

Healthy Lunchtime Toolkit

A step-by-step guide for primary schools to help pupils eat a healthy lunch at school



Health Improvement in Schools



Ealing

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Healthy Schools

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About the Ealing Health Improvement Team

The health improvement team in Ealing are a trusted and qualified team of experts, providing support, programmes and training in safeguarding prevention, mental health and emotional wellbeing, nutrition and exercise, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and PSHE to help improve your pupils' health and achievement.



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Our Services

All Ealing schools get access to our free Universal service. For additional support, the majority of schools also buy back the Healthy Schools Awards & Training package and/or our 4 Day Bespoke package. For more information on our services, email Karen: KGibson@ealing.gov.uk.

Free Universal service

Includes an annual Health In School Visit, Ealing PSHE scheme of work, PSHE network, Stepping Up To Health newsletter, Health Related Behaviour Survey and conferences.

Awards & Training package

Includes six practical workshops to help you achieve Healthy Schools London awards, access to our partnership, a celebration event, plus a choice from over 30 training workshops.

4 Day Bespoke package

Includes four days of bespoke work, surveys to measure impact, an impact report, and phone and email support. Schools can also buy back a single day of lunchtime support.

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Welcome

About the toolkit?



This toolkit has been written by Nicole McGregor, the health improvement team's nutrition and exercise officer. Nicole is a qualified nutritionist with over four years' experience helping Ealing schools improve the nutrition of school food and packed lunches.

This toolkit includes information, solutions, ideas and resources to help primary schools successfully introduce healthy changes at lunchtime.

This toolkit provides helpful guidance developed from experience and knowledge gained from Ealing schools and good practice gathered from schools around the country.

This toolkit is available to download here: egfl.org.uk/healthy-schools

Main sections in the toolkit



There are three main sections in this toolkit.

• Section 1: Background

Background information, a summary of the issues and a brief overview of the science.

• Section 2: 7 step guide

A step-by-step guide to introducing a packed lunch policy and making healthy changes to school lunches. Follow the seven steps in this section to help ensure your changes are successful, sustainable and have buy in from staff, parents and pupils.

• Section 3: Appendix

A resources section including letter templates, a sample policy, flyers, surveys and posters.

How to use the toolkit



1

Implementing a successful packed lunch policy requires schools to follow seven steps. After reading about each step in this toolkit, answer the questions in the action plan on **page 17**.

2

Meet with colleagues, your senior leadership team and headteacher to gauge interest in introducing a packed lunch policy and reward system.

3

If there is a need and interest in a packed lunch policy, carry out the seven steps as outlined on page 7. Use the checklist on **page 18** to help keep you on track.



*The school food standards

Starchy food
One portion of starchy food every day and one or more wholegrain varieties each week.



Fruit & vegetables
One or more portions of vegetables as an accompaniment every day.



Milk & dairy
A portion of food from this group every day.

Background

About half of all children in England take a packed lunch to school and many parents mistakenly believe that a packed lunch is the healthiest option. However, packed lunches often include convenience food items which tend to be high in salt, sugar and fat, which are linked to health issues affecting children including obesity, tooth decay, anaemia and diabetes, and later in life can lead to heart disease, stroke and some cancers.

The Leeds research team surveyed 1294 children from 89 schools in the UK in 2010. The researchers found that 82% of lunchboxes contained foods high in saturated fat, salt and sugar such as crisps, sweets and biscuits. Only one in five packed lunches contained any vegetables or salad and about half included an item of fruit.

This study also found that only one in 100 pupils' packed lunches meet the basic dietary standards that school meals provide.

School food standards require caterers to provide a variety of vegetables or salad every day, wholegrain foods must be available, and fried food and foods that include pastry must be limited to two portions a week. Base your packed lunch policy on the school food standards to ensure your messages about food in school are consistent.

Why introduce a packed lunch policy?



Maintained schools have a statutory duty to promote children's wellbeing and with the introduction of school food standards, schools have a duty to ensure both school meals and packed lunches are nutritious.

Also, data shows that very few pupils in Ealing meet their nutritional requirements. Ealing's Health Related Behaviour Survey (2015) found that only 30% of pupils met their 5 A DAY, 7% of pupils ate no fruit or vegetables and 8% ate chocolate for lunch the day before the survey.

Schools that have introduced a packed lunch policy have on average seen a 70% increase in vegetable and salad consumption and 30% decrease in junk food items.

According to Ealing's National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) 2015/16 data, 39% of year 6 pupils were overweight or obese, which is higher than the national average of 34%.

Also, research shows that education and health are closely linked (1). Therefore, promoting the health and wellbeing of pupils within schools has the potential to improve their educational outcomes.

The Ofsted inspection framework asks schools what they are doing to support pupils to lead a healthy lifestyle. A packed lunch policy is excellent evidence to show inspectors that your school is committed to supporting pupils health.

Finally, schools need to have a packed lunch policy to gain healthy schools status and achieve their Healthy Schools London bronze award.



Meat, fish, eggs, beans

A portion of food from this group everyday. Oily fish once or more every three weeks. Meat or poultry on three or more days each week.



Healthier drinks

Free, fresh drinking water at all times. The only drinks permitted are plain water, low fat milk, juice (150 mls max).



Junk food

No confectionery and no more than two portions each week of pastry items, deep-fried or battered food.



