

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019

Dear Parent/Carers

### **Re: Packed Lunch Policy and Health initiatives**

West Acton is committed to helping pupils achieve the best they can both academically and in being the healthiest they can be - in the Autumn term we started work with Ealing Health Improvement team. We must all take care of our physical and mental health.

#### **What do we think about Packed Lunches?**

December 2018, 244 pupils at West Acton Primary School completed an online survey to find out about their eating habits. The survey found that only 31% of packed lunch included any salad or vegetables, 56% of lunches included an unhealthy snack or sugary drinks.

In December 2018, we also invited all parents to complete a packed lunch questionnaire and the results found that 84% of parents were in favour of a Packed Lunch Policy where some food items are not allowed in packed lunches. We also asked pupils their opinion on a Packed Lunch Policy in an online survey and 91% said they were in favour of a healthy packed lunch policy (that includes a treat day on Friday). Unanimously, all school council pupils and senior leaders said they support the school introducing a packed lunch policy. Based on the results on our food survey and consultation process, we want to support more pupils to have a healthy balanced lunch through the introduction of a packed lunch policy. The full policy can be seen on our website, as well as the parent survey results.

#### **What are the risks of being overweight?**

Being overweight in childhood causes high cholesterol, high blood pressure, prediabetes, psychological problems and also affects pupils' academic results.

In the long term, being overweight can lead to health effects such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, some cancers and bone diseases.

#### **What is West Acton Primary doing to help pupils be healthy?**

This academic year, we would like to trial some new and exciting projects including:

1. A weekly Mile on the Daily Mile track
2. 3 minute HIIT
3. Packed Lunch Policy and healthy eating lunchtime rewards
4. Water and Milk only for lunchtime

### Daily Mile

'Daily Mile' has been proven to be one of the most effective programmes to help pupils become a healthy weight. 'Daily Mile' involves all pupils running as far as they can along a mile track every day at school. This project started in St Ninian's Primary School in Scotland in 2012. Almost four years on, none of the pupils in this school are overweight and many pupils report feeling healthier and happier at school. Our school will run this once a week in class and pupils also have the option to run more laps at lunchtime.

### 3 minute HIT

Pupils have been trained as Active Champions and at the end of break time, they will lead their class in 3 minutes of high intensity training (HIT). HIT is a training technique in which quick, intense bursts of exercise are followed by short rest breaks. HIT is proven to be one of the quickest ways to improve fitness and burn fat. We hope that our pupils will benefit both physically and emotionally as being active also helps children feel positive and concentrate better.

### Packed Lunch Policy and healthy eating lunchtime rewards

Our school is introducing a packed lunch policy and alongside this policy we will trial an exciting reward system where pupils can receive tokens for healthy choices at lunchtime.

Our 'Health Champions' have been trained to reward their peers. Pupils who have the following in their lunchbox will receive a green token:

- ONE or more pieces of fruit, and
- ONE or more portions of vegetables (i.e. salad in sandwich, carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes)
- No junk food such as crisps, chocolate, sweets, pudding, fried food and sugary drinks – we have a water/milk only drinks policy.
- Pupils who have a school meal will also receive a token if they have fruit instead of pudding and salad or vegetables with their school meal.
- Friday is a treat day – pupils may bring crisps or biscuits for example.

Pupils then put the green token in the plastic tube that is labelled with their year group. The year with the most tokens at the end of every term will receive a prize.

### Water/Milk only for lunchtime

Oral health in Ealing is also worse than in any other borough in London and recent data found that 1 in every 2 pupils have decayed, missing or filled teeth and fizzy drinks cause more tooth decay than not brushing teeth.

If the average drink costs 50p then the saving is £2.50 a week, saving around £100.00 a year: by switching to water only also has financial benefits as well as health benefits. This saving could pay for school uniform!

**Therefore, in line with the majority of schools across Ealing, pupils must only bring water of milk for lunch - this is on Fridays too. Water will be available at school.**

We hope that you share our enthusiasm and passion for helping the pupils at our school be healthy citizens of the future. We welcome your feedback on any of the above activities, so please get in contact with if you have any questions.

From next week, packed lunch children will not be able to throw away rubbish in school from their lunch, but will bring everything back home to enable you to monitor more accurately what they have and have not eaten at school on that day.

Myself and the Health and Active champions will be outside school next week to talk to you about the new lunchtime initiatives.

Yours faithfully,

**Karen Kondo**  
Headteacher

To score a...  
**GREEN TOKEN** YOUR PACKED LUNCH OR SCHOOL MEAL MUST HAVE:

**1** Fresh fruit

**2** Salad or vegetables

**3** NONE of these foods:

