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Signed:	Signed copy on Governor Hub			Chair of governors	

Castle Vale Nursery School Healthy Packed Lunches Policy

It is the aim of the Governing Body of Castle Vale Nursery School to support the implementation of policies and procedures which support the vision of:

Making a difference. All of our children, all of the time.

We follow the policies and procedures from Birmingham City Council and Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) which includes the government's prevent strategy.

Equal opportunities for all - 'An entitlement to learning must be an entitlement for all pupils'. Our school uses the Equality Act 2010: To treat everyone Equally and Fairly regardless of: Age, Disability, Gender, Gender Identity, Race and Nationality, Religion or belief, Pregnancy, Marriage, Sexual Orientation. Our children are treated as individuals with their own abilities, difficulties, attitudes, backgrounds and experiences.

We are a Silver RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL This policy is in accordance with the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

At Castle Vale Nursery School, we are a Startwell accredited nursery school and we are dedicated to supporting the health, development, and well-being of every child through the provision of healthy, balanced and nutritious meals and snacks. To ensure all children attending our school receive a healthy, balanced and nutritious lunch, our food and nutrition practices are guided by the statutory EYFS framework, the 2025 EYFS Nutrition Guidance, School Food Standards and Startwell best practices. Parents wishing to provide a packed lunch for their child **must adhere to this policy**.

Overall aim of this policy

To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in nursery (or on trips) adhere to our regulatory obligation to provide children with healthy, balanced and nutritious food that align with the healthy options offered at Castle Vale Nursery School and our Food and Nutrition Policy, so that children receive consistent messages about nutrition.

Objectives

- To provide meals, snacks and drinks that are healthy, balanced and nutritious to ensure that children:

- Get the right amount of nutrients and energy they need while they are growing rapidly.
- Develop positive eating habits early on. Children's early experiences with food can shape future eating habits. This can impact children's long term health including, maintaining a healthy weight, and good oral health.
- To foster healthy eating habits and a positive relationship with food.
- To work collaboratively with families to provide a healthy and balanced diet for children that takes into account their cultural and dietary needs in order to create a safe and inclusive environment for all children to eat.
- To reduce health inequalities and set the foundations for a lifetime of good health.

Our nursery facilities

- The nursery will provide facilities for children bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water and milk is available on the dining tables throughout lunchtime.
- The nursery will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.
- As fridge space is not available and children are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible to stop food getting warm.

What to Bring

A healthy, balanced diet is based on the 4 main food groups (fruit and vegetables; potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates; dairy or dairy alternatives; and beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins). These provide essential nutrients to help children grow and develop.

Packed lunches should always include the following on a daily basis:

- A minimum of 1 portion of fruit or vegetables for vitamins and minerals. There should be a variety throughout the week. **Do not bring dried fruit as a snack.**
- A portion of starchy foods for energy and concentration e.g. bread (low or medium in salt), wrap (low or medium in salt), chapatti (low or medium in salt), pasta, rice, noodles, potatoes. **Do not bring flavoured dried rice, pasta, and noodle products e.g., packets and pots of instant noodles, pasta, and rice.**
- A portion of protein - meat, fish, eggs or another plant-based source of iron and protein e.g., beans, lentils, pulses or a meat alternative. **Limit processed meat products like ham or salami to once a week.** Choose a healthier sandwich filling such as cheese, tuna, hummus or chicken instead. **1 lunch per week must include beans, lentils, pulses or a meat alternative as the protein source.**
- Children need to eat 3 portions of milk and unsweetened dairy products each day. These include milk, cheese and unsweetened yoghurt. Non-dairy alternatives must be unsweetened and calcium fortified.

- Children over 12 months old need to eat regularly, with breakfast, lunch (consisting of 2 dishes), and tea (consisting of 2 dishes), plus 2 or 3 snacks every day. The additional dish as part of their healthy packed lunch, could be a side dish such as vegetable sticks and dip or second dish such as plain yoghurt and fruit.
- Some foods use red, amber and green colour coding to tell you if a food has high, medium or low amounts of fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt. Red means high, amber means medium, green means low. You should provide food that has mostly green on the label as this is a healthier choice. Amber means neither high nor low, so you should also provide foods with all or mostly amber on the label too.
- Please see Appendix 1 for ideas of main dishes, side dishes and starters.
- Please note that we cannot heat up food brought from home.