Food provided outside lunch

Fruit and/or vegetables must be available, and no cakes, biscuits, pastries or desserts containing less than 50% fruit are allowed.

The Science:

Proven benefits of eating a healthy lunch

It is widely accepted that eating food high in fat, sugar and salt, and low in fibre is bad for our health. It leaves children at risk of developing a range of adverse medical conditions during childhood and beyond into adulthood.

This contrasts with children who have a healthy diet – they will generally have lower blood pressure, fewer dental caries, less body fat and fewer long-term health problems such as coronary heart disease, cancer and stroke.

Evidence suggests that benefits go far beyond physical health. Having a healthy diet can improve concentration, improve energy levels, academic achievement, mood, memory, self-esteem and sleep.

Also, a good diet may help reduce depression. According to research, a lack of vitamin B12, iron, and calcium is often the cause of mild cases of depression and anxiety (2).

Here are eight benefits of eating a healthy lunch:



Step-by-step guide

to introducing a packed lunch policy and healthier school meals

A packed lunch policy is easy to introduce but improper planning can cost you time and money. Follow the seven steps below to help ensure your changes to school lunches are sustainable and have buy in from staff, parents and pupils.

step **1** Carry out a needs assessment

step **2** Organise a planning group

step **3** Consult and discuss

step **4** Write and revise

step **5** Design a reward scheme

step **6** Promote and communicate

step **7** Review, monitor and evaluate

Carry out a needs assessment

Before introducing changes to food consumed at lunchtime, it is recommended that schools carry out a needs assessment to find out the issues regarding school meals and packed lunches. The information collected from your needs assessment can help you decide on the activities to introduce. Presenting this data to your senior leaders can help you negotiate allocated time, funds and support to work on improving school lunches.

Ealing schools have access to data including the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) and the Health Related Behaviour Survey (HRBS). The NCMP graph shows the percentage of underweight, healthy weight, overweight and obese children in reception and year 6 in Ealing primary schools.

The HRBS is carried out every two years in Ealing and shows the health and wellbeing needs of year 4, 6, 8 and 10 pupils.

If obesity in your school is low and pupils' diets are better than the Ealing average, improving the nutrition of food consumed at lunch will still benefit your pupils' academic achievement, concentration, mood and emotional wellbeing.

Before starting activities to improve packed lunches, collect baseline data to find out: what pupils are eating at lunch, what pupils think about school meals and what incentives would encourage pupils to choose healthy options at lunchtime.

To collect baseline data, create an online survey in a programme such as Survey Monkey and use the sample baseline questions on **page 17**. Ask pupils to complete this at the beginning of their ICT lesson. Get at least one class in each year group to complete this survey for a representative sample size.

Repeat this survey with the same pupils four months after implementing your activities to find out the impact you are having. Share your results with pupils, staff and parents.

Carry out a survey to find out what pupils are eating at lunch and to get their opinion on school meals. Repeat this survey after implementing your activities to find out the impact you are having.

Organise a planning group

The key to a successful project is careful planning, to have a lead person and group of pupils and/or staff working on your lunchtime activities. It is important that everyone in your school feels involved so that they take ownership of the activities you plan to introduce.

Introducing changes to school lunches will affect many people in your school. Therefore, you should begin to consult all key groups affected in the early planning stages.

You can ask your school council to look at this topic as part of their school council meetings or you can set up a new group to lead your lunchtime activities.

If you choose to set up a new working group, invite pupils, your PSHE coordinator, PE lead, senior leaders, governors, lead SMSA and catering lead to join your group.

Clear leadership is essential from the start. Therefore a member of staff should be chosen to lead the working group or discussions in school council meetings, and be responsible for organising regular meetings. This is usually the PSHE co-ordinator.

The group leading on this project should begin to set out a clear and shared vision, and the working group will need to meet regularly to keep the project on track. All working group members should be delegated responsibilities.

Case study

Perivale Primary School introduced a school nutrition action group (SNAG). A SNAG is a working party that reviews school food culture. Perivale's SNAG has 15 members which includes pupils and staff. This group meet regularly to make important decisions about school food.



Consult and discuss

Consulting staff, your catering team, SMSAs, pupils and parents offers you the opportunity to explain what you want to achieve and why, it gives you the chance to look at some of the issues and barriers and allows everyone to recognise that their views are valued, which will result in more confidence and compliance with your activities.

If you plan to introduce a token reward system, it's important to find out what your SMSAs think about this idea, especially if SMSAs will be responsible for giving out tokens. Plan a consultation meeting with your SMSAs before they start their shift.

Consulting parents will help get parents on board with your changes. Ask parents for their opinion on a packed lunch policy and find out their concerns. You can use the example questionnaire on **page 25**. Ask parents to complete this, collate the results and feedback the results to parents via your school newsletter.

It is important to provide parents with an opportunity to feedback any concerns they have about a packed lunch policy. Therefore, you could organise a focus group, drop-in, set up a stall at a parent-teacher evening or invite parents to meet with you to discuss their concerns.

If you plan to make changes to your school lunch menu, arrange a time to meet with your catering manager. Let them know what you want to do, what you are trying to achieve and find out if they are interested in trialling a new healthier menu.

