



THOMAS JOHNSON LOWER SCHOOL

Hurst Grove, Lidlington, Bedfordshire MK43 0SB

Tel: 01525 402377 / 01525 404743

email: office@thomasjohnsonschool.co.uk

Packed Lunch Policy

Responsibility	Governing body
Review date	February 2022
Approved by Full Governing Body	updated February 2020
Storage: Electronic	School website

Aim

To promote the idea that children who bring a lunch from home to eat in school (or on school trips) should have food which is just as healthy and nutritious as food now served in school which is regulated by national standards.

Why do we need a policy?

The government has placed a duty on all maintained schools to ensure that every child is healthy and has invested hugely in improved school meals and free fruit for schools. Eating healthily is important because it will help children to:

- Be fitter and healthier now and later in life
- Be able to concentrate and learn during lesson time.

School meals conform to government nutritional guidelines, and in 2019 the guidance received stated that meals provided within schools must include :

- high quality meat, poultry or oily fish
- fruit and vegetables
- bread, other cereals and potatoes

The guidance advises against the inclusion at lunch times of:

- drinks with added sugar
- crisps, chocolate or sweets
- more than 2 portions of deep-fried, battered or breaded food a week.

Who does it apply to and when and where?

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

The policy

- The school will provide facilities for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is available at all times
- The school will work with pupils to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements
- The school will work with parents to promote healthy eating in all forms, whether as a packed lunch or as a school dinner.

- The school will ensure that children eating packed lunch or school meals sit together and are not separated.
- Parents should aim to provide children with a suitable container which they can actually eat the lunch from (rather than need to take food out and place it straight onto the table). A plastic box with a removable lid is ideal
- Children must only eat their own food and not other children's

GUIDANCE

Parents know their child's eating habits and are the best judge of what will keep them healthy and happy.

Suggestions for food TO include in a healthy packed lunch

- At least one portion of fruit or vegetables every day
- Meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, beans, soya or hummus) every day (usually as part of a sandwich, roll or salad)
- Oily fish, such as pilchards, salmon or tuna occasionally
- A starchy food such as bread, pasta, rice, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals every day
- Dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard
- A drink: water is best, followed by semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, fruit juice, drinking yoghurt, milk drinks or smoothies
- Fruit, cheese, and vegetable or bread sticks with a dip

Suggestions for food to include LESS OFTEN in a healthy packed lunch

- Meat and pastry products such as sausage rolls or pies

Food to NOT include in a healthy packed lunch

- Sweets, including chocolate and chocolate-coated bars
- Biscuits
- Crisps
- Nut or nut products (although these can be very healthy) because of the danger to other children with allergies
- Fizzy drinks as these tend to have low nutritional content and are messy if spilt.

Please see the end of this policy for our Traffic Light guide of suggestions for foods parents may wish to include. Our suggestions have been made with the aim of reducing high sugar and salt content. We have also tried to incorporate some of the pudding suggestions offered in our hot school dinners.

Does this mean children can't have any sweets, cakes or chocolate in school?

No, the guidance is to help children understand the difference between eating healthily for a main meal (such as breakfast, lunch and tea) and eating a treat occasionally. Treats are therefore allowed in school:

- To celebrate an occasion (e.g. a birthday or festival)
- As a reward (e.g. end of term party; whole class reward)
- As part of a school fundraising event (e.g. Fireworks night; ice-cream Fridays)
- Other similar occasions.

What happens if "banned" items are included in the lunch box?

With the vast array of food available in shops, it is easy to become confused by packaging and we understand that some food products may be misleading or confusing. If we feel that an item should not be included we will contact parents later that day to discuss the item with them. The child will not be prevented from eating that item on the day.

My child has anxieties around food. What can I do?

The school is happy to work with parents and support any child who has anxieties with certain foods, tastes and textures. We will work with parents and the School Nurse to find a solution together. This could involve a phased approach over several weeks, or could result in different food suggestions which might not otherwise have been considered. It is not our intention that any child should be anxious about eating as a result of this policy.

The NHS Change4Life website provides a list of practical food suggestions to help busy parents. The Lunchbox list gives different ideas for each day of the week, all of which are easy to prepare.
www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/healthy-lunchbox-picnic.aspx

Special diets

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 should contact the school so that we can work together to ensure packed lunches are as healthy as possible.

The role of Lunchtime Staff

Our Lunchtime Teaching Assistants try to ensure that children eat as much of their meal as possible, in a positive atmosphere, and that they have adequate time for playing with friends. We try to encourage children to try new things, but it is not possible to monitor exactly how much is being eaten. For this reason, your child will bring home empty packets and any uneaten food, so that you can adjust quantities, discuss preferences, or be alerted to other patterns (e.g. lack of appetite signalling the approach of an illness).

Here to help

If a parent becomes concerned about any aspect of our lunchtime routine, we advise them to contact the class teacher or office staff immediately, so that we can help resolve any difficulties or problems.

PACKED LUNCH IDEAS

YES! (MUST INCLUDE FRUIT/VEG)

Main	Fruit/Veg	Snack	Dessert
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown or Granary Bread Sandwich/wrap with, for example, ham, cheese, salad, marmite, banana • Pizza slices • Soup in a safe thermal container • Salad with veg, cheese, ham • Pasta Salad, with veg, cheese, ham • Cold chicken dippers • Cold sausages • Cold sausage rolls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banana, apple, pear, berries, citrus • Dried fruit, apple crisps • Cucumber slices • Pepper slices • Baby tomatoes • Carrot sticks • Sugar snap peas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breadsticks • Cheese/breadstick dippers • Cheese straws • Babybel/Cheese strings • Plain crackers • Rice cakes (not choc covered) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flapjacks • Banana bread/malt or fruit loaf • Low fat/sugar custard or rice pudding • Jelly • Mousse • Fruit yoghurt or fromage frais • Fruit pie/crumble • Mini cheesecake • Pancakes with or without raisins • Brioche roll or croissant (no choc)

ONLY OCCASIONALLY

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salami • Pepperami • Other spicy deli meats (all these have high fat/salt content) • White bread/wrap (try using one slice of white and one slice of brown to help make the change to green) 	<p>Friday only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairy cake • Rice crispy/cornflake cake • Shortcake • Cereal bar
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NO!

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisps (including vegetable or baked) • Mini cheddars • Chocolate in any form • Fruit Winders • Cakes (except Friday) • Cereal bar (except Friday) • Confectionary • Biscuits • Jam or marmalade • Nutella • Peanut butter • Nuts in any form
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