



INGLETON C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

POLICY FOR PACKED LUNCHES (BROUGHT IN FROM HOME)

This policy guidance has been developed by a group of multi-agency partners involved in 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 the NHS Healthier Families website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/>

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 yet taking up school lunches are also eating healthier

Durham County Council and its partners have developed this guidance document to support schools in their journey towards this goal.



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.

Rationale:

- Schools are required to positively promote the health and well-being of its pupils.
- 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).

Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta

These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Packed lunches should include 2 or more portions e.g. 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 e.g. 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 e.g. yoghurt, fromage frais, milk.

Meat, Fish, Eggs, Beans

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

Drinks – any 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.

Please see Healthier Lunchboxes document on our school website for further guidance.

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR SCHOOL BY NOT INCLUDING THESE ITEMS IN A PACKED LUNCH:

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.

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
- Chewing gum
- Sugared / toffee popcorn
- Crisps or any packet savoury snacks high in salt and fat
- Salted nuts
- Energy Drinks
- Any glass thermos flasks or glass containers (this is due to health and safety reasons).

Special Diets and Allergies

We ask that parents/carers be aware of nut allergies. The school recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not follow the National Food Standards exactly. In this case parents/carers are asked to make sure that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For these reasons pupils are also not permitted to swap food items. As some children in school have nut allergies we ask parents to refrain from including peanuts or peanut butter in 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.

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 monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise concerns over their child's food intake with the school.

Dining Facilities for Pupils Bringing Packed Lunch

The school provides an appropriate area where pupils who choose to bring packed lunches can eat. Pupils will eat with their friends who may be taking hot meals- they are not segregated.

Monitoring

To promote healthy eating we will regularly monitor the content of packed lunches and involve pupils and staff. We will talk to parents/carers where necessary and offer guidance on bringing healthy packed lunches. If a lunch is not deemed to meet nutritional standards parents will be advised on the changes that need to be made. Any sweets or fizzy drinks will be confiscated until the end of the day. These may be substituted with a piece of fruit and alternative drink.

During OFSTED Inspectors will look for evidence of a culture or ethos of exercise and healthy eating throughout their entire inspection visit, in classrooms as well as in the school canteen. They will look at the food on offer including packed lunches, and visit the canteen to see the atmosphere and culture in the dining space and the effect this has on pupils' behaviour. Inspectors will also speak to school leaders about how they help to ensure a healthy lifestyle for pupils.

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.

Working with Parents and Carers

We hope that all parents and carers will support this packed lunch policy. We will offer advice and guidance to parents/carers on packed lunches if required.

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.

