



Fingringhoe

Church of England (VA) Primary School

'Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.' ~Joshua 1:9

Lunchtime Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines our approach to packed lunches brought from home. It is designed to promote pupils' health, wellbeing and readiness to learn, while reflecting a culture of care, respect and responsibility. We aim to work in positive partnership with families to support children in developing healthy habits and thoughtful attitudes towards food.

Aims

- To encourage balanced, nutritious and varied lunchboxes that support children's physical and cognitive development.
- To foster independence, good manners and a positive social experience at mealtimes.
- To support pupils in making informed, healthy choices over time.
- To respect individual needs, family circumstances and parental choice.

Partnership with parents and carers

We recognise that parents and carers are responsible for providing packed lunches and ultimately decide what their child eats. Our role is to guide, encourage and support. Through open communication, shared expectations and mutual respect, we aim to promote healthy choices without judgement. Information, suggestions and resources may be shared with families to support this partnership.

Healthy and balanced lunchboxes

We encourage lunchboxes to include a range of foods from different food groups, for example:

- A source of carbohydrates (e.g. bread, wraps, rice, pasta)
- Protein (e.g. meat, fish, eggs, beans, lentils)
- Dairy or alternatives (e.g. cheese, yogurt)
- Fresh fruit and/or vegetables

We promote:

- Variety across the week
- Sensible portion sizes
- Water or milk as the main drinks

We discourage:

- Excessive amounts of high-sugar or high-fat foods
- Fizzy drinks or energy drinks

However, we recognise that balance looks different for every family and occasional treats are a normal part of a healthy relationship with food.

Respecting individual needs

We are committed to inclusion and understanding. Some pupils may have additional needs, medical conditions, allergies, or sensory sensitivities related to food. In these cases:

- Reasonable adjustments will always be made
- Staff will work closely with parents, carers and relevant professionals
- Pupils will be supported sensitively and without stigma
- We acknowledge that for some children, particularly those with sensory processing differences, food choices may be limited. These needs will be respected and supported.

Food supplements and added ingredients

We recognise that some foods naturally contain added vitamins, probiotics or supplements as part of their ingredients. These are acceptable within a balanced diet.

Discrete food supplements (e.g. separate multivitamin tablets and/or gummies, probiotic sachets or similar) will not usually be permitted in school unless:

- There has been prior agreement with the school, and
- There is a clear medical reason supported by appropriate guidance
- In such cases, arrangements will be made in line with the school's medical needs procedures.

Social and emotional aspects of eating

Lunchtime is an important social time. We encourage:

- Kindness and respect towards others' food choices
- Good table manners
- Independence (e.g. opening containers, managing food)

Staff will model positive attitudes towards food and avoid creating pressure or anxiety around eating.

Allergies and safety

To ensure the safety of all pupils:

- Parents must inform the school of any allergies or medical dietary needs so that individual health care plans can be implemented
- The school may implement specific restrictions (e.g. nut-free guidance) where necessary

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to reflect best practice, pupil needs and feedback from families and staff.

Summary

This policy is rooted in a shared commitment to care, respect and responsibility. By working together, we can help children develop healthy habits, confidence and consideration for others—supporting both their wellbeing and their ability to thrive.

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