

35. Healthy Lunch Box Policy

Aim

At La Petite Academy our aim is to ensure that all packed lunches consumed in nursery provide the child with healthy and nutritious food that is similar to the food that is served in nursery and provides a balanced diet. This policy applies to all children and parents providing packed lunches to be consumed within the nursery. At no time will a child be made to feel ashamed or uncomfortable about the contents of their lunch box. However, should parents consistently send packed lunches which do not meet our objectives below, then a member of staff will speak to the parent away from the child.

Objectives

- To give the children and parents the information they need to make healthy choices and consistent messages about food and health
- To contribute to the healthy physical development of all members of our nursery community
- To encourage all children to take part in the “5 a day” campaign
- To promote consistency between packed lunches and food provided by the nursery.

Parents should note:

- The nursery will ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times for children bringing in packed lunches.
- The nursery will work with the children to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements.
- As fridge space is not available in the nursery, parents are advised to send packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks, where possible, to retain appropriate temperatures for safe food consumption.
- Parents are unable to send in food which requires heating, so hot food should be sent in a thermal flask.
- The nursery does not routinely wash plates, bowl etc, sent from home and will return these home in the packed lunch box for cleaning at home
- There needs to be an awareness of nut allergies and that **NO** nuts are not put into a child’s lunch box, including baked within other products.

Packed lunches should include:

- At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables e.g., carrot sticks, cucumber, small apple or orange, banana, dried fruit, mini tomatoes, mango cubes
- Meat, fish, or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g., chicken, turkey, ham, beef, pork, tuna, lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, falafel)
- A starchy food e.g., bread, pasta, crackers, rice cakes, oat cakes, pitta bread, tortilla wraps.
- Dairy food e.g., milk, cheese, yoghurt or fromage frais (or dairy alternative)
- Drink (e.g., fruit juice, milk, yoghurt drink or smoothie) or water will be provided.

High fat meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages should only be included occasionally.

It is not appropriate for lunchboxes to contain chocolate (eg bars, buttons), sweets (eg Haribos) or fizzy drinks.

Our alternative suggestions to snacks such as crisps, include:

- Savoury crackers or breadsticks served with a dip
- Sliced vegetables and fruit
- Cereal bars
- Dried fruit
- Baked crisps

Our alternative suggestions to snacks such as chocolate bars, include:

- Sugar free jellies with fruit
- Fruit, vegetables
- Scones (plain or with dried fruit)
- Fruit based cake e.g., carrot cake, gingerbread, banana loaf, date loaf, fruit loaf (or the same but in the form of a muffin)

Special diets and allergies.

The nursery recognises that some children may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly (e.g., dairy free, egg allergy). In this case parents are to be responsible for ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy and balanced as possible. For this reason, children are also not permitted to swap food items with others.

Assessment, evaluation and reviewing

Key workers will hold discussions with parents (e.g., at handovers) regarding their child's lunches and appetites. Any food not eaten will be returned home so parents can see how much their child has consumed

If staff members feel that a child's lunchbox has not been balanced and healthy over the course of time, then staff will discuss this in private with parents to offer suggestions for improvements and ensure that a copy of this policy has been seen by the parent.

Dissemination of the policy

- The policy will be available on the nursery's website and mentioned on nursery newsletters over time
- The nursery will use opportunities such as, healthy eating days and food technology to promote this policy as part of a whole nursery approach to healthy eating.
- All nursery staff, including catering staff, will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>28th April 2023</i>	<i>J. Hursthouse</i>	<i>28th April 2025</i>