



Summary of School Packed Lunch Policy for Parents/Carers

Why?

- At the West Tyne Church Schools Federation, we believe our pupils should have a say in what they eat and give them the opportunity to look after their health, now and in the future. Over the past term, our School Council has led on the content of this policy; investigating what we do currently and what they think (in consultation with their classes) our packed lunches should contain.
- In partnership with families, we need to educate our pupils about healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. We are required to make sure children eat healthily when they are at school and this is an important aspect of our Healthy Schools Award.
- There is increased evidence that childhood obesity is increasing and complications associated with this makes children prone to a range of problems/illnesses.

Health effects of a poor diet/being an unhealthy weight include:

- Poor growth
- Obesity
- poor concentration and behavioural problems, which may have an impact on a child's learning.
- Type 2 diabetes
- Tooth decay
- Increased risk of picking up illnesses (which affects attendance)
- Lack of energy and poor concentration (which affects learning)

During School Council sessions and in discussions thereafter with their class cohort, our children have agreed these guidelines for packed lunches:

Things we would like to see:

- A balance of different foods
- Yoghurts and cheese
- At least two pieces of fruit and/or vegetables
- Crisps which are baked and not fried
- Water or sugar free cordial
- Healthy sandwich fillings, eg cheese, tuna, ham, chicken
- Pasta
- Rice

These items are NOT allowed:

- Fizzy drinks, sugary juice or pure fruit juice
- Sweets (including fruit winders)
- Chocolates bars
- Yoghurts with sweets in them
- Chocolate spread in sandwiches
- **No nuts of any description**

Waste and Disposal

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.

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Only 1 of these items:

- A small chocolate biscuit (not a chocolate bar)
- Small cake

Have you thought of trying these?

- Raisins or other dried fruit
- Crackers and Cheese
- Soup
- Breadsticks

Suggested packed lunches the school council have found and we would like to see...



Suggested healthy and unhealthy items recorded by the School Council





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Context

To grow and stay healthy children need to eat a nutritionally well-balanced diet. In modern Britain, 28% of children aged 2 to 16 are overweight or obese (Public Health England, 2015). Schools are an influential setting and can contribute significantly to improving the health and well-being of pupils.

At West Tyne Federation of Schools, we support the fact that 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. As food consumed during the school week can contribute to almost a third of a child's weekly food intake, it is important that the food they eat whilst in school is balanced and nutritious.

Aim

To ensure that packed lunches (brought in from home) reflect the standards for school meals set out by national guidelines (including Ofsted and The Food Standards Agency guidelines (2015), this policy aims to guide parents as to the expectations for a balanced diet for our pupils at West Tyne Federation Schools.

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. Studies have shown that the contents of lunchboxes in some schools can be extremely unhealthy, illustrating 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, children need to understand what a balanced diet is and why it is important.
- The longer-term effects of a poor diet in childhood can be an increased risk of stroke, cancer, heart disease and type-2 diabetes in adulthood.

Objectives of this Policy

- To have a consistent expectation as to 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.



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- 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. It is expected that children's packed lunches at West Tyne Federation of School should be based on the 'Eatwell Guide' model (below) which shows items the 5 main food groups; (Food Standards Agency). Also included is an indication of what should be included in a packed lunch to make it a healthy, balanced meal.

Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta

These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Packed lunches should include 2 or more portions.

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.

Milk and Dairy foods

These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Include 1 portion at lunch.

Meat, Fish, Eggs, Beans

These foods provide protein for growth. Packed lunches should include 1 portion of these foods

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 and type-2 diabetes.

This is why sweets; chocolate bars and fizzy drinks are no longer available in schools. Please support West Tyne Federation and the health of your child by not including these items in a packed lunch. However, a small chocolate biscuit is permitted to provide energy and as a treat.

Drinks

Any drinks in lunch boxes should only include either plain water or a small amount of diluted juice. Children eating packed lunches have water readily available to them on their tables during lunchtime.



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Parents should use this advice in conjunction with the summary for parents/carers when providing their child with a packed lunch.



The 'Eat well' Plate

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 bars / sweets / confectionary
- Chocolate spread as a filling for sandwiches
- Chewing gum
- Nuts (due to possible allergies within our school community)

Waste and Disposal

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.

Promotion of Healthy Packed Lunches

There will be ongoing promotion/information of the need to provide healthy packed lunches though:

- Newsletters
- Updates from the School Council
- School prospectus
- The Packed Lunch Policy
- Health weeks / healthy eating activities
- Curriculum content as directed by the National Curriculum
- Parents evenings / parent consultations
- Reward schemes

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. Packed lunch boxes should be clearly printed with the child's name. Parents are advised 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 which can cause illness.



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Storage of Packed Lunches

The school provides storage areas for packed lunches. However, the school cannot provide cooled storage areas and therefore cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school (along with the School Council) will carry out monitoring of packed lunch provision - where there may be concerns over a child's food or nutrition intake and the content of packed lunches, parents will be contacted and healthy alternatives discussed.

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.

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"
- Ensure an effective, up to date packed lunch policy or guidance in place that is in line with the 2015 School Food Standards.

We are a school, which has achieved National Healthy School Status (NHSS) and may be monitored as part of a national and local quality assurance process. We thank parents and are grateful for their continued support for making West Tyne Federation a healthy and happy place to learn, play and eat.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the schools agreed policy review process. Parents and carers views are taken into account. They will be asked for their views and opinions during regular questionnaires about healthy eating and nutrition and this will take place in the Summer Term. In addition, any major legislative or governmental changes regarding school food may lead to this policy being amended as and when needed.