Don't forget to consult pupils! Introducing a packed lunch policy has been most successful where the school council have been involved in driving it forward.

To ensure all pupils in your school have their opinion heard, include consultation questions in your baseline survey. For example, ask pupils for their opinion on a packed lunch policy, token reward system, ask for their ideas on prizes for the year group that collects the most tokens and find out what healthy desserts appeal to them. See the example survey on **page 23**.

Consultation will result in more confidence and compliance in your policy from parents, pupils, SMSAs and your catering team.



Write and revise

The two activities demonstrated to improve the nutrition of food consumed by pupils at lunchtime include introducing a packed lunch policy and revising the school lunch menu.

Revise school lunches



To ensure the messages and rules about food in your school are consistent, improve the nutrition of school lunches at the same time as introducing your packed lunch policy.

School lunches meet strict nutrition criteria and are generally much healthier than packed lunches.

School meal pupils have the option of a dessert such as cake or pudding every day. However, many schools believe that offering desserts everyday to pupils for lunch is setting pupils up with unhealthy food behaviours and is sending inconsistent messages. As a compromise, most schools in Ealing have introduced a 'Friday treat day' where pupils are allowed to bring in one snack of their choice on Fridays.

To improve the nutrition of school lunches and for consistent messages, ask your caterer to introduce a healthier dessert menu that includes fruit-based desserts such as fruit and yoghurt cups and fruit jelly.

Speak to your catering manager if you would like changes made to your school lunch menu.

Introduce a packed lunch policy



Your packed lunch policy should include background information, communicate your aims, outline what food should be included and what food will be restricted. Use the sample policy on **page 27** as a guide.

Most schools introduce a packed lunch policy where water is the only drink allowed. This is recommended and may reduce incidents of tooth decay and will reduce the calorie content of lunches. Some schools also allow semi-skimmed milk.

In your policy, consider discouraging confectionery, chocolate and chocolate spreads, crisps, fried meat, pastry foods, cakes and biscuits. Some schools also discourage cereal bars.

Your policy should encourage consumption of fruit, protein foods, vegetables or salad, dairy food such as yoghurt and starchy food such as bread.

Make sure your policy considers the feedback from parents and pupils provided during your consultation process. For example, if the majority of pupils support a packed lunch policy that allows a treat on Friday, make sure you allow for this compromise in your policy.



step 1

step 2

step 3

step 4

step 5

step 6

step 7

Design a reward system

Design a reward system



Children should be consuming at least five portions of vegetables and fruit everyday for their overall health and to help prevent weight gain. According to Ealing's Health Related Behaviour Survey (2015), only 29% of pupils said they had five or more portions of fruit and vegetables the day before the survey.

Schools that incentivise vegetables and fruit consumption with rewards have seen an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption by up to 383% (see case study on **page 16**).

There are many ways to reward pupils. Some Ealing schools reward pupils who have both fruit and vegetables in their lunchbox, and no junk food with a sticker. Stickers work well with KS1 pupils but are less important to KS2 pupils. Certificates, Dojo points and house points are other ways to reward a healthy lunch.

However, the token reward system is the most popular reward method used in schools as it is quick, effective, inexpensive and sustainable.



This method involves awarding a plastic token to every packed lunch pupil who has both fruit and vegetables (and no junk food) in their lunchbox. School meal pupils are also rewarded with a token if they eat salad or vegetables, and fruit for dessert.



Pupils place their token in the token collector tube for their year group. The year group with the most tokens at the end of every half term receives a reward. This may include an afternoon playing traditional playground games, watching a film or cooking.

To introduce the token reward system, print and laminate the posters on **pages 34 and 35** and display these in your dining hall. Then, purchase six acrylic suggestion boxes (one for each year group) from Shopfitting Warehouse UK website (£4.40 each). Or, purchase a six-tube token collector from Striking Displays website (cost is £420). Order 1000 tokens from Plastic Tokens UK website for £40.

Hold a special assembly to promote your token reward programme and make your parents aware of the reward system via your parent letter (see example on **page 29**).

Token reward system training



If you are interested in introducing token rewards, you will need to train either TAs, SMSAs or pupils in this programme. Most schools train their year 5 and 6 pupils and give these pupils the title of Lunchtime Champions.

Ask pupils to apply for the position by submitting a job application for the role of Lunchtime Champions (see example job application on **page 26**).

Some schools provide their Lunchtime Champions with a tabbard. To purchase, email: McGregorN@ealing.gov.uk.

If you would like to receive Lunchtime Champion training in your school, email McGregorN@ealing.gov.uk.



Promote and communicate

Feedback gained from the discussion process (step 3) will help you decide how to communicate and promote your packed lunch policy. Below are six ideas and activities to help with your promotion. Good promotion will help get buy in from the whole school.

● Policy poster

Send parents a copy of your policy poster (**page 30**) alongside the letter on **page 29**. Display your poster in reception, on your school website and include in your school induction pack.

● Hold a competition

To help pupils learn about healthy lunches, organise a competition where pupils design a healthy packed lunch. Use the competition form on **page 39**.

● Curriculum

The Ealing PSHE scheme of work autumn lessons teach pupils about the Eatwell Guide and helps pupils gain an understanding about the importance of variety and balance.

