



Packed Lunch and Snacks Policy

Aims

At Pavilion Pre School Aigburth (CIO), we aim to promote healthy eating habits from an early age and ensure that all children receive balanced and nutritious meals and snacks during their time with us. This policy outlines our expectations for packed lunches and snacks brought from home to ensure consistency, safety, and support for all children's health and wellbeing.

Objectives

- To ensure that all packed lunches provide children with a healthy, balanced meal.
- To ensure that all snacks are healthy and nutritious
- To promote awareness of good nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices.
- To safeguard children with allergies and specific dietary needs.
- To work in partnership with parents and carers to support healthy eating habits.

How Much Food Should I Pack?

We understand that it can be difficult to know how much food to provide for a preschool-aged child. Please do not feel that you need to fill your child's lunchbox with lots of food or a large variety of different items.

For young children, a lunchbox containing too much food can sometimes feel overwhelming. When faced with a large amount of food, some children may refuse to eat, become distracted by the different choices, or eat very little. A smaller, manageable portion is often more appropriate for a preschool child.

Children's appetites also vary from day to day. Some days they may eat more, while on other days they may eat less. We will never force a child to eat, and children are gently encouraged to try the foods provided.



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As a guide, a preschool child's lunch could include:

- Main item: approximately ½–1 small sandwich or wrap, or a small child-sized portion of pasta, rice or salad.
- Fruit: a small handful or a few pieces, such as ½ a banana, a few slices of apple or pear, or a few berries.
- Vegetables: a small handful or a few child-sized pieces, such as cucumber sticks, carrot sticks or quartered tomatoes.
- Dairy: a small yoghurt or a few small pieces of cheese.
- Drink: a small bottle or cup of water or milk.

You do not need to provide every possible food option in large quantities. A simple lunch with a few appropriate portions is usually more than enough.

Remember – Your Child Also Has a Snack

Please also remember that children attending preschool sessions have a snack during their session. Snacks form part of our provision and are intended to complement, rather than replace, their meals.

For this reason, there is no need to provide a very large lunch to make up for the food your child may eat during the day. Providing manageable portions helps children to recognise their own hunger and fullness and supports positive, relaxed mealtimes.

Our aim is to work together with families to help children develop healthy relationships with food, enjoy mealtimes and gradually become more confident and independent eaters.



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Guidelines for Parents/Carers who have opted out of the Consumables package

You should provide snacks for your children if you have opted out of the Consumables package.

For families who have chosen to opt out of our consumables package, we kindly ask that you provide your child's snack in a separate container from their lunch box.

Having snacks clearly separated will help staff to easily identify what has been provided for snack time and ensure everything runs smoothly throughout the session. If staff are unable to identify your child's snack provision, they will be provided with a snack by Pavilion and you will be charged accordingly.

Snacks may include:

(Cut into bite-size pieces or soft textures to reduce choking risk)

- Sliced apples or pears (steamed if needed for softness)
- Banana slices
- Seedless grape halves (lengthwise)
- Orange or mandarin segments (pith removed)
- Soft melon cubes (watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew)
- Mango slices
- Kiwi slices (skin removed)
- Stewed apples or pears (no added sugar)
- Soft berries (halved if large)



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Pre-Prepared Vegetable Snacks

(Lightly cooked or finely cut where needed)

- Steamed carrot sticks
- Cucumber sticks (peeled if skin is tough)
- Cherry tomatoes quartered
- Steamed sweet potato cubes
- Steamed zucchini slices
- Steamed pumpkin or squash cubes
- Avocado slices

We encourage parents to limit:

- Sweet treats such as biscuits, cakes or small chocolate bars — these should be occasional only.
- Crisps or savoury snacks — ideally, include these in moderation.

Please do not include:

- Sweets or confectionery.
- Fizzy or energy drinks.
- Nuts or nut-based products (including Nutella and peanut butter) — we are a nut-free setting due to allergies.



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- Foods that require reheating or refrigeration beyond our safe storage capacity.

Food Safety

- All packed lunches should be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- All snacks should be clearly labelled with the child's name
- Staff will supervise meal times to ensure food is eaten safely and hygienically.
- Please note we are unable to store chilled food or heat/reheat food products

Allergies and Special Diets

- Please inform the pre-school of any allergies, intolerances, or dietary requirements.
- We will work closely with parents to accommodate medical, cultural, or religious dietary needs.

Promoting Healthy Eating

- Staff will encourage children to try a variety of foods.
- We use mealtimes as a social and learning experience, encouraging good manners and conversation.
- Children will never be forced to eat but will be gently encouraged to try different foods.



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This policy was adopted in October 2025

It will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to changes in national guidance, EYFS requirements, or identified needs within the setting.

Last updated: 02.10.26

Signed by the Chair of Trustees:

Signed by the Operations Manager:

Signed by the Pre School Manager: