Howe Dell School

Packed Lunch Policy

Autumn 2026

Reason for the policy

We as a school work hard to positively promote the health and well-being of all of our children. The best way to ensure that a child receives a nutritious, balanced diet to support his or her learning and development is to have a school meal on a daily basis.

However, the school recognises that packed lunches are an option that some parents may want to take up so we want to ensure that the content of lunchboxes reflect the requirement to meet minimum food and nutrition standards.

Therefore, there is a requirement that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the pupils with healthy, safe and nutritious food.

Aims of the policy

- To ensure that children eating packed lunch (brought in from home) get the necessary nutritional benefits as they would from school meals
- To encourage a high nutritional quality of packed lunches in school and healthy eating habits of the children at lunchtimes, which can positively influence health and well-being.
- To further raise the profile of healthy eating throughout the school.
- To encourage healthy eating habits from an early age and improve the overall nutrition of children

What the school will provide:

- an appropriate area where pupils who choose to bring packed lunches can eat (be that indoors or outdoors)
- a storage area for packed lunch bags next to or in the cloakroom (there are no refrigeration facilities)
- drinking water for pupils who request it
- staff on duty at lunchtime to supervise children and ensure that children eat what is included within their packed lunch. (If eating habits become an issue of concern then parents will be contacted.)

Packed Lunch Box Contents

If children bring a packed lunch, please send the packed lunch in a named box or tin. Packed lunches should contain healthy food in line with the packed lunch policy. You must provide a labelled water bottle for your child every day. Children eating packed lunches will sit in the dining room and will be supervised in the same way as the children eating a school meal. **No hot food should be sent in to school.**

The eatwell plate, included at the end of this policy, demonstrates the range of foods that children should consume in order to maintain a balanced diet; parents can use this as a guide.

As a general guide, items acceptable within a packed lunch include:

- Fruit and vegetables (to provide vitamins and minerals for health)
- Meat, fish, eggs, usually within a sandwich or wrap (for protein for growth)
- Bread, cold pasta and rice (to provide carbohydrates for energy)

- Cheese, yogurt and other dairy products (to provide protein for growth)
- Water (no juice)
- Cereal bars
- Sushi (to be kept with a cool pack in lunchbox) – no sesame seeds
- Grapes that are cut into quarters

However, packed lunches should <u>not</u> include:

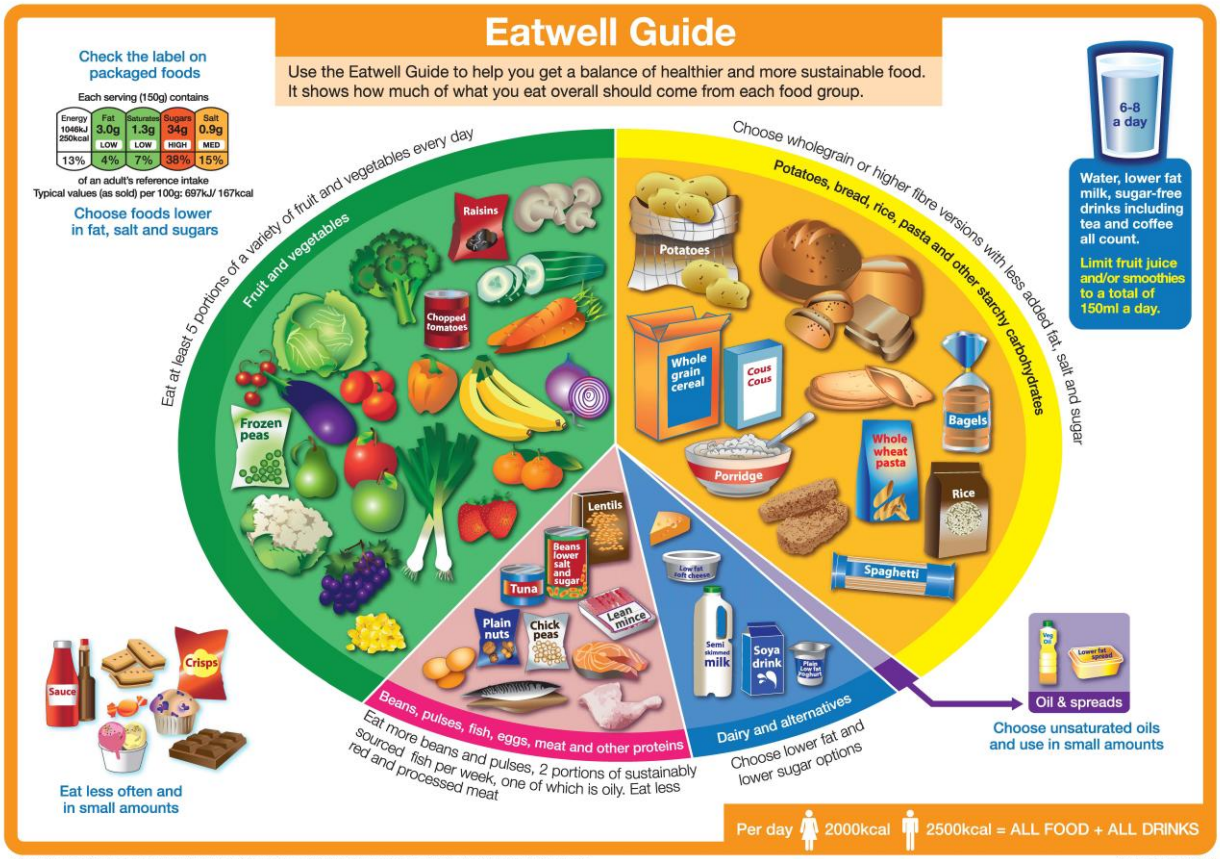
- Hot/warm food (due to health and safety concerns as the school has no facilities to maintain or monitor the required temperatures for hot packed lunches and particularly hot foods could be a scalding hazard)
- Cold/ pre-cooked burgers (any type of burger) /fish fingers/chips/fried egg etc
- Fast food (eg McDonalds/ KFC etc)
- Sesame Seeds – this also includes sesame seeds on rolls and buns
- Hummus – as it contains sesame
- Popcorn
- Marshmallows
- Whole grapes – they must be cut into quarters
- Any items containing nuts including peanut butter
- Fizzy / highly sugared drinks in cartons, bottles or cans
- Juice
- Sweets / confectionary
- Chocolate spread as a filling for sandwiches, pain au chocolate (any make) or pancakes with chocolate spread filling
- Chewing gum
- Energy drinks

<u>Nuts or nut products</u> should not be included in any packed lunch because of risks to children with allergies

Packed lunches should be provided in re-usable plastic boxes, not plastic bags.

Special Diets
The school recognises that some pupils may require special diets due to verified medical conditions. In these cases, parents should inform the school and be responsible for ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible.

It is essential that children eat their own packed lunch only and not each other's.



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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