See Appendix A).

Packed lunches should aim to follow the below guidance:

INCLUDE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Fruit and Vegetables</b> - at least one portion of fruit <b>and</b> one portion of vegetables or salad.</li><li>• <b>A non-dairy source of protein</b> - meat, poultry, fish, egg, beans or pulses, such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus or falafel.</li><li>• <b>A starchy food</b> like bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other types of cereals.</li><li>• <b>Dairy foods</b> such as milk, cheese, low fat or natural yoghurt or fromage frais, low sugar rice pudding. (not split pot or flavoured yoghurts, these have a lot of sugar)</li><li>• <b>Drinks</b> - the school provides water, but only healthy drinks, such as water, 100% pure fruit juice (maximum portion 150 mls), semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies should be included in your child's packed lunch.</li><li>• <b>Oily fish</b> such as salmon should be included at least once every three weeks. (Tuna is no longer considered an oily fish, oily fish includes herring (bloaters, kipper and hilsa are types of herring), pilchards, sardines, sprats, trout, mackerel and salmon)</li><li>• <b>Snacks</b> such as malt loaf, low sugar jelly, or plain popcorn</li></ul>
LIMIT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Snacks such as crisps (although seeds, , vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat would be preferable, snacks such as fruit winders are full of sugar, and therefore should be limited)</li><li>• Corned meat and sausages (these have a high fat and salt content)</li><li>• Cakes and plain biscuits are allowed but children should be encouraged to eat these only as part of a balanced meal</li></ul>
DO NOT INCLUDE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chocolate, chocolate-coated biscuits or food items containing chocolate</li><li>• Cereal bars, or processed fruit bars</li><li>• Food containing nuts</li><li>• Processed meat products such as pepperami, sausage rolls, or Fridge Raiders. These foods have a very high fat and salt content</li><li>• Other confectionery such as Haribo, and chewing gum</li><li>• Fizzy or sugary drinks, including squash or fruit flavoured squash drinks such as Ribena, Fruit Shoot or Capri Sun; or diet or energy drinks which contain high levels of caffeine and other additives. (Even if labelled as 'sugar-free', 'no-added sugar' or 'reduced sugar' these drinks can contribute to tooth decay and provide little nutritional value).</li></ul>

As part of the packed lunch policy, children's packed lunches **should always** include:

- ✓ A starchy food, such as bread, potato, rice, or pasta
- ✓ At least one item of fruit, vegetable or salad
- ✓ A balance of foods from different food groups

For healthier options:

- ✓ Replace cakes and pastries with fruit bread, malt loaf, or teacake
- ✓ Replace salted savoury snacks, such as crisps, with popcorn (not sweet or toffee), breadsticks, rice cakes or cheese and crackers
- ✓ Include dried fruit or fruit salad
- ✓ Swap chocolate pudding pots for tinned fruit in it's own juice (not syrup)
- ✓ Drink water, milk, 100% juice (maximum portion 150 mls), plain sparkling water, fruit smoothie, or a yoghurt or milk drink

**Special diets and allergies**

Some pupils within our schools suffer from food allergies. We have a procedure in place to manage food allergies and other special dietary requirements. Read [The Children's Food Trust guide to producing and sharing allergen information](#), and visit [www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/schools/help-forschools](http://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/schools/help-forschools) for more information.

We are a nut free school. Please do not send your child with food that contains nuts or traces of nuts.

The Trust 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, pupils are also not permitted to swap food items.

**5. 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. 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. Glass or tin containers are not permitted.

**Storage of Packed Lunches**

Our schools will provide storage areas/facilities for packed lunch bags in the most convenient and appropriate place possible. However our schools cannot provide cooled storage areas and therefore cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

**6. Assessment, evaluation and reviewing:**

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by teaching staff, LSAs, midday meal supervisors and pupil handy helpers. Children who eat healthy lunches will be acknowledged and rewarded through the Healthy Lunch Reward Programme.

Parents and pupils who do not adhere to the packed lunch policy will receive a leaflet in the packed lunch informing them of the policy. If a child regularly brings in a packed lunch that does not conform to the policy then the school will contact the parents to discuss this.

Pupils with special diet or food allergies will be given due consideration.

### **7. Dissemination of the policy**

The school will write to all new and existing parents/carers to inform them of the policy. The policy will be available on the Trust, and all school's websites. Our schools will use opportunities such as parents' evenings and special workshops to promote this policy as part of the whole Trust approach to healthier eating. All Trust staff, including teaching and catering staff, will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.

### **8. Working with parents and carers**

We encourage all children to eat school meals. Parents of pupils wishing to have packed lunches are expected to provide lunches in line with our packed lunch policy, and we hope that all parents and carers will support this.

We will offer advice and guidance to parents/carers on packed lunches if required. We will offer a range of ways to support parents/carers including regular information on newsletters, workshops, and useful websites to be displayed on the school's websites.

### **9. Linked policies**

Please also see the following policies:

- Food Policy
- Healthy Eating Reward Programme

# The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.