● Parent workshops

Before introducing your policy, hold a workshop for parents on healthy packed lunches to help parent feel supported and encouraged to make positive, gradual changes. Use the sample workshop plan and parent workbook under our training tab on EGFL. Alternatively contact Nicole to deliver a workshop to parents on healthy packed lunches: McGregorN@ealing.gov.uk.

● Hold an assembly

The health improvement team deliver assemblies to schools on healthy packed lunches. For more information, email McGregorN@ealing.gov.uk.

Alternatively, use the pupil assmebly PowerPoint under the toolkits tab on our EGFL page. Every half term remind pupils about your policy and reward system during assembly.

● Art project

Ask your art teacher to facilitate a healthy eating collage or mobile display for the dining room. Alternatively, ask each year group to design a poster or model.

You might also like to approach art students at a local high school to design and paint a mural in your dining room that represents healthy lifestyles.

Promoting your activities will help get your pupils interested and excited about the new changes and make them aware of your new policy.

Review, monitor and evaluate

It is important that you build in time to review, monitor and evaluate your activities to find out how they are working. Encourage your working group to talk about how they feel your activities can be monitored and ask pupils in your working group to develop creative ways to track progress. This could include:

● Regular review

Your working group or school council should meet at least monthly to track progress. Find out what the group feels is working well and what could be improved.

If you introduce Lunchtime Champions, aim to meet with them at least fortnightly to discuss what is working well/not so well.

● Evaluate impact

To find out about your pupils eating habits, you should have carried out a baseline survey, as outlined in step 1.

Carry out this survey again a couple of months after introducing your activities to find out the impact you are having. Share these results with pupils, staff and parents.

● Daily monitoring

The token collection tubes will show the year group that is most compliant with your new policy.

The tokens and rewards work well with the younger pupils but you might need to offer a different prize to incentivise your year 5 and 6 pupils to follow the policy.



Your working group or school council should continue to meet at least monthly to discuss your lunchtime changes.

Case study: Stanhope Primary

Stanhope Primary School successfully decreased consumption of sugary drink and snacks, and significantly increased consumption of vegetables and fruit by introducing Lunchtime Champions, a token reward system and by improving the nutrition of school lunches.



Lunchtime Champions transform lunches

In 2012 Stanhope Primary School was classed as special measures and the focus was to improve educational outcomes. By 2014 Stanhope Primary was judged 'good' by Ofsted so the headteacher focused his attention to the worryingly high levels of childhood obesity.

In 2014/15, the health improvement team worked with Stanhope school's catering manager to design a new healthier menu and to introduce a water-only packed lunch policy. The new policy encouraged pupils to eat fruit and vegetables everyday and no junk food from Monday to Thursday.

To support pupils to follow this new policy, Stanhope asked the Ealing health improvement team to introduce their Lunchtime Champion programme, where year 5 and 6 pupils (the Lunchtime Champions) award tokens to pupils who eat salad or vegetables, and fruit for lunch.

Pupils put their token in the token collector tube labelled with their year group. The year with the most tokens at the end of every half term receives a half day of active games organised by the PE Lead.

Pupils interested in this role submitted a job application. Twenty pupils were selected and received training on nutrition and the school's new packed lunch policy and token reward system.

Before commencing in their roles, the Lunchtime Champions practised giving out tokens at lunchtime for a week with guidance from their PSHE co-ordinator.

Each Champion received a green tabbard to help other pupils easily identify the Lunchtime Champion on duty.

Stanhope's activities appear to have improved the nutrition of their pupils' lunches. Food dietary questionnaires found a 55% decrease in sugary drink consumption, 85% decrease in sugary snacks and 160% increase in fruit and vegetables consumption.

Also, Stanhope's National Child Measurement programme data, (2015/16) revealed a 22% decrease in rates of overweight and obesity of their year 6 pupils, compared to their weight in reception.



Case Study: St John Fisher

St John Fisher Primary School successfully decreased consumption of sugary drink and snacks, and significantly increased consumption of vegetables and fruit by introducing a healthy dessert menu and token reward scheme.



A token way to transform food!

According to the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) 2014/15, 40% of St John Fisher Primary School's pupils were overweight or obese. Also, an online survey completed by pupils from each year group revealed that only 11% ate vegetables or salad at lunch.

In response, the school bought back the health improvement team to help introduce a reward scheme that would encourage pupils to follow the school's existing packed lunch policy.

The PSHE co-ordinator and Ealing health improvement officer arranged meetings with the school's SMSAs. The SMSAs were excited by the token reward system and agree to lead on this. The SMSAs received training from Ealing health improvement officer and at the request of the SMSAs, every SMSA received a neck wallet to hold the tokens. A child receives a token for having fruit and vegetables in their packed lunch or school meal.

Every lunchtime pupils place their tokens in their year group container and the year with the most tokens at the end half term receives an afternoon of cooking.

This system has proved extremely popular with the children who are keen to show off their healthy lunches to the SMSAs, and children encourage each other to eat a healthy lunch.

The school also wanted to introduce healthier dessert options for school meal pupils. The PSHE co-ordinator worked with their caterer to redesign their dessert menu. Pupils approved of the new menu changes that included more fruit-based desserts such as apple crumble, fruit salad and frozen yoghurt.

The school's activities have proven to be successful. Sugary drink consumption has decreased by 67%, junk food has decreased by 85%, and vegetables consumption has increased by 382%.



