Healthy Eating, Snacks and Lunch Box Policy

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Diocese of Chelmsford
Vine Schools Trust
Colne Valley Consortium

The overall aim of this policy

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

Our School

St Andrew's Primary School recognises that our children come from diverse home backgrounds, cultures, ethnic and faith groups. Our school aims to meet the needs of all children and ensure equality of provision whilst taking account of this diversity and difference. We understand that some children are 'fussy eaters' and that it is a major step to get some children to eat anything at all. We would want parents to let us know if this is the case so that we can deal with such children sensitively and with encouragement and praise for what they have eaten.

We will provide a safe, healthy and appealing eating environment for pupils eating snacks and packed lunches, and ensure fresh drinking water is available at all times. We will encourage pupils to eat and drink as much of their morning snack or lunch as possible. As fridge space is not available in school parents are advised to send in packed lunches in a cooler bag or food that does not require refrigeration.

Water

It has been recognised that children's concentration and behaviour improves when children drink water throughout the day. Dehydration can give children headaches and make them tired. Therefore, we encourage pupils to bring a clearly named plastic bottle of water to school each day. This will allow children to have fresh drinking water throughout each day.

The following guidelines for snacks and lunchbox contents may help parents and ensure health and equality for all children.

Packed lunches may include:

- At least one portion of fruit and or vegetable (this could include dried fruit)
- Meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, chick peas, hummus)
- A sandwich that includes a savoury filling (e.g. egg, tuna, cheese, cooked meat)
- A starchy food such as bread, pasta, rice, noodles. • Dairy food such as cheese, yogurt, fromage frais.
- A smoothie or yogurt drink
- A bottle of water
- A biscuit not coated in chocolate
- Crisps (baked or other low fat options if possible) or other snack such as seeds, savoury crackers, breadsticks etc.

Packed Lunches should avoid:

- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate coated biscuits and sweets.
- Sausage rolls and pies should only be included occasionally
- No fizzy drinks

Nuts and nut products (e.g. peanut butter) should never be sent to school because of allergy concerns. Neither are children allowed to share food items for this same reason.

Mid-Morning Break

Early Years/KS1 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2)

- Each student will receive one piece of fruit or vegetable free per day. This is provided under the NHS Free Fruit and Vegetables for Schools Scheme and will be prepared onsite.
- You may wish to send a piece of fruit in with your child. However if your child is unable to peel the fruit, please peel them and wrap or store in a suitable way.

KS2 (Year 3,4,5 and 6)

- Fruit / vegetable – this may be sent in with your children or will be available to buy within school (again dry fruit is acceptable).

Please note that if you send in grapes or cherry tomatoes with your child then they must be cut in half.

Please no sweets or chocolate should be sent to school. Crisps may only be eaten at lunchtime.

On a daily basis the staff in school see what children have in their lunchboxes whilst supervising in the dining hall. This in an opportunity for them to talk with the children about their lunchboxes and to encourage healthy eating and drinking. However, we may send parents a reminder of this policy if their lunchbox falls short of the expectations of this policy. It is not our intention to tell parents what and how they should be feeding their children and we will not do so, but we want to work with parents to educate our children about health dietary choices so that they can make their own informed choices independently when they are older. If your child has not eaten enough of their lunch, we will wrap it up and send it home in their lunch box in order for you to see.

Treats that are sent into school to celebrate birthdays are allowed. Where possible these will be distributed at home time so parents are able to monitor this.

School Dinners

A nutritionally balanced school dinner is available for all children should they wish to have one. Early Years and KS1 classes are entitled to a free school meal under the Universal Free School Meals Scheme. Some KS2 children that are entitled to Free School Meals (these must be applied for and granted by Essex County Council) may request a free school meal each day. Other KS2 children may have a school meal at a cost of £2.30 per day.

Our school meals service is provided by Essex County Council's School Meal Service. Fully nutritionally balanced menus are cooked by the school catering staff and the quality of these meals is regularly monitored by our School Meals Consultant.

A vegetarian option is available each day and should your child wish to receive this option (whether vegetarian or not) then these can be ordered using the online payment system.

The Catering Manager is informed about children who have special dietary needs or allergies and this information is also displayed in the kitchen and staffroom. Our Catering Manager has received accredited

Allergen training and she is more than happy to discuss specific needs with parents/carers directly.

We have the best interests of all the children at heart.