Desserts:

- If you want to provide a dessert for your child, this would be an additional side dish. It must be balanced and based on the 4 main food groups listed above.
- **Do not bring foods high in saturated fat, salt and/or sugar e.g., cakes, sweets, chocolate bars and chocolate coated biscuits.**
- Healthy dessert options include:
 - Fresh fruit
 - Tinned fruit in juice
 - Fruit and plain, unsweetened yogurt

What not to Bring

Packed lunches should not include any of the following:

- foods high in saturated fat, salt and/or sugar like cakes, sweet and savoury pastries, biscuits, crisps, chocolate and other confectionary
- sweetened yoghurts and fromage frais (including non-dairy alternatives)
- cereals labelled as 'high' (red) in sugar such as sugar-coated or chocolate-flavoured cereals
- flavoured rice, pasta and noodle products e.g. packets and pots of instant flavoured noodles, pasta and rice
- dried fruit as a snack
- fruit tinned in syrup
- sugary drinks (including fruit juices, squash and smoothies)
- skimmed milk or 1% cow's milk
- food containing artificial sweeteners e.g. any food that says it's sugar free e.g. sugar free yoghurt, sugar free jelly

Drinks:

- Water and milk will be provided by the nursery throughout the day and during lunchtime, **so you do not need to send any other drinks.**

Guidance on portion sizes

Children should be eating 'me size meals'. Toddlers and children have smaller stomachs than adults do so it is important they eat smaller amounts of food. Putting too much food in lunchboxes can be overwhelming and stop children enjoying mealtimes. It can also lead to overeating and fussy eating.



A portion size for a child aged 1 to 5 is generally smaller than an adult portion. Portions should be appropriate for the child's body size and appetite. For two year olds, portion size is roughly the size of their clenched fist. About half a piece of fruit or a tablespoon of vegetables is a good portion for a snack. Please refer to Appendix 4 of our 'Food and Nutrition' Policy for further guidance on portion sizes.

Special Diets and Allergies

Due to the high risk of nut allergies we do not allow children to bring foods containing nuts.

The nursery also recognises that some children may require special diets that do not allow for the guidelines above to be met exactly. This will be discussed with you before your child starts to ensure that packed lunches are as healthy and close to the guidelines as possible. For these reasons children are also not permitted to swap food items.

Please refer to section 5 of our 'Food and Nutrition Policy' for more information on special diets and allergies.

Monitoring & Review:

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by staff. Children who have a packed lunch which meets the guidance above will receive praise e.g. verbally 'well done', a high five, lunchbox tokens, a sticker, certificates etc.

Food and drink items that do not conform to the policy will receive a healthy eating note in the packed lunch informing them of the policy and a lunchbox token to encourage healthy choices. If a child regularly brings a packed lunch that does not conform to the policy, the nursery will contact the parents to discuss this. We will support

the parents to understand the nutrition guidance and offer support in creating healthier, cost effective choices.

Promotion of the Policy:

The nursery will inform all parents and carers of the policy via our admissions paperwork, display boards, parent workshops and one to one conversations.



Hummus with veggie fingers recipe

Your baby will love this homemade hummus. With no added salt, it's a great snack for the whole family.

Age: 12 months or older

Prep: 10 mins

Cook: None

Portions: 4 (approx)



Ingredients

- 120g chickpeas ($\frac{1}{2}$ canned in water, drained)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 garlic clove, peeled
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cumin
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp water
- 2 tsp olive oil
- Approx 24 sugar snap peas, washed

Method

1. Put all the ingredients, apart from the sugar snap peas, into a blender or food processor and blend into a smooth paste.
2. Serve with the sugar snap peas (or any other vegetables good for dipping).

