

This document has been prepared with reference to information in the DfE publication *Lunch policy – Nutrient based standards for food in school*. Please note *Appendix A – packed lunches* is attached to, and forms part of this policy.

Aims

Woodcroft School aims to provide its pupils with the highest quality food budgetary constraints will allow. The school also aims to promote the importance of healthy eating by encouraging pupils to learn about and enjoy choosing, preparing and eating good quality food. All special dietary requirements are catered for.

Introduction

A varied and balanced diet is an important way of protecting health and promoting proper growth and development. In the short term it can help our pupils improve their concentration and fulfil their potential both inside and outside school. It helps to minimise some health risks such as anaemia and dental decay. A good diet in childhood can also help to prevent ill health later in life. Unhealthy diets, which include too many fatty foods, too much salt and sugar and not enough vegetables and fruit, are linked to the risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers.

A healthy diet

For our pupils a healthy diet means broadly:

- A balanced diet with plenty of variety and enough energy for growth and development.
- Plenty of fibre-rich starchy foods such as bread, rice, pasta, potatoes and yams.
- Plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables (everyone should aim to have five portions of fruit and vegetables each day).
- Moderate amounts of dairy products.
- Moderate amounts of meat, fish or alternative proteins, such as pulses.
- Not eating too many foods containing a lot of fat, especially saturated fat.
- Not having sugary foods and drinks too often.

Many children today consume too much saturated fat and salt and have sugary foods and drinks too often. A few do not get the right amounts of vitamins and essential minerals.

All children have particularly high energy and nutrient needs in relation to their size.

Food provision at Woodcroft

Woodcroft offers a free school lunch to all of its pupils. Our lunches are freshly prepared and cooked in our dedicated kitchen by our school cook. The menu is thought through in accordance with government guidelines and changes regularly depending on pupil feedback and seasonal availability. There is always a vegetarian option, but the weekly roast is a firm favourite. Our school cook uses organic, locally sourced and/or fairly traded ingredients wherever possible.

Alternatively pupils may choose to bring a packed lunch in from home, in which case *Appendix A* applies.

Pupils are provided with mid morning and afternoon snacks and in some cases offered a breakfast snack.

School snacks and special events

For birthday celebrations the pupil's parents can send in a simple cake for classmates to share. (We do ask that all food sent in from home is nut free.) For festivals such as Christmas, Easter and Dvali, the school buys an assortment of treats for pupils to enjoy.

Examples of drinks and snack foods provided throughout the school day include:

- Fresh fruit, vegetables
- Unlimited access to free, fresh water (skimmed or semi-skimmed organic milk and natural unsweetened fruit juices may be provided for special occasions)
- Wholegrain bread, rice cakes, crispbreads, plain cereals
- Honey, cottage cheese, fruit spreads, dried fruit (limited amounts)

National nutritional standards for school lunches

The government has set compulsory nutritional standards which are set out in legislation. The standards say that lunches for primary school pupils must contain at least *one* item from each of the following food groups:

- *Starchy foods* such as bread, potatoes, rice and pasta. Starchy food cooked in oil or fat should not be served more than three times a week.
- *Fruit and a vegetable* must be available every day. Fruit based desserts must be available twice a week.
- *Milk and dairy foods*. Cheese may be included in this group.
- *Meat, fish and alternative sources of protein*. Red meat must be served at least twice a week. Fish must be served at least once a week.

These standards apply to:

- All lunches provided for pupils during term time, whether they are free or lunches which pupils pay for.
- Hot and cold food, including packed lunches provided by the school for pupils on school trips.

Monitoring nutritional standards

The government recommends that records are kept of the food provided and detailed monitoring is undertaken from time-to-time to take account of key nutrients served and cooking methods. It is also recommended that feedback is sought from pupils. This is done via the school council and questionnaires.

Good food practice at Woodcroft

School lessons aim to encourage healthy eating and reinforce the importance of a balanced diet. Food themes are introduced and linked to the curriculum, festivals or other national initiatives.

Due to severe allergic reactions in some people, **nuts are not allowed in school**.

Woodcroft makes every effort, within the boundaries of a healthy diet and the national nutritional standards, to reflect the food likes and dislikes of its pupils. The school also makes efforts to: ensure hot food stays hot; present food in an attractive and interesting way; replace unpopular foods; to vary the food on offer; and regularly introduce new food.

