

Greenside Primary School

Packed Lunch Policy

Introduction

The policy was drawn up using a range of national documents including information and a draft policy from the School Food Trust, the Food in Schools toolkit (Department of Health) and Food Policy in Schools – a strategic policy framework for governing bodies (National Governors' Council, (NGC) 2005).

The packed lunch policy has been formulated for the following reasons:

- To make a positive contribution to children's health and Healthy Schools Status.
- To encourage a happier and calmer population of children and young people.
- To promote consistency between packed lunches and food provided by schools which, from September 2006, must adhere to national standards set by the government. Please visit www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk for more information.

Aim

To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the pupil with healthy and nutritious food that meets similar standards to food served in schools, which is now regulated by national standards.

Where, when and to whom the policy applies:

To all pupils and to parents providing packed lunches to be consumed within school or on school visits during normal school hours.

Food and drink in packed lunches:

- The school will provide facilities for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.
- The school will work with the pupils to provide appropriate dining room arrangements
- The school will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.
- As fridge space is not available in school, pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible to stop the food going off.

The School Food Standards recommend that packed lunches should meet the standards outlined below. Children will not be prevented from eating packed lunches provided by parents if they do not meet the standards, but where there are ongoing concerns about the content of packed lunches, staff will discuss this with parents.

Packed lunches should include:

- at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day.
- meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel) every day
- oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks.

- a starchy food such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals every day.
- dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard everyday
- only plain water, still or sparkling, fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies. Please provide drinks in plastic screw top bottles (no cans).

Packed lunches should not include:

- Snacks such as crisps. Advice suggests including seeds, vegetables and fruit. Savoury crackers or breadsticks (with no added salt, sugar or fat) are also a good choice.
- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits and sweets. Cakes and other biscuits are allowed but encourage your child to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.
- Fizzy drinks (other than plain sparkling water).
- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages / chipolatas should only be included occasionally.

Health and Safety - Important

- **Nuts or eggs must not be included in packed lunches or brought into school at any time due to the risk to children in school with severe food allergies.**
- **Hot soup (and other hot food items) must not be brought into school due to the risk of scalding (Gateshead Health and Safety team). The team are also concerned about the implications of food being consumed at an unsafe temperature.**

Special diets and allergies:

The school also recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case, parents should share this information with school and they are urged to be responsible for ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible.

For these reasons, pupils are also not permitted to swap food items.

Involvement of parents/carers:

Pupils are normally expected to eat the lunch provided by the school. However, parents of pupils wishing to have packed lunches for a particular reason are encouraged to provide their children with packed lunches which conform to the packed lunch policy recommendations.

Dissemination of the policy:

The school will use opportunities to promote this policy as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating. The school will write to all new and existing parents/carers to inform them of the policy via the school newsletter and the policy will be available on the school's website and from the school office.

Policy Review

REVIEWED: September 2024

NEXT REVIEW: September 2026