



Millbrook Primary School

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Packed Lunches

Dear Parents and Carers,

Over the last few weeks there have been a number of concerns with some of the items coming in children's packed lunches, so I am writing both to clarify our expectations on this and also to simplify the system so that parents can better understand and adhere to the requirements.

There is an increasing issue with childhood obesity and tooth decay in England, and as an accredited Healthy School, we want to support our parents as much as possible to make healthy choices for their children's meals. There is also a clear link between a high sugar intake and poor behaviour, which we seek to protect our children from.

We recognise that it can sometimes be confusing to see what children having a school lunch are allowed to eat compared with packed lunches, so I would like to clarify this further. School kitchens have to adhere to very strict nutritional guidelines about what can and cannot be included in school meals. This includes any salt, sugar and saturated fats. All menus compiled by school kitchens must meet these standards and all recipes are scrutinised for their nutritional content before being passed to the kitchen. This means that although the children will sometimes have puddings, cakes or chips for example, these are sourced and cooked in a healthier way and are presented as part of a balanced menu over the week. We understand that it is sometimes hard to explain this to children, who may see their friends as being allowed to have something on school meals that they are not as packed lunches, but we can control the sugar, salt and fat content of school lunches in a way that we cannot with packed lunches.

In the past, we have tried to ensure that packed lunches are of a similar healthy standard to school meals, but we recognise that it can be difficult to navigate the array of different types of foods and to ensure variety in packed lunches. Therefore, to clarify our rules for packed lunches, they can include anything so long as there is no:

- Chocolate or chocolate spread
- Nuts (to safeguard those with allergies)
- Fizzy drinks
- Sweets
- Fast Foods (Burgers, fries etc.)

We will also speak with you individually if we are concerned about the contents of your child's lunchbox. We also include a suggestions sheet with this letter to help parents and children to prepare a healthy packed lunch. Please do get your children involved in preparing their packed lunches and encourage them to make healthier choices.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Pereira-Barker
Head teacher