Lunchtime Action Plan

step 1

Carry out a needs assessment

- What data will you use for your needs assessment?.....
- Who will carry out your needs assessment?.....
- Who will collect baseline data?.....
- How will you collect baseline data?.....

step 2

Organise a project planning group

- Who will lead your planning group?.....
- Who will be part of your planning group?.....
- How often will your planning group meet?.....

step 3

Consult and discuss

- When and how will you consult parents?.....
- When and how will you consult pupils?.....
- When and how will you consult staff, SMSAs and caterers?.....

step 4

Write and revise

- Who will write your packed lunch policy?.....
- Who needs to sign off your policy??.....
- When will you introduce your policy?.....
- Who will manage and coordinate your lunchtime activities?.....
- Do you need to make changes to the school lunch menu?.....
- What changes will you make to your school lunch menu?.....

step 5

Implement a reward scheme

- What reward system will you introduce and what will be the reward?.....
- Who will give out tokens (i.e. SMSAs, TAs, pupils)?.....

step 6

Promote and communicate

- How will you communicate your new packed lunch policy to parents?.....
- How will you communicate your new packed lunch policy to pupils?.....
- How will you promote your new policy and reward system?.....

step 7

Review, monitor and evaluate

- How and when will you review your policy and reward system?.....
- How and when will you monitor your policy and reward system?.....
- How and when will you evaluate your policy and reward system?.....

Lunchtime Checklist

step

1

Carry out a needs assessment

- Carry out a needs assessment using your data (i.e. NCMP and HRBS).
- Create a survey to collect baseline data (use the survey in the Appendix).
- Carry out your survey, collate your results and analyse your data.

step

2

Organise a planning group

- Set up a project group or use an existing groups such as your school council.
- Invite staff, SMSAs, your catering manager and pupils to attend meetings.

step

3

Consult and discuss

- Consult parents i.e. via the parent questionnaire in the Appendix.
- Consult pupils i.e. your school council or via the survey in the Appendix.
- Meet with your SMSAs, catering team and school governors.

step

4

Write your revise

- Write your packed lunch policy (use example in the Appendix).
- Get your policy signed off by your heateacher and govenors.
- Upload your policy to your school website, post it to parents, display in your school reception area, include in your school induction pack.
- Work with your caterer to make changes to the school lunch menu so that it reflects your policy changes.

step

5

Implement a reward scheme

- Send out a job description on the Lunchtime Champions role.
- Recruit and train your Lunchtime Champions (or SMSAs) in your reward scheme.
- Purchase your reward scheme i.e. token reward system.
- Design rota for the Lunchtime Champions.

step

6

Promote and communicate

- Regularly inform parents about your policy in your parent newsletter.
- Hold an assembly to inform pupils of your new lunch policy and reward scheme.
- Deliver a healthy packed lunch workshop to parents.
- Hold a competition where pupils design a healthy lunchbox.

step

7

Review, monitor and evaluate

- Meet with your Lunchtime Champions and/or SMSAs every few weeks and ask for feedback on what is and is not working well.
- Ask your school council to include the lunchtime changes as a regular agenda item.
- Three months after your launch, repeat your baseline survey to find out the impact you are having on your pupils' health.

Frequently asked questions



? What happens if pupils don't follow the policy?

A Regularly mention your school's lunch policy in assembly and in class, include your policy in your school induction pack so all new parents know your packed lunch rules before their pupils start at your school. Ask your SMSAs to remind pupils, who have non-compliant items in their lunch about your packed lunch policy, and use the token reward system to encourage pupils to eat a healthy lunch. Year 5 and 6 pupils are least likely to take interest in the token reward system. To get them on board, find out what prize would incentivise them to eat a healthy lunch. Some schools remove non-compliant foods from lunchboxes, however, this is not recommended.

? What do I do if parents complain about the policy?

A Unfortunately, this is likely to happen. While most parents will be on board with your policy, there will be a few parents who will not agree with these changes. By consulting parents and supporting parents with these changes through parent workshops, you will get more parents on board with your changes. Your headteacher can offer to meet with any parents who complain.

Also let parents know that these changes have been initiated by your school council and let parents know that the majority of pupils in your school were in favour of a policy (reference your survey statistics). Reassure the parent that while this policy is recommended, it will not be enforced through punishment or food removal. Mention the physical, emotional and academic benefits of eating a healthy lunch.

? Will a packed lunch policy or token reward system have a negative impact on the uptake of school lunches?

A No. Some schools have seen an increase in school lunch sales where a policy has been introduced as parents feel this is the easier option or more desired by their child. If both school meal and packed lunch pupils receive a token for eating a lunch that includes both fruit and vegetables, the policy won't discourage pupils from eating a school lunch.

? Parents are complaining that our packed lunch policy is unfair as school meal pupils get desserts such as cake and pudding every day. What do I do?

A Speak to your catering manager as most caterers are happy to make changes to the school lunch menu. Your caterer may be concerned that changing the dessert menu will reduce the number of pupils purchasing school lunches. If an exciting healthy menu is introduced alongside promotion of the new menu to parents and pupils, it is unlikely to have a negative impact on sales of school lunches. A recent survey at Stanhope primary school of 200 pupils found that introducing a healthy dessert menu did not impact on sales. In fact, 60% of pupils said they preferred the new desserts.

