

Akhter Early Learning Centre

Packed Lunch – Parent and Carer Responsibilities

IMPORTANT: It is a condition that all packed lunches provided by parents and carers comply with the requirements set out in this document.

A healthy packed lunch will give young children the energy and nutrition they need to get the most from their day, helping them to grow and develop, learn and play, be healthy and happy.

What to Include in a packed lunch (based on NHS Eatwell Guide)

- a) Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta - these starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Packed lunches should include 2 or more portions.
- b) Fruit and Vegetables - these foods provide vitamins, minerals and fibre. Lunches should include at least 1 portion of fruit and 1 portion of vegetables / salad, or more.
- c) Milk and Dairy foods - these foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Include 1 portion at lunch
- d) Meat, Fish, Eggs, Beans, Pulses - these foods provide protein for growth. Packed lunches should include 1 portion of these foods
- e) Drinks - any drinks provided in lunch boxes should only include either plain water, milk (semi-skimmed), unsweetened fresh fruit juice, diluted fresh fruit juice, fruit or dairy based smoothies.

The Eatwell Guide does not apply to children under the age of 2 because they have different nutritional needs.

Further information can be found on the following NHS webpages;

www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/
www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/weaning-and-feeding/

What Not to include in a packed lunch

To ensure children are not exposed to potential life-threatening allergens and choking hazards, packed lunches **MUST NOT** contain the following:

- Nuts or nut products (assume foodstuff contains nuts unless it is clearly evident that the foodstuff does not)
- Fizzy / sugary drinks in cartons, bottles or cans
- Chocolate-coated products / sweets / confectionary

- Chewing gum
- Sugared / toffee and salted popcorn
- Whole uncut round foods; grapes, cherries, blueberries, strawberries and cherry tomatoes

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure they understand any allergens present within any purchased or homemade foods placed in a packed lunch. Details of the 14 major allergens can be found on the Food Standards Agency website www.food.gov.uk/document/14-allergens

Packed lunch containers

- Packed lunch containers should be secure, reusable and suitable for storing foodstuff until the meal time period. Containers must be clearly labelled with your child's name. If multiple meals are provided for i.e. lunch and tea, the container must be marked with the meal type.
- It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure their food container(s) are collected each day.
- Akhter ELC is unable to provide refrigeration for packed lunch. Foodstuff that needs to be kept chilled should not be included in packed lunch unless containers are insulated and contain an ice pack.

Tips for your packed lunch

- Freezer packs can keep food cool. Freeze a (reusable) bottle of water which will be ready to drink by lunchtime.
- Ask your child to help pack their lunch box, they are more likely to enjoy it.
- Love to dip? Cut up pitta bread or use veg sticks to have with a dip.

The requirements set out in this document form part of the ABI Nurseries Packed Lunch Policy. To promote safe healthy eating, staff will regularly monitor the content of packed lunches. Parents and carers who do not adhere to the requirements set out in this document will receive a leaflet in their child's packed lunch box reminding them of their responsibilities. If a child regularly brings in packed lunches that do not conform to the requirements set out in this document, staff will contact the parent/carer to discuss changes required.

If you require any further information, please contact our administration office on 01279 927020 or e-mail info@akhterelc.co.uk