Parents and pupils are informed on entry to Woodcroft of what 'food in school' entails via a Food Pack. A pupil version is also available.

The current school lunch menu and packed lunch ideas are always included in the termly newsletter.

Appendix A – packed lunches

Aims

- To promote consistency between packed lunches and the food provided by the school, including school lunches, which must adhere to government set national standards.
- To comply with government policy requiring schools to work towards the five outcomes of Every Child Matters, one of which is ‘being healthy’.
- To make a positive contribution to children’s overall health and to help the school achieve and maintain Healthy Schools Status.
- To encourage a more happy and calm population of children and young people.

Practicalities

Where, when and to whom the appendix applies

- To all pupils and parents providing packed lunches to be consumed within school or on school trips during normal school hours.
- To all staff, bringing a packed lunch from home, which will be eaten with pupils on school trips during normal school hours. (*Note: This appendix does not apply to staff bringing in a packed lunch to eat in the staff dining room.*)

Woodcroft School will ensure the following

- That free, fresh drinking water is readily available to all pupils at all times.
- That we will work with pupils to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements.
- That we will work with parents, staff and pupils to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.
- That wherever possible the school will ensure that packed lunch pupils and school lunch pupils will be able to sit and eat together.

For each day packed lunches should include

- At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables.
- One source of protein, e.g. meat, fish, lentils, chickpeas, hummus, falafel etc.
- Dairy food, such as cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or a custard pot.
- A starchy food, such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereal. Wholegrain, wholewheat or high fibre varieties should be chosen where possible. Plain crisps, biscuits or cake bars are allowed, in moderation, as part of a balanced meal. These must not be chocolate coated.

Packed lunches must not include

- Nuts, e.g. peanut butter, nutty cereal bars.
- Snacks, such as flavoured crisps or snacks, e.g. Wotsits, Quavers etc. Plain crisps are allowed. Instead, you could include: seeds; vegetables, e.g. carrot sticks and dried fruit (with no added salt, sugar or fat); savoury crackers or breadsticks served with fruit, vegetables or dairy food.
- Confectionery, such as sweets, chocolate bars, chocolate covered cakes or biscuits or chocolate dippers.

Notes:

- Please don’t send in any drinks as free, fresh water is available throughout the school day.
- Meat products, such as sausage rolls, pork pies, corned beef or sausages should be included only occasionally.
- Pupils coming into school with unsuitable items may have them removed, stored safely and returned at home time at the end of the school day.

Special diets and allergies

- Please be aware of nut allergies.
- Please speak to the head teacher for further advice if you are concerned about allergies, or visit the website www.allergyinschools.co.uk for accurate, reliable information on managing allergies in schools.
- The school recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For these reasons pupils are also not permitted to swap food items.
- Please contact the school regarding any special dietary requirements and we will discuss a suitable approach that is agreeable to all concerned.

Assessment, evaluation and reviewing

- Packed lunches will be monitored on a daily basis by teaching, lunch-time and learning support staff, and will be regularly reviewed and monitored by the healthy eating working party.
- Staff, parents and pupils who do not adhere to the *Packed lunch appendix* will receive a leaflet informing them of the appendix. If a child regularly brings a packed lunch that does not conform, the school will contact the parents to discuss this.
- Please note that pupils with special diets will be given due consideration.

Involvement of parents

- Whenever possible, pupils are encouraged to eat the lunches provided by the school. To this end the school subsidises school lunches and they are free to all pupils.
- Parents of pupils wishing to have packed lunches for a particular reason are expected to provide their children with packed lunches which conform to the *Packed lunch appendix*.
- Parents and staff are expected to adhere to the *Packed lunch appendix* on school trips.
- In turn, the school will keep all relevant parties informed as per the methods detailed in the following paragraph.

Dissemination of the appendix

- The school will write to all new and existing parents to inform them of the *Packed lunch appendix*.
- The school will use opportunities such as parents' events and Healthy Living weeks to promote this appendix as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating.
- All school staff will be informed of this appendix and will support its implementation.
- Pupils will be involved in discussion as relevant, and informed of the appendix as it affects them, in a way that takes into account their individual level of understanding. A pupil friendly version of the appendix will be available for the above purpose.