? Who will monitor packed lunches in my school?

A Most schools train either their SMSAs or a group of year 5 and 6 pupils to monitor lunches. In some schools a PSHE co-ordinator or parent volunteer monitors lunches. Lunches should be monitored at least once a week. If you chose to train up pupils to monitor lunches, monitoring can be done daily.



Resources and support

Health Improvement bespoke support

The Ealing health improvement team can help schools introduce lunchtime changes and we can support you with:

- Writing your school packed lunch policy and parent consultation letter
- Delivering a healthy packed lunch workshop to parents
- Delivering a healthy lunch assembly to pupils
- Introducing the token reward system
- Training pupils or SMSAs in the token reward system
- Designing food recall questionnaires to measure impact of your activities

For more information on the support we can offer, email Nicole:
McGregorN@ealing.gov.uk

Healthy Lunchtime toolkit

Download this toolkit from our EGFL page. On our EGFL page, you can also access resources, pupil assembly PowerPoint, parent workshop workbooks and staff training PowerPoints: www.egfl.org.uk/healthy-schools





Appendix

Appendix

- 23** Baseline survey
- 25** Parent questionnaire
- 26** Lunchtime Champions job application
- 27** Example packed lunch policy
- 29** Policy letter to parents
- 30** Packed lunch policy poster
- 31** A healthy lunchbox in 5 steps
- 32** Packed lunch money saving ideas
- 33** Smart lunchbox snack swaps
- 34** Snacks that will pass and fail poster
- 35** Token reward poster
- 36** One minute packed lunches for £1
- 38** Cost of healthy vs unhealthy lunches
- 39** Packed lunch drawing competition

Baseline survey - healthy eating

1. What year are you in?

- Reception
- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4
- Year 5
- Year 6

2. Your school would like to start giving out tokens to children who eat a healthy lunch that includes fruit and vegetables. Below are reward ideas for the year that wins the most lunch tokens. Please tick ALL the ideas below that would encourage you to eat a healthy lunch.

- A trophy for my class
- Extra playtime
- A trip to Kidzania
- An afternoon playing boardgames
- An afternoon of cooking
- An afternoon playing sport and games outside
- An afternoon watching movies
- A picnic in the park with games
- Something else:

3. Fizzy drinks, soft drinks and fruit juice all cause your teeth to rot even if you brush twice a day! Unhealthy foods can also make it harder for you to learn in class, make you tired, moody and feel sick. So, your teachers want to put in place some lunchbox rules to help kids at your school be healthy. Please tick which lunchbox rule you would like:

- No junk food to be allowed on any day of the week so we become the healthiest kids in the world!
- No junk food on any day EXCEPT Friday! We can have treats on Friday.
- I want to keep eating junk food every day even though it's not good for my health.

4. Please let us know if you have any ideas for healthier desserts that could be offered with school dinners:

Baseline survey - healthy eating

5. Do you have vegetables or salad at lunch time?

- Everyday
- Most days
- Sometimes
- Never

6. Do you have fruit at lunch time?

- Everyday
- Most days
- Sometimes
- Never

7. If you eat a school lunch, do you enjoy it on most days?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

8. If you have a packed lunch today, what's in your lunchbox today? (Tick all the foods that are in your lunchbox. Skip this question if you have a school lunch)

- Fruit
- Vegetables or salad
- Chocolate, cake, biscuits or chocolate bar
- Crisps or chips
- Water
- Soft drink, fizzy drink or fruit juice
- Milk, yoghurt or cheese
- Bread, sandwich, pasta, rice or chapati
- Meat, fish, eggs, pulses
- Something else:

9. Did you eat at least five portions or more of fruit or vegetables yesterday? (A tennis ball is the size of one portion of fruit or vegetable. Don't count fruit juice or fruit drinks).

- Yes
- No



Parent questionnaire

Dear Parent/Carer

As you know our school is dedicated to developing the health and wellbeing of all children and staff. This term the school council is looking at healthy balanced packed lunches within the school. We want you to be involved in this too and value your help in finding out what would encourage children to eat healthy balanced packed lunches. Please return the completed questionnaire by (insert date) to the school office.

Please circle one box as appropriate.

1. Does your child take a packed lunch to school?

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

2. If your child takes a packed lunch, please could you explain why?

.....

.....

3. Would you like some advice about what makes up a healthy balanced packed lunch for your child?

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

4. Would you like some ideas and suggestions for healthy packed foods?

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

5. Would you like recipes for foods/snacks to make to include in packed lunches?

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

6. Do you think that some types of foods (for example crisps, sweets or fizzy drinks) should be discouraged or not allowed in packed lunches?

Yes	No	Sometimes
-----	----	-----------

7. If yes, which types of foods should be discouraged or not allowed in packed lunches?

.....

.....

8. Any other suggestions/requests?

.....

.....

Thank you for taking the time to complete and return this survey.



Lunchtime champions job application

Your teachers are recruiting children for the role of Lunchtime Champions. In this role you will develop your skills and knowledge in healthy eating, receive special training, have the privilege of rewarding your peers with tokens.

What do Lunchtime Champions do?

- Encourage children to eat healthy food, especially more vegetables, salad and fruit.
- Reward pupils who have fruit and vegetables and no junk in their lunch with a token.
- Set a good example

When do I work?

