

# Staples Road Primary School



Epping Forest Schools Partnership Trust  
"Unlocking the potential of collaboration"

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STRIVE, RESPECT, SUCCEED



28<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

## Re: Bringing food into school from home - allergies

Although the majority of food eaten at school is provided by our catering team, during each academic year there are certain times when food is brought in from home. The main time that this happens is for children's birthdays.

Birthdays are very special for the children and we are always happy to help them celebrate their big day. However, although I know that some children do like to bring in cakes and treats for their friends (and teachers!), we are always mindful that there are many children who are allergic to some of the goodies that are brought into school.

According to Allergy UK, the leading national charity that supports those with allergies, the UK has some of the highest rates of allergic conditions in the world with over 20% of the population experiencing reactions to certain foods. 1 in 40 children develop peanut allergies and 1 in 20 develop egg allergies. These children, who are perfectly healthy and 'normal' in every other way, must watch every bite they eat or risk suffering a severe or even life threatening reaction. We are seeing more and more children with allergies to a particular ingredient, such as eggs, wheat, milk or peanuts, and who are then inadvertently excluded from participating in sharing some of the special birthday treats.

It has always been our policy to make the safety and well-being of all pupils our top priority. Allergy UK's advice is to manage the process of food being brought into school rather than banning it, and so I feel that this is the right time to set some boundaries to make life easier for everybody.

Please do not feel obliged to send treats into school for the children. However, if you would like to do so then our staff will do their best to distribute them as long as you follow the following measures:

1. Ask your child's teacher first if there are any children with specific food allergies (you might find it easier to ClassDojo).
2. Only send in commercially bought food that is still sealed and in its original packaging so that we can check all ingredients ourselves.
3. Do not send any food that contains nuts (or traces of nuts) as we will not be able to give it out as we are a 'nut free' school.
4. Ensure there is enough for the whole class and that treats can be divided easily.
5. Bring an alternative for those children who can't eat the 'main' treat.

Thank you in advance for your support in helping those with food allergies. In the meantime, if you or your child are affected then you will find further information from the website [www.allergyuk.org](http://www.allergyuk.org).

On a similar note, please remember that mid-morning snacks should be **healthy**. Far too many children are bringing in chocolate biscuits, crisps and even sweets. Visit <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/food-facts/healthier-snacks-for-kids/100-calorie-snacks> for money saving ideas on preparing your own healthy snacks. Remember fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables are always the best choice for a snack.

Yours sincerely,  
Jane Harvey  
Headteacher

Headteacher: Jane Harvey

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