Thomas Harding Junior School Healthy Eating Lunch Box Policy

The Overall aim of this policy:

Our aim is to ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide pupils with healthy and nutritious food that is similar to food served in schools, which is now regulated by government national standards.

Our School

Thomas Harding Junior School recognises that our children come from diverse home backgrounds, cultures, ethnic and faith groups. Our academy aims to meet the needs of all children and ensure equality of provision whilst taking account of this diversity and difference. We understand that some children are 'fussy' eaters and that it is a major step to get some children to eat anything at all. We would like parents to let us know if this is the case, so that we can manage children's sensitively with encouragement and praise.

We will provide a safe, healthy and appealing eating environment for pupils eating packed lunches, and ensure fresh drinking water is available at all times. We will encourage all pupils to eat and drink as much of their lunch as possible. As fridge space is not available in school parents are advised to send in packed lunches in a cooler bag or food that does not require refrigeration.

Water

It has been recognised that children's concentration and behaviour improves when children drink water throughout the day. Dehydration can give children headaches and make them tired. Therefore, we encourage all pupils to bring a plastic bottle of water to school each day. These can be refilled with fresh drinking water throughout the day.

The following **guidelines for lunchbox** contents may help parents and ensure health and equality for all children.

Packed lunches should include health items such as:

- At least one portion of fruit and or vegetable (this could include dried fruit)
- Meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, chick peas, hummus)
- A sandwich that includes a savoury filling (e.g. egg, tuna, cheese, cooked meat)
- A starchy food such as bread, pasta, rice, noodles

- Dairy food such as cheese, yogurt, fromage frais
- A smoothie or yogurt drink
- A bottle of water
- A biscuit not coated in chocolate
- Crisps (baked or other low fat options if possible) or other such snack such as seeds, savoury crackers, breadsticks, rice crackers, oat cakes etc.
- Eating utensils if necessary

Packed lunches <u>should not</u> contain the following:

- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate coated biscuits and sweets.
- Sausage rolls and pies should only be included occasionally.
- No take away food i.e. burgers, chicken, pizzas
- No fizzy drinks.
- Nuts and nut products (e.g. peanut butter) should never be sent to school because of allergy concerns. Neither are children allowed to share food items for this same reason.

On a daily basis the staff in school see what children have in their lunchboxes

Whilst supervising in the dining hall. This is an opportunity for them to talk with the children about their lunchboxes and to encourage healthy eating and drinking. However, we may send parents a reminder of this policy if lunchbox contents regularly fall short of the expectations in this policy. It is not our intention to tell parents what and how they should be feeding their children and we will not do so, but we want to work with parents to educate our children about healthy dietary choices so that they can make their own informed choices independently when they are older.

We always have the best interests of all our pupils at heart.

(Policy next due for update: September 2026)