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Lunch box policy

At St Thomas Preschool we provide food for the children throughout the day, except when we go on full day outings which include a lunchtime. The food served is governed by legislation and embraces the Every Child Matters agenda, the right of every child to:

- stay safe
- be healthy
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic wellbeing.

Good nutrition in childhood can help prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many children are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables.

This policy applies to:

- all packed lunches brought from home for outings or other exceptional circumstances at nursery
- all staff eating food brought from home within nursery or on an outing in the presence of the children.

We aim to ensure that all lunch boxes include:

- at least one portion of fruit
- at least one portion of vegetables
- meat/fish or other non-dairy protein (eg chicken, ham, chickpeas, hummus)
- a starchy food such as bread, pasta or other types of cereal (pitta bread, tortilla wrap, oat cakes)
- dairy food such as milk, cheese or yoghurt
- drinks which should be water, fruit juice, semi skimmed milk, milk drinks or smoothies.

We aim to avoid:

- snacks such as crisps
- confectionery such as chocolate bars and sweets (alternatives include small cakes, shortbread, flapjacks)
- drinks with added sugar or sweeteners.

What is not allowed:

- fizzy drinks and drinks in glass bottles or ring pull cans

- chocolate or sweets
- anything containing nuts

Diets and allergies

We recognise that some children may require special diets for medical, ethical or religious reasons that do not allow the standard to be met exactly. In these cases, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring the food from home is specific for the child's needs.

We do not allow swapping of food items as there is potential for an adverse reaction for children with food allergies.

We also take special care of any children whom have life threatening allergies on trips to ensure they do not come into contact with any foods they are allergic to.

Waste and disposal

We will as much as possible send any uneaten food items home. The rationale for this is that parents can also monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake during their day out.

Implementation of the policy

We will:

- ensure that all staff are informed of the policy and support its implementation
- train staff as required to implement the policy
- share ideas for a healthy packed lunch using resources such as:

<https://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/healthy-lunchbox-picnic.aspx>

<https://www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts/PackedLunches.pdf>

www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk

This policy was adapted in May 2023 and will be updated in 24