



Healthy Eating Packed Lunches and Snack Policy

Oaklea Montessori nursery wish to promote the right environment for our children to understand the importance of making healthy food choices. Packed lunches and snacks represent at least a third of a child's daily intake of foods and nutrients, which presents a great opportunity to promote healthy food choices for children.

Aims

To give clear guidance to parents, carers, children and staff on providing a healthy packed lunch and snack. We believe that a healthy packed lunch can contribute to the health of children and needs to be consistent with the nutritional standards provided by Early Years Nutritional Guidelines. The policy applies to all packed lunches and snacks consumed within Nursery. *"It is important that food provided from home aligns with the healthy options offered by the setting, so that children receive consistent messages about nutrition", as stated in the Early Years nutrition guidance document.*

The nursery will continue to work with parents to ensure packed lunches and snack at Oaklea Montessori nursery abide by this policy.

Content of Packed Lunches

- Fruit and vegetables; at least one portion of fruit, vegetables, or salad a day. Ensure berries are cut in half (long ways); grapes to be cut into quarters.
- Carbohydrates: starchy food such as bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes (not fried)
- Drinks: milk and water will be provided.
- Sandwich fillings to be savoury only - no jam, honey, peanut butter or chocolate spread.

All packed lunches should be age appropriate, so that the child can eat independently and should not need preparing by the practitioner.

The following should not be included in packed lunches or snack

- Nuts or nut products
- Fried food
- Chocolate, including chocolate spread
- Fizzy/sugary drinks in cartons, bottles or cans (including diet or energy drinks which contain high levels of caffeine and other additives which are not suitable for children)
- Confectionary such as chocolate bars, chocolate covered biscuits and sweets.
- Cooked food, such as pasta, rice, meat etc. cannot be reheated on the premises, so please ensure your child's lunch can be consumed at room temperature.

Special Diets and allergies

“All foods bought from home should be checked for potential allergens so that the risk of cross contamination”. We ask parents/carers to be aware of nut and other allergies. As some children/staff in nursery may have nut allergies, we ask parents to refrain from including nuts or peanut butter in their lunch boxes/bags.

Packed Lunch Containers

We ask that parents/carers provide a packed lunch container which is to be labelled where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunch time period. You may wish to include an ice water bottle or freezer block to keep the food cold as we do not have the facilities to refrigerate the food. If food is not in its original packaging, please clearly label the item.

At Oaklea we will:-

- Make sure all Children have access to drinking water at all times (EYFS)
- Milk is available at snack time for all 2-5 year olds.

Snack

Snacks will be offered between meals to ensure children receive appropriate levels of energy and nutrition, for example at mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

If you have opted to providing your own snack, this must be a piece of fruit or vegetable cut up and ready to eat in a labelled container, please see the list above that is not to be included to be snack.

Monitoring

To promote healthy eating, we will regularly monitor the content of packed lunches and snacks. We will talk to parents/carers where necessary and offer guidance on bringing healthy packed lunches and snack. If lunches are not deemed to meet nutritional standards parents will be advised on changes that need to be made. Any sweets or sugary drinks will be sent home at the end of the day. Water and milk will be provided as an alternative. If a child's packed lunch continues not to follow the guidance, then the parent/carer will be asked to come in for a consultation with the manager.

Birthdays and other celebrations

We welcome cakes and sweets being brought in for the children by their peers to celebrate Birthdays or any other celebrations. If these are brought into nursery to share amongst the children, we will give them out at the end of the session and leave it to the discretion of the parent/carer. Please list the ingredients if homemade.

Working with parents and carers

We hope that all parents and carers will support this packed lunch and snack policy. We will offer advice and guidance to parents and carers on packed lunches and snack if required. Children on special diets following verified medical advice will be given due consultation.

Websites for advice on packing a healthy lunch box

- [Lunchbox ideas and recipes – Healthier Families - NHS](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/the-eatwell-guide.aspx)
- <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/the-eatwell-guide.aspx>