

Packed Lunch Policy

Introduction

To grow and stay healthy children need to eat a nutritionally well balanced diet. Schools are an influential setting and can contribute significantly to improving the health and well-being of pupils. Good nutrition in childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many children are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables. Packed lunches can contribute to almost a third of a child's weekly food intake and therefore need to be balanced and nutritious.

This policy applies to all pupils and parents providing packed lunches and other foods to be consumed within school or on school trips during normal school hours.

Aims

- to ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the child with healthy food that is similar in its nutritional value to food served in schools.
- to make a positive contribution to children's health by encouraging healthy eating habits in childhood, setting a trend for lifelong health and wellbeing.
- to work with parents to ensure that we have fit and healthy children.
- to allow pupils to understand the importance of a balanced diet, including the place for occasional 'treats'.
- to work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below and give suggestions for healthy lunches when possible. This packed lunch policy fits within a wider context of promoting a whole school approach to food and healthy eating and builds upon curriculum teaching in science and PSHE.

Lunchtime arrangements

- The school will work with the pupils to provide appropriate dining room arrangements where pupils eating school meals and packed lunches are able to sit together.
- The school will ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.
- All uneaten food and waste will be kept in the lunchbox and returned home with the child so that parents are able to monitor their child's food consumption.

Food Choices

Packed lunches should include the following every day:

- Fruit and Vegetables - at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad.
- A starchy food like bread (white wholegrain, pitta bread or wrap), pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals.

- Non-dairy source of protein – meat, fish, egg, beans or pulses such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel.
- Dairy products such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard.
- A drink – the school provides water but drinks, such as 100% pure fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies are permitted. Children may bring low sugar cordial, well-diluted with plain water.
- Oily fish, such as salmon, are recommended to be included at least once every three weeks.

Packed lunches should not include:

- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, sweets and chewing gum.
- Any product containing nuts, including chocolate spreads, satay chicken, peanut butter etc.
- Fizzy/sugary drinks. This includes diet drinks and energy drinks which can contain high levels of caffeine and other additives and are not suitable for children.
- Any food containing nuts or nut based products.

Occasionally, the following foods which have a higher sugar or fat content, may be included as part of a balanced diet:

- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages/chipolatas.
- High fat, high salt, high sugar snacks such as sweet popcorn and other high fat/salt packet savoury snacks.
- Cakes and biscuits.
- Cereal bars, fruit bars or chocolate-coated biscuits.
- Potato crisps

As well as considering the content of a packed lunch we also ask parents to think about the quantity of portions children are given. Children must have enough food to ensure that they are able to function throughout the afternoon without feeling hungry.

Special diets and allergies:

The school will work with parents whose children have food allergies or those with specific dietary needs, to keep them safe. For these reasons pupils are also not permitted to swap food items.

The school also recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case parents are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible and ensure the school are fully informed of any such requirements and medical evidence is provided.

Health and safety

It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to provide an appropriate packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period. No glass containers or metal tins are allowed. Parents are advised to include an ice pack. Food products prepared and stored in ambient temperatures after a period of time can have increased levels of bacteria in them.

Storage of packed lunches

The school will provide storage areas/facilities for packed lunch bags, in the most convenient and appropriate place possible. However, the school cannot provide cooled storage areas and therefore cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's agreed policy review process. In addition, any major legislative or governmental changes regarding school food may lead to this policy being amended.

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by midday meal supervisors. While respecting the parents' right to provide a balanced diet, we do expect lunches provided to be in line with our packed lunch policy.

If a child regularly brings a packed lunch that does not conform to the policy then the school will contact the parents to discuss this.

Additional guidance and advice on providing health packed lunches is available from a number of sources including NHS Healthier Lunch Boxes
<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes>

Date ratified by the Governing Body:	June 2026
Date last reviewed:	January 2022
Next review date:	June 2029

Virtual Signature of Chair of Governors: *Mr S. Ryley* Date: 30th June 2026