JIGSAWS

Information and guidance

to support parents and carers with food brought from home

Ofsted Good Provider

Food brought from home

At Jigsaws we charge for our food and we understand that not all parents and carers want to have an additional expense when accessing their setting sessions. Families may wish to provide food from home and some children may need to bring their own meals and snacks for medical or cultural reasons. It is important to ensure that food provided from home aligns with the healthy options offered by Jigsaws, so that children receive consistent messages about nutrition. We do have guidelines and policies relating to how we store and serve the foods provided. We also offer guidance on how parents can create a nutritional and balanced diet.

Food safety and hygiene

All foods brought from home should be checked for potential allergens by parents/carers so that the risk of cross contamination is reduced. Jigsaws is a **nut free setting**. All food served to children must be prepared at home in a way to prevent choking. Please see the Food Standards Agency poster on how to prepare food safely to avoid choking.

Additionally, providers should communicate with parents and/or carers about best practices for packing lunches and other food brought in from home, including tips on keeping food safe and fresh. Parents and/or carers should be encouraged to:

- Ensure the food is suitable for their child's individual developmental needs and prepared in a way to prevent choking.
- For perishable items that should be kept cool, pack food in insulated sealed bags and use ice packs. If ice packs are unavailable, the '4-hour rule' can be applied. This rule allows food to be stored outside of chilled conditions for up to 4 hours, but this should only be done once during the entire storage.
- Clearly label their child's name on the lunch bag and detail the contents. Try and use easy to open containers to encourage independence.
- Pack foods that can safely be kept at room temperature **Jigsaws has no refrigerated area for storing food brought from home**. The Food Standards Agency provides advice on Listeria which has examples of ready-to-eat foods that should be eaten within 4 hours of removing them from the fridge. Listeria | Food Standards Agency
- **Jigsaws are not able to reheat food brought in by children.**
- Jigsaws will supply cutlery if needed

Guidance

Unhealthy packed lunches/teas and food intake can include poor growth, tooth decay, obesity, anaemia, constipation, poor concentration and behavioural problems which may have an impact on a child's learning. The longer-term effects of a poor diet in childhood can be an increased risk of stroke, cancer, heart disease and diabetes in adulthood.

Children's packed lunches/teas should include items from the 5 main food groups;

1) Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta. These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Packed lunches should include 2 or more portions eg pasta salad, sandwich.

2) Fruit and Vegetables. These foods provide vitamins, minerals and fibre. Lunches should include at least 1 portion of fruit and 1 portion of vegetables / salad, or more e.g. carrot/cucumber sticks, cherry tomatoes, a piece of fruit.

3) Milk and Dairy foods. These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Include 1 portion at lunch e.g. yoghurt, fromage frais, milk.

4) Meat, Fish, Eggs, Beans. These foods provide protein for growth. Packed lunches should include 1 portion of these foods e.g. boiled egg as filling in sandwich, mixed bean salad.

5) Drinks – parents are not required to provide a drink with their child's packed lunch. Water is the best drink for children with food, Jigsaws ensures that we provide water at every mealtime in our nursery. any drinks provided in lunch boxes should only include either plain water, milk (semi-skimmed) fruit or dairy based smoothies. Any other drinks brought to nursery will not be given to your child.

Lunchbox ideas and recipes – Healthier Families - NHS

Packed lunches — First Steps Nutrition Trust

Guidance-for-Healthy-Packed-Lunches.pdf

Please support us by not including these items in a food brought from home

Foods and drinks high in fat and / or sugar It is important not to fill up on too many foods that are high in fat and / or sugar at the expense of other more nutritious foods. Limiting high fat and sugar foods will help protect young people from becoming overweight as well as helping prevent tooth decay, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

- Fizzy Pop/Fruit shoots
- Sweets
- Chocolate bars
- Any nut based products

Celebrations

We understand that children like to celebrate special events at Jigsaws, and we like to support that. We ask that any food brought in from home is balanced and meets the setting's food guidelines we prefer children not to be eating large quantities of sugary and fatty foods so we also recommend for example fruit platters to share or non-edible options to celebrate with such as bubbles or stickers. Any food shared in the setting should be checked for potential allergens.

Early years food choking hazards

Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

Below is a table of advice on key foods for care givers who are involved with preparing and serving food for babies and young children (under 5 years old)

Vegetable and fruits	Advice
Pips or stones in fruit	Always check beforehand and remove hard pips or stones from fruit.
Small fruits	Cut small round fruits like grapes, cherries, berries, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, into small pieces: cut lengthways and then again cut them in halves (quarters).
Large fruits and firm fruits	Cut large fruits like melon and firm fruits like apple into slices instead of small chunks. For very young children, consider grating or mashing firm fruits, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Vegetables	Cut vegetables like carrots, cucumber and celery into narrow batons. For very young children consider grating or mashing firm vegetables and legumes like butter beans, chickpeas and tofu, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Skin on fruit and vegetables	Consider removing the skin from fruit and vegetables, especially for very young children. Peeled fruit and vegetables can be swallowed more easily.
Cooking fruit and vegetables	Consider softening firm fruit and vegetables (such as carrots, broccoli, yam and apples) by steaming or simmering until soft. Serve cut into slices or narrow batons.
Meat and fish	**Advice**
Sausages and hot dogs	Cut sausages and hot dogs into short strips. Cut them in half and then lengthways or as thinly as possible. Peeling the skin off the sausages helps them to be swallowed more easily.
Meat or fish	Remove bones from meat or fish. Cut meat into strips as thinly as possible. Remove skin and fat from meat and fish, it will help the food pass smoothly down the throat.
Cheese	**Advice**
Grate or cut cheese	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.
Nuts and seeds	**Advice**
Chop or flake whole nuts	Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.
Bread	**Advice**
White bread and other breads	White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.
Snacks and other foods	**Advice**
Popcorn	Do not give babies and young children popcorn.
Chewing gum and marshmallows	Do not give babies and young children chewing gum or marshmallows.
Peanut butter	Do not give babies and young children peanut butter on its own, only use as a spread.
Jelly cubes	Do not give babies and young children raw jelly cubes.
Boiled sweets and ice cubes	Do not give babies and young children boiled, hard, gooey, sticky or cough sweets, or ice cubes.
Raisins and other dried fruits	Do not give babies under the age of 1 whole raisins or dried fruits. Cut them into small pieces.

Make sure food is prepared appropriately for children under 5 years old, see: https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/

It is also advisable that care givers are familiar with how to respond to a choking incident, see: How to stop a child from choking: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/

and How to resuscitate a child: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/

Example of meals served at Jigsaws

Week 3	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast Crawlers	Cereal and Berries and grape slices	Cereal and Fruit toast fingers	Cereal and Melon slices	Cereal and banana sticks	Cereal and Wholemeal bread
Breakfast	Cereal and toast with fruit	Cereal and toast with fruit	Cereal and toast with fruit	Cereal and toast with fruit	Cereal and toast with fruit
Morning Snack	Fruit	Fruit	Fruit	Fruit	Fruit
Lunch Starter - Crawlers			Soft carrot sticks		
Lunch Starter	Breadsticks with healthy dip	Tomato slices and cheese sticks	Mixed Vegetable sticks	Garlic and herb pitta fingers	Runner beans with healthy dip
Lunch Main	Creamy Chicken and Leek Hotpot with Broccoli	Pork meatballs with Spaghetti, peas and carrots	Haddock and Salmon pie with red cabbage and runner beans	Chickpea and spinach curry	Quorn fillet with roast potatoes, root vegetables and gravy
Afternoon Snack	Rice pudding	Mixed berries with plain yoghurt	Crumpets and spread and grapes	Crackers with spread and carrot sticks	Rice cakes and healthy dip
Tea Crawlers 	Pea, ham and mushroom pasta bake Fruit	Crustless quiche with potato salad and pepper sticks Fruit	Potato and lentil cakes with beans Fruit 	Jacket potatoes with mixed bean chilli Fruit	Parsnip, butterbean and apple soup with a wholemeal roll and spread Fruit
Tea Explorers/ Investigators/ Discoverers	Pea, ham and mushroom pasta bake Fruit	Crustless quiche with potato salad and pepper sticks Fruit	Potato and lentil cakes with beans Fruit	Jacket potatoes with mixed bean chilli Fruit	Parsnip, butterbean and apple soup with a wholemeal roll and spread Fruit
Tea Adventurers 	Pasta and sauce Fruit	Waffles and spaghetti Fruit	Sausage sandwiches with vegetable sticks Fruit	Jacket potatoes with beans and cheese Fruit	Sausage rolls with vegetable sticks Fruit