



Policy for Packed Lunches (brought in from home)

This policy and procedures are aimed at parents who wish to provide their child(ren) with a lunch brought in from home.

Acorns2Oaks (A2O) wish to promote the right environment for our pupils to understand the importance of making healthy food choices. Packed lunches represent at least a third of a child's daily intake of foods and nutrients, which represents a great opportunity to promote healthy food choices for children. Good nutrition in childhood can help to 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.

We believe that a healthy packed lunch can contribute to the health of children and needs to be consistent with the nutritional standards provided by Early Years Nutritional Guidelines. This policy aims to

1. ensure that children who bring a lunch from home to eat in Nursery have food that is just as healthy and nutritious as food served at schools that is regulated by national standards.
2. give clear guidance to parents, carers, children and staff on providing a healthy packed lunch.

This policy will be reviewed when changes arise.

A copy of this policy can be obtained from the Nursery Offices or downloaded via our website.

For further guidance and advice, please refer to [Acorns2Oaks Packed Lunch Guide](#) or the School Food Trust www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk

Working with parent and carers: We hope that all parents and carers will support this packed lunch policy. We will offer advice and guidance to parents/carers on packed lunches if required. We can offer a range of ways to support parents/carers e.g. information sheets, meetings, workshops, emails etc. Children on special diets following verified medical advice will be given due consultation.

Special diets and allergies: We ask parents/carers to be aware of nut and other allergies. For this reason, pupils are not permitted to swap food items. As some children in Nursery may have nut allergies, we ask parents to refrain from including nuts or peanut butter in their lunch boxes/bags.

If we have any doubt or concern that the lunch/food contains nuts or has been cooked using nut oil, paste or milk, we will dispose of it immediately.

Snacks will be offered between meals to ensure children receive appropriate levels of energy and nutrition, for example at mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

Birthdays and other celebrations: We welcome cakes being brought in for the children by their peers to celebrate birthdays or any other celebrations. Any cakes supplied must be nut free and must be shop bought with clear list of ingredients. The birthday cake is presented to the child usually around snack time, and in most cases, and preferable, the cake is not served at the setting but sent home with the children at the end of session.

Staff Lunches: To support a whole Nursery approach, staff are encouraged to comply with this policy when bringing in packed lunches and eating with the children.

Cold Packed Lunches

Packed Lunch Containers: We ask that parents/carers provide a **clearly named** packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunch time period. We advise that packed lunches are stored in insulated bags, preferably with freezer blocks to keep food cool especially in the summer months.

Food Safety: All fruit and vegetables should be washed thoroughly. *To reduce the risk of choking, always:*

- remove any stones and pips before serving
- halve small fruit and vegetables like grapes and cherry tomatoes, longways
- cut large fruits, like melon, into slices instead of small chunks.

Heated Lunches

Parent's Responsibility: Parents who wish to provide a lunch to be re-heated must complete the consent form (Appendix A) and abide by these requirements:

1. All containers are to be labelled clearly with the child's full name.
2. To safeguard all children attending our setting:
3. Parent/Carers must advise the keyperson what the meal is.
4. Food must not contain nuts in any form. If we have any doubt or concern that your food contains nuts or has been cooked using nut oil, paste or milk, we will dispose of it immediately.
5. To prevent food-poisoning, food provided must be thoroughly cooked beforehand, not requiring defrosting and suitable for re-heating.
6. Acorns 2 Oaks Limited accept no liability for any sickness arising from disregard of these requirements.

Procedure for Handling Food Brought from Home:

All keypersons are to be fully aware of safe storage and re-heating procedures.

All parents/carers who provide food to be re-heated must complete and sign a *Consent for Heated Lunch* form in the first instance, which is retained on the child's file.

The following procedures must be followed to ensure safe storage and re-heating of food provided by parents/carers:

1. When food is handed in, the keyperson must check that:
 - a) The container is labelled with child's full name

- b) The parent/carer provides a description of what the meal is.
 - c) The parent/carer is asked whether the food contains ***nuts or has been prepared using nut oil, paste or milk.***
 - d) Should such case arise, the parent/carer are to source other means of lunch for their child on that day. Under no circumstance should the container be accepted or remain on site.
2. A daily food log is completed at the same time detailing:
- a) Date
 - b) Child's full name
 - c) What the meal is
 - d) Parents signature
3. Food containers are to be closed and stored immediately in the fridge, on a shelf away from other foods, i.e. loose vegetables, uncooked meats
4. Re-heating:
- a) Remove the food from the container provided and place in an appropriate and clean container for re-heating only. i.e. microwavable, oven proof.
 - b) To prevent any risk of cross contamination, separate re-heating containers and clean utensils are to be used for every meal provided.
 - c) Follow the attached Food Standards Agency Guidelines for safe re-heating
 - d) Ensure the food is re-heated at the correct temperature but served at a safe temperature for the child to consume.
 - e) Food must be served on a child proof plate or bowl and not the container in which it is re-heated. Care must be taken to ensure the correct meal is given to the correct child
5. If you have any doubt that food is not fit to consume or may contain allergens, do not serve it and report your concerns immediately to the Manager.
6. The original food container must be cleaned and returned to the parent/carer at collection time.

Appendix A – Consent Form for Heated Lunch

Dear Parent Carer,

If you wish to provide a lunch to be re-heated, you are required to complete this consent form and abide by these requirements:

- All containers are to be labelled clearly with the child's full name.
- To safeguard all children attending our setting:
 1. Parent/Carers must advise the keyperson what the meal is.
 2. Food must not contain nuts in any form. If we have any doubt or concern that your food contains nuts or has been cooked using nut oil, paste or milk, we will dispose of it immediately.
- To prevent food-poisoning, food provided must be thoroughly cooked beforehand, not requiring defrosting and suitable for re-heating.

Our keypersons are fully aware of safe storage and re-heating procedures.

Acorns 2 Oaks Limited accept no liability for any sickness arising from disregard of these requirements.

Child's Name....., **D.O.B.**.....

I confirm that I have read and agree to abide to the requirements for providing my child's lunch and hereby give consent for food brought from home to be re-heated.

Parent/Carer Name:.....

Parent/Carer Signature:....., **Date:**.....