

Sunning Hill Primary School



Packed Lunch Policy

February 2024

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Review: February 2026

POLICY

Introduction

To grow and stay healthy children need to eat a nutritionally well balanced diet. Schools can support and contribute 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 from home) are healthy and nutritious.

Rationale:

- Schools are required to positively promote the health and well-being of its pupils through PSHE and other subjects.
- The contents of lunchboxes can be unhealthy, recent audits of lunchboxes have shown that they contain foods with high levels of fat, sugar and salt.
- 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.

Implementation

This packed lunch policy fits within a wider context of promoting a whole school approach to food and healthy eating.

Foods high in fat and / or sugar - It is important not to eat too many foods that are high in fat and / or sugar. 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 **only 1 treat** (crisp, chocolate, biscuits) should be included in a child's packed lunch and the amount of fried food should be limited.

Drinks – any drinks provided in lunch boxes should only include either plain water, milk (semi-skimmed), unsweetened fresh fruit juice or water and cordial.

Fruit & Vegetables – Children should have at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day. This is why we encourage children to have at least 1 portion in their packed lunch so they can fulfil this.

Nuts – in school we have several children with severe nut allergies therefore Nutella, peanut butter and loose nuts are not permitted in school.

POLICY

Storage of Packed Lunches/Packed Lunch Containers

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. The office will not accept packed lunches brought in during the school day because parents want their child to have hot food as this will become time consuming and disruptive.

We ask that parents/carers and pupils:-

- Provide a packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period.
- Bring packed lunches in reusable plastic containers, rather than disposing of plastic bags and bottles.

Monitoring of packed lunches

This will be carried out by SMSAs and if there are any concerns the class teacher will be informed. The children in upper KS2 also monitor the content of packed lunches and will report concerns to the SMSA who can pass onto the teacher. If a healthy packed lunch is not being provided then parents will be spoken to by the class teacher and healthier options will be discussed and if necessary further support will be given.

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.