You can also use wholemeal pitta bread or wholemeal toast fingers for dipping.

3. If you have older children in the family it's a great snack for them to enjoy, and adults too. Any leftovers should be covered and kept in the fridge (for up to 2 to 3 days).

Starter idea:

Cheesy English muffins and cucumber sticks recipe

Toasted English muffins with a tasty layer of cream cheese and cucumber sticks on the side – a perfect mid-afternoon snack for your baby.

Age: 12 months and older

Prep: 5 mins

Cook: 2 mins

Portions: 2



Ingredients

- 4 thick cucumber finger sticks, washed and halved lengthways
- 1 English muffin, halved
- 30g full-fat cream cheese

Method

1. Toast or grill the muffin until golden brown, then spread the cream cheese evenly.
2. Serve with the cucumber sticks. Any leftover cucumber will make a great snack for older children and other members of the family too.

Try your baby with some different vegetables such as carrot, pepper or celery sticks on the side. Or why not mix it up with a couple of sticks of each.

Starter or side dish idea:

Tuna dip recipe

A simple but yummy dip for your baby to enjoy as a snack.

Age: 12 months and older

Prep: 15 mins

Cook: None

Portions: 4 (approx)



Ingredients

- 160g tinned tuna in spring water, drained
- 1 tbsp mayonnaise
- 2 tsp plain full-fat yoghurt
- 35g wholemeal pitta bread, cut into thin slices

Method

1. Put the tuna into a bowl, mash with the mayonnaise and yoghurt to make a paste.
2. Serve with pitta bread fingers. Any leftovers can be covered and stored in the fridge.

Try offering it with vegetable sticks such as cucumber or carrots, as an alternative to pitta bread.

Main dish idea:

Chicken and vegetable pasta salad

Tea
Serves
10

Nutrition: protein, carbohydrates, vitamin C

Ingredients

- 1 red pepper, deseeded and thickly sliced
- 1 red onion, thickly sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 400g penne or fusilli pasta
- 3 skinless chicken breasts, diced
- 2 tbsp chopped thyme
- 2 tbsp oregano
- Pinch of dried chilli flakes
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 150g cherry tomatoes, quartered
- ½ cucumber, diced

Method

Heat oven to 200°C. Mix the pepper and onion with 1 tsp oil and roast for 20 minutes.

Cook the pasta following the instructions on the pack. Drain and set aside.

While the pasta is cooking, season the chicken with the remaining oil, herbs, chilli and garlic and bake in the oven at 200°C for 15 to 20 minutes. Make sure the temperature of the chicken reaches 75°C.

Add the chicken with any juices, roasted onion and pepper to the pasta. Toss together with the cherry tomatoes and cucumber and eat warm or cold.

Known allergens*
Gluten

Substitutions
Use a gluten free pasta product

*We have listed all known allergens, however, always check the nutrition label as some brands content may vary.

 Department for Education



Main dish idea:

Zesty chicken wrap recipe

Baked chicken marinated with lemon, served with cream cheese tortilla and cucumber strips, this could be a popular lunch for the whole family.



Age: 12 months or older

Prep: 10 mins

Cook: 20 mins

Portions: 1

Ingredients

- 1 medium chicken breast, skinless
- ½ lemon, juice only
- 4 slices cucumber, washed (30g)
- Small handful lettuce (10g)
- 1 small tortilla wrap
- 1 tsp full fat cream cheese

Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to 200C, 400F, gas mark 6. Slice the chicken into strips and pour the lemon juice over.
2. Place the chicken fillets on a baking tray and roast in the oven for 15 to 20 minutes, until thoroughly cooked.
3. Meanwhile, slice the lettuce and slice the cucumber pieces in half.
4. Spread the tortilla with the cream cheese and add the sliced lettuce and cucumber.

Kids love getting involved with preparing and cooking meals. You could encourage your child to help you assemble the wrap with the prepared ingredients.

5. Place ¼ of the cooked chicken slices on top and roll up the tortilla. Cut in half and serve. Freeze the remaining 3 portions of chicken slices for other days.

