



GREEN OAKS PRIMARY ACADEMY

Snacks and Packed Lunch Policy

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.

Our Aim:

To ensure that packed lunches and snacks, brought in from home, reflect the new standards for school meals.

Objectives:

- To improve the nutritional quality of packed lunches in school and the eating habits of children at lunchtimes and breaktimes
- To develop an awareness in pupils, parents, staff and the 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 work with parents to ensure that packed lunches are as close as possible to the guidance below.

Government Packed Lunch advice:

Children's packed lunches should include items from the 5 main food groups;

1. **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.
2. **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.

3. **Milk and Dairy foods** These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Include 1 portion at lunch eg yoghurt, fromage frais, milk.
4. **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.
5. **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.

Snacks

During morning break, children are able to access a snack.

Nursery and Reception: Snack is provided (small contribution required from parents)

KS1: (Years 1-2) Fruit or vegetable snack provided free of charge by Government Fruit and Vegetable Scheme.

KS2: (Years 3–6) Children are allowed to bring in their own fruit or vegetable snack in from home. This can be a piece of whole fruit/veg, chopped fruit/veg in a container or dried fruit.

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.

Treats

We recognise that a “treat” is part of a packed lunch and encourage children to choose a healthier treat rather than traditional crisps or chocolate biscuits. Ideas for healthier treats can be found on our packed lunch builder sheet (attached) or take a look at <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/food-facts/healthier-snacks-for-kids/100-calorie-snacks> for ideas.

Food 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 biscuits, sweets or 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**
- **Nuts of any kind – including peanut butter and nut-based chocolate spreads**
- **Processed meat products**

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 any concerns over their child's food intake with the school.

Promotion of Healthy Packed Lunches/Snacks

- Healthy eating competitions / updates / assemblies
- Snack suggestions in newsletter
- Links (on school website) to healthy eating websites
- Workshops for children and parents
- Stickers
- Positive/Healthy eating slips

Other considerations:

- 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. Reusable plastic containers with a fitted lid are ideal.
- Parents are advised to include a small ice pack in packed lunches to keep food cool.
- 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.
- The school also recognises that some pupils may have verified medical conditions requiring 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.

Monitoring

There will be a range of ways that staff will monitor the contents of packed lunches to ensure they meet the healthy packed lunch guidelines.

Lunch staff will be able to award stickers to children who bring in healthy items in their packed lunches.

Positive/Healthy choice slips – can be given out by staff to acknowledge that children have brought in healthy packed lunch items.

If children consistently bring in unhealthy items or do not follow the guidelines set out in this policy letters will be sent home to parents.

Communication

The school will write to all new and existing parents/carers to inform them of the policy via the school newsletter. The policy will be available on the school's website and will be incorporated into the school prospectus. The school will use opportunities such as parent evenings and parent afternoons to promote this policy as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating. All school staff, including teaching and catering staff, will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.