



Bernards Heath Infant School

Home Prepared Packed Lunch Policy

September 2016

Policy Summary:

This is a guide for families who are choosing to provide a home prepared packed lunch for their children. The guide is available on our website.

To summarise the policy:

- Parents should ensure that home prepared packed lunches provide a healthy and well balanced meal
- All children at school will be given water to drink at lunchtime, any drinks in lunchtime must be a healthy choice, no cans or fizzy drinks thank you.
- Whole/crushed nuts must not be sent into school
- Packed lunches must not contain sweets, chocolate or popcorn
- Biscuits, chocolate coated biscuits and small cakes are allowed as long as the packed lunch provides a healthy and balanced meal
- Re-useable ice packs are a good choice in warmer weather, all lunches must be in a sealed plastic container/lunch bag
- Within reason any uneaten food will be sent home in the lunchbox

Where meals do not appear to be well balanced, a member of staff will talk to parents in a timely and sensitive manner.

Introduction

Bernards Heath Infant and Nursery School has written a home packed lunch policy to reflect the importance of healthy eating and healthy lifestyles linked to a balanced diet.

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 children. 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.

Home prepared packed lunches can contribute to almost a quarter of a child's weekly food intake and therefore need to be balanced and nutritious.

The policy applies to all home prepared packed lunches which are to be eaten within school or on school visits during school hours.

Aims

- To encourage healthy eating habits from an early age and improve the overall nutrition of children
- To ensure that home prepared packed lunches provide children with healthy and nutritious food that is similar to food served in schools. All food served in schools is now regulated by the Food and Nutrient Based Standards for School Lunches.

Rationale

- Schools are required to positively promote the health and well-being of the children

- The contents of home prepared packed lunches need to reflect the requirement of schools to meet minimum food and nutrition standards for school meals
- Historically, the contents of home prepared packed lunches in some schools have been unhealthy and nationally 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
- 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 - all of 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 home prepared packed lunches at school 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 (home prepared packed lunches) reflects and meets the Guide for Nutrition Based Standards

Implementation

Our home prepared 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 Plate' model which shows items from the 5 main food groups; (Food Standards Agency 2007).

Group 1

Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta

These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Home prepared packed lunches should include 1 or more portions.

Group 2

Fruit and Vegetables

These foods provide vitamins, minerals and fibre. Packed lunches should include at least 1 portion of fruit and 1 portion of vegetables / salad.

Group 3

Milk and Dairy foods

These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Include 1 portion at lunch (can be in a smoothie form).

Group 4

Meat, Fish, Eggs, Beans and Pulses

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

Group 5

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 bars, crisps, cereal bars, fruit bars, popcorn, squash and fizzy drinks are not available in schools. Please support your children by not including these items in your child's packed lunch.

Foods Which Must Be Avoided

1. Whole/crushed nuts **MUST NOT** be brought into school in for the safety of all children.
2. Packed lunches must also **NOT** contain sweets, chocolate, crisps or popcorn.
3. Biscuits, chocolate coated biscuits or small cakes are allowed as long as the packed lunch overall provides a healthy and balanced meal for children.

(Additional information is available with ideas and examples of foods that can be included in packed lunches - *School Food Trust* www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk)

Special Diets and Allergies

Please ensure that we are aware of any special diets that do not allow for our policy to be followed exactly. In such cases we do ask that parents talk to us and make sure the packed lunch is as healthy as possible.

Children are not permitted to swap or share food items.

Packed Lunch Containers

It is the responsibility of parents / carers to provide an appropriate packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period. Parents might include an ice pack, since we do not have facilities to refrigerate home prepared packed lunches.

Please ensure the outside of all lunch boxes / containers are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Waste and Disposal

The school will, within reason, send any uneaten home prepared packed lunch food items back home. The rationale for this is that parents can be aware of what their child has consumed during the day and plan the family evening meal accordingly as well as to offer you the opportunity to raise any concerns over their child's food intake with the class teacher.

Promotion of Healthy Home Prepared Packed Lunches

There will be on going promotion of the need to provide healthy packed lunches through:

School newsletters
School handbook/prospectus for parents
Whole School Home Prepared Packed Lunch Policy
'New to ' Meetings for parents
Healthy School Week / healthy eating activities
Curriculum content
School website

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school will carry out monitoring of packed lunch provision - where there may be concerns over a child's food / nutritional intake and / or content of home prepared packed lunches, this will be dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.