Lunchtime Champions work for 30 minutes at lunchtime, one or more days a week.

Lunchtime Champions 'golden rules'

- Be a good role model and eat healthy food.
- Behave well at school as being a Lunchtime Champion is a special privilege.
- Be fair and treat everyone equally. Only reward pupils who have fruit AND vegetables AND no junk.
- Do not force children to finish their food. Just encourage them to try new foods and fruit and vegetables.
- If children are bringing in junk food, gently remind them of your school's packed lunch policy.

Name:.....

Print name:

Parent/carer signature: Date:

Example packed lunch policy

Introduction

The food children eat at school is important and school lunches have to meet strict standards to provide one-third of a child's nutrient requirements. A study by the Leeds research team found that only one in five packed lunches contained any vegetables or salad and only one in 100 packed lunches meet the basic dietary standards that school meals provide.

In (month/year), (... pupils) in our school completed an online survey to find out about their eating habits. The survey found that only (...%) of packed lunches included any salad or vegetables, (...%) of lunches included cake or chocolate and (.....%) of pupils had no fruit or vegetables the day before the survey

In (month/year), we also invited all parents to complete a packed lunch questionnaire and the results found that (....%) of parents were in favour of a packed lunch policy. We also asked pupils their opinion on a packed lunch policy in an online survey and (....%) said they were in favour of a healthy packed lunch policy (that includes a treat day on Friday).

Unanimously, all school council pupils and governors said they support the school introducing a packed lunch policy. Staff, the headteacher and the school meal supervisors were also consulted and they were also supportive of our policy.

Based on the results on our survey and consultation process, we want to support more pupils to have a healthy balanced lunch through the a packed lunch policy.

Aim

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with headteacher parents, pupils, the school council, governors and staff with the following aims:

- To improve the nutritional quality of packed lunches
- To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home provide the child with healthy food that is similar in its nutritional value to food served in schools.
- To make a positive contribution to children's health by encouraging healthy eating habits in childhood setting a trend for lifelong changes.
- To contribute to the self-evaluation for review by Ofsted.

This policy applies to all pupils and parents providing packed lunches and other foods to be consumed within school or on school trips during normal school hours. This packed lunch policy promotes a whole school approach to food and healthy eating.

The policy

- The school will work with the pupils to provide an attractive dining room.
- The school will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards.
- The school will ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available.
- Pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible to stop the food going off.
- Glass bottles and tins are not permitted due to safety issues that could arise.

Food contained in lunchboxes

Packed lunches should be based on the Eat Well plate model and should include the following every day:

- Fruit and Vegetables - at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad.
- Non-dairy source of protein - meat, fish, egg, beans or pulses such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel.
- A starchy food like bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals.
- Dairy foods such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais
- Water or reduced fat milk. The school provides this for all pupils.
- Oily fish, such as salmon, should be included at least once every three weeks.

To keep packed lunches in line with the food based standards for school meals, packed lunches should not include:

- High fat, high salt, high sugar snacks such as crisps, sweet popcorn, other high fat / salt packet savoury snacks such as crisps.
- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits, sweets and chewing gum.
- Chocolate spread, honey, jam or marmalade as a sandwich filling.
- Fizzy / sugary drinks or fruit flavoured squash. This includes diet drinks and energy drinks which can contain high levels of caffeine and other additives and are not suitable for children.

One of the following may be included on Friday:

- Meat products (such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages / chipolatas), crisps, cakes and biscuits are allowed on Friday. Fizzy drinks are not allowed on any day.

Special diets and allergens

The school also recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For these reasons pupils are also not permitted to swap food items.

Health and safety

It is the responsibility of the parents / carers to provide an appropriate packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period. The school will provide storage area / facilities for packed lunch bags, in the most convenient place possible. However the school cannot provide cooled storage areas and therefore cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

Assessment and evaluation

- Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by midday meal supervisors.
- Healthy lunches that include salad/vegetables and fruit and none of the 'Friday only Foods' will be rewarded with a token.
- The school will write to parents / carers to inform them of the policy.
- The policy will be available on the school's website and school induction pack.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the schools agreed policy review process.

Signed:

Date:

Next review date:



Policy letter to parents

Dear Parent(s)/ Carer(s)

As you will be aware, there is an increasing concern about rising rates of obesity - and tooth decay in Ealing is twice as high as the England average. This is mainly caused by consumption of sugary drinks.

Research from Public Health England shows eating healthy foods (such as vegetables and fruit) improves pupils' attainment, mood and behaviour. **Also**, Ofsted now judges pupils' knowledge of how to keep them healthy and looks at the food and behaviour in the dining room.

In, we invited parents to complete a packed lunch questionnaire and the results found that% of parents were in favour of the school introducing packed lunch guidance. In an online survey of pupils,% said they were in favour of a healthy packed lunch guidance (that includes a treat day on Friday).

Unanimously, the school council, governors and school meal supervisors also said they support packed lunch guidance.

Based on the results of our food survey and consultation process, we want to support more pupils to have a healthy lunch by introducing packed lunch guidance.

