



Newton Hall Infants' School

Packed Lunch Guidance

(This is based on Durham County Council guidance, informed by the School Food Trust and the Cross Government Strategy for England, Healthy Weight, 'Healthy Lives' launched in January 2008).

To grow and stay healthy children need to eat a nutritionally well balanced diet. Schools are required to positively promote the health and well-being of its pupils. Work around healthy eating is a high priority of the school curriculum.

The content of lunchboxes needs to reflect the requirement of schools to meet minimum food and nutrition standards for school meals.

We know that 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 consume 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.

Our packed lunch guidelines fit 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 Guide' model which shows items the **5** main food groups; (*Food Standards Agency*).

Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta

These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Packed lunches should include 2 or more portions.

Fruit and Vegetables

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

Milk and Dairy foods

These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Include 1 portion at lunch.

Meat, Fish, Eggs, Beans

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

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, crisps, cereal bars, fruit bars, toffee/salted popcorn, squash and fizzy drinks are no longer available in schools. Please support your school by not including these items in a packed lunch.

Drinks - any drinks provided in lunch boxes **should only** include either plain water, milk (semi-skimmed), unsweetened fresh fruit juice, diluted fresh fruit juice, fruit or dairy based smoothies.

To ensure consistency and to keep packed lunches in line with food standards for school meals, where possible packed lunches should not contain the following:

- Fizzy / sugary drinks in cartons, bottles or cans;
- Chocolate-coated products / sweets / confectionery;
- Chocolate spread as a filling for sandwiches;
- Chewing gum;
- Sugared / toffee and salted popcorn;
- Crisps or any packet savoury snacks high in salt and fat;
- Salted nuts or products containing nuts.

To assist us in ensuring the safety of all children in school at lunchtime, packed lunches should not contain nuts or any nut products, e.g. nutty cereal bars, peanut butter. This protects the children who have severe allergies to nut products and can suffer anaphylaxis as a result of contact with such products.

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

Waste and Disposal

The school will, within reason, send any uneaten packed lunch food items back home. The rationale for this is that parents can also monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake with the school.

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 are advised to include an ice pack. Food products prepared and stored in ambient temperatures after a period of time can have increased levels of bacteria in them. Hot foods e.g. soup should not be sent in to school. School cannot heat packed lunch food or store hot products, therefore all packed lunch items should be cold.

Storage of Packed Lunches

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.

Dining Facilities for Pupils Bringing Packed Lunch

The school will provide an appropriate area where pupils who choose to bring packed lunches can eat.

Thank you for your support in helping us to promote healthy eating and lifestyles in school by providing a nutritionally balanced packed lunch.