**Packed Lunch Policy and Guidelines**

**Aims**

To ensure that packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide children with healthy and nutritious food that is similar to food served by the catering team. All food served in school is now regulated by the Food and Nutrient Based Standards for School Lunches and the Food and Nutrient Based Standards for food other than lunches.

**Formulation of the Policy**

The policy has been developed by the Local Authority Catering Manager and members of the Senior Leadership Team and links directly to the school’s involvement in the National Healthy Schools Status. The policy will be reviewed by the Governing Board.

Reasons for introducing a policy include:-

* to make a positive contribution to children’s health and ability to learn
* to encourage a happier and calmer atmosphere in school
* to promote consistency between packed lunches and food provided by the school
* to strengthen the school’s excellent work in the area of healthy eating

The school recognises that this can be a sensitive issue and therefore wishes to make the following points:-

* we understand that there are several valid reasons why parents/carers may choose to provide a packed lunch for their child
* only the parent/ carer knows how the food provided in a packed lunch forms part of that child’s overall balanced diet
* although there is no ban on any foods we would prefer parents/carers to do their best to follow these guidelines

**National Guidance**

A range of national documents and information regarding food in schools have been considered in drawing up this policy.

* Standards for Food In Schools
* The Food In Schools Toolkit
* Food Policy in Schools – a strategic framework for governing boards

The policy applies to all packed lunches provided from home to be consumed within school or on school trips during normal school hours.

**Food and Drink in Packed Lunches**

The school provides facilities and adequate time for pupils to eat packed lunches.

Free fresh drinking water is provided. Parents do not have to provide a drink as part of the packed lunch but we ask that parents provide a drinking bottle that can be refilled at school. The school would prefer the content of packed lunches to follow the guidelines below.

*It is recommended that 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) every day
* a starchy food such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other types of cereal every day
* dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais, or custard every day
* if you wish to provide a drink the following are acceptable: non flavoured water, fruit juice, yoghurt or milk drinks, smoothies

*It is recommended that packed lunches should not include:*

* snacks such as crisps. Instead we ask seeds, vegetables and fruit (with no added salt, sugar or fat) are brought instead
* confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate covered biscuits and sweets. Cakes and biscuits are preferred as part of a balanced meal. We would prefer lunches not to contain processed items such as dippers and cheese strings etc.

**Hot Food on site**

To comply with Health and Safety and Food Safety Legislation no hot food or hot liquid is to be brought on site, if you wish your child to have a hot lunch please order a lunch from our in-house caterer.

*Special Diets and Allergies*

Please ensure that we are aware of any special diets that do not allow for the guidelines to be followed exactly. In such cases we do ask that parents/carers make sure the packed lunch is as healthy as possible. The school meals service is also able to provide for special diets due to either health or cultural reasons.

Children are not permitted to swap or share food items.

In the event that the school has a pupil in attendance that has an allergy to any food groups we will contact parents/carers to ask them to refrain from sending in these items for the safety and wellbeing of their fellow pupil/pupils.

Date: November 2023