To help encourage pupils to follow our new healthy lunch guidance, we will reward healthy lunches with a green token. Pupils who have the following in their lunchbox will receive a green token:

- ONE or more pieces of fruit
- ONE or more portions of vegetables (i.e. salad in sandwich, carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes)
- No junk food such as crisps, chocolate, sweets, pudding, fried food and sugary drinks (including fruit juice due to high sugar content).

The year group with the most tokens at the end of every half term will receive a fantastic reward. School meal pupils will also receive a token if they eat vegetables or salad and have fruit instead of pudding or cake.

To help you put together a cost effective packed lunch, we will include helpful information in every parent newsletter and upload a parent healthy eating handbook on our website. We will also be holding a packed lunch workshops to help you make healthy packed lunches on a budget.

If you have any questions, please contact the school office to make an appointment to see (NAME HERE) to discuss.

Thank you for your support,
(NAME)
(JOB TITLE)

Packed lunch policy poster

YOUR CHILD'S PACKED LUNCH SHOULD INCLUDE ONE PORTION OF:



FRUIT



VEGETABLES



**MEAT, EGG,
BEANS OR
FISH**



**STARCHY FOOD
E.G. SANDWICH,
RICE OR PASTA**



**MILK, CHEESE
OR YOGHURT**



**BOTTLE OF
WATER**

YOUR CHILD'S PACKED LUNCH SHOULD NOT INCLUDE THESE FOODS:



**CHIPS &
OTHER HIGH
FAT SNACKS**



**CHOCOLATE
BARS, SWEETS,
CAKES**



**PASTRY/FRIED
FOODS**



CEREAL BARS



SOFT DRINKS

**INSERT
SCHOOL
LOGO
HERE**

A healthy lunchbox in 5 steps

1. Fill up on starchy foods by making a sandwich with bread, pitta or a roll, or make a salad with pasta, potato, couscous, lentils, rice or chickpeas.



2. Add a piece of fruit and add salad to a sandwich or eat vegetable sticks as a snack.



3. Add a little protein to sandwiches or salad.



4. Include yoghurt or cheese as a snack.



5. Pack water.



Packed lunch money saving ideas

1



Buy fruit by the kilo

2



Buy supermarket brands

3



Buy rolls in bulk

4



Pop your own popcorn

5



Pack dinner leftovers

6



Buy reduced to clear

7



Fill a bottle with tap water

8



Replace meat with pulses

9



10



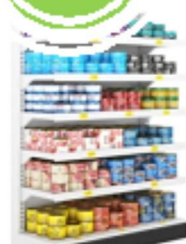
Portion yoghurt into single serves

11



Buy veg and fruit frozen or canned when out of season

12



Look above and below eye level

Smart lunchbox snack swaps

All healthy snacks cost less than 50p*

CRISPS ❌

Wotsits, Hula Hoops, Skips, Walkers

Swap these for these

Velvet Crunch, Tesco Popcorn, K Cracker Crisps, Smart Jobs

BARS

Squares, Nutri-Grain, KitKat, Time Out

Swap these for these

Apples, grapes, banana, carrots, raisins, oranges, grapes

DRINKS

Ribena, Capri-Sun, Volvic, Fuzoo, Popper Juice

Swap these for these

Lite Milk, Water, Rice Dream

TREATS

Mini Curls, Jaffa Cakes, Oreo, Cupcake

Swap these for these

Ryvita, Rice Thins, Corn Thins, Pretzels, Biscuits

DAIRY

Lunchables, Cheesstrings, Nesquik, Dunkers

Swap these for these

Babybel, Milk, Laughing Cow, Frubes, Yogurt

Snacks that will fail



Confectionary



Cakes and biscuits



Pastry & fried food

Crisps

Sugary drinks

Snacks that will pass



Healthier savoury snacks



Dairy snacks

Fruit & veg

Drinks

To score a...

GREEN TOKEN YOUR PACKED LUNCH OR SCHOOL MEAL MUST HAVE:

1

Fresh fruit



+

2

Salad or vegetables



NONE of these foods:

3



1 minute packed lunches for £1

 <p>50p</p>	 <p>10p</p>	 <p>0p</p>
	 <p>30p</p>	
TOTAL COST: £0.90		

 <p>70p</p> <p>LEFTOVERS</p>	 <p>5p</p>	 <p>0p</p>
	 <p>20p</p>	
TOTAL COST: £0.95		

1 minute packed lunches for £1

60p



10p



0p



25p



TOTAL COST: £0.95

15p



15p



0p








40p



TOTAL COST: £0.70

Cost of healthy vs unhealthy lunchbox

 <p>45p</p>	 <p>10p</p>	 <p>0</p>
 <p>20p</p>		
TOTAL COST OF HEALTHY LUNCHBOX: £0.75		

 <p>60p</p>	 <p>28p</p>	 <p>30p</p>
	 <p>50p</p>	
TOTAL COST OF UNHEALTHY LUNCHBOX: £1.68		



Packed lunch DRAWING COMPETITION



Please draw your idea for a healthy lunchbox in the box below to win..... Your lunchbox should include a fruit, vegetable, starchy food, protein and dairy food. Entries close on the

Name:

Class:



Hand your completed entry form to your class teacher.

**For more information on healthy lunchtimes,
please contact Nicole McGregor:**

McGregorN@ealing.gov.uk

020 8825 5484

www.egfl.org.uk/healthy-schools

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Healthy Schools
EALING