



School Packed Lunch Policy

Responsible Person	Mrs L Stinchon
Date Created	November 2025
Date to be Reviewed	November 2026

Aim

All packed lunches brought into school should be packed safely, be healthy (based on the national standards set for school lunches), and enjoyed as part of a positive dining experience.

Rationale

We want to ensure that every child has access to a balanced, nutritious meal that supports their health, wellbeing, and learning.

Whilst we fully respect individual food choices and understand that there are many different needs and tastes, we want to work with parents to educate children about healthy diet choices so that our children, through understanding a balanced diet, will develop a greater appreciation of a healthy lifestyle.

Our School Commitment

- Pupils in Reception and Key Stage One will be supported to take up their Universal Infant Free School Meal entitlement.
- We will provide a safe, clean environment for pupils to eat their packed lunch.
- Packed lunches will be stored in a cool, dry place.
- Pupils on packed lunches and school dinners will sit together to promote inclusion.
- Free drinking water will be available for all pupils.
- Pupils with food allergies and intolerances will be supported by lunchtime supervisors.

Packed Lunch Recommended Guidance

Packed lunches should include every day:

- **Energy food** – wholegrain bread, pasta, couscous, rice, chapattis, wraps.
- **Protein food** – meat, fish, dairy, eggs, lentils, beans.
- **At least one portion of vegetables or salad.**
- **One portion of fruit.**
- **A dairy food** – milk, cheese, yoghurt, custard, or calcium-enriched plant-based alternative.
- **A drink** – water, milk, or fruit juice.

Packed lunches can occasionally include (approx. once per week):

- Meat-based items like sausage rolls or pies.
- Cakes and biscuits.

Packed lunches should not include:

- **Snacks high in salt like crisps** – instead try plain popcorn, vegetable sticks, seeds, savoury crackers or breadsticks.
- **Confectionery like sweets or chocolate bars** – instead include fruit or flapjack.
- **Soft drinks** – fizzy drinks or squash (even “no added sugar” or “sugar-free” drinks contain harmful sweeteners and encourage a taste for sweet drinks).

PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILDREN WITH NUTS OR FOOD CONTAINING NUTS AS WE HAVE A NUMBER OF CHILDREN WITH NUT ALLERGIES.

Assessment and Review

- The **School Wellbeing Warriors** will carry out an annual lunchbox audit.
- Lunchtime supervisors will **reward healthy packed lunches** in line with our lunchtime reward scheme.
- If items are repeatedly brought in that do not meet the standards, the packed lunch policy will be sent home and parents may be invited to discuss the matter.

Sustainability

Sustainable food nourishes both our health and the environment. We encourage families to:

- Use **less single-use packaging** (e.g., reusable containers).
- Include **seasonal fruit and vegetables**.
- Try **healthy and delicious meat alternatives** occasionally.

For more ideas, see the Food for Life Packed Lunch Guidance resource.

Fridge space for packed lunches is not available so it is advisable to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with an ice pack to keep the food fresh.

Waste and disposal

The school will, within reason, send any uneaten packed lunch food items back home. The rationale for this is that parents can also monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake with the school.

Useful links for further information

- Food for Life Packed Lunch Guidance resource
- School food standards: resources for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Lunchbox ideas and recipes – Healthier Families - NHS (www.nhs.uk)
- What is sustainable food? | Sustain (sustainweb.org)

Government Guidance

The Department for Education's School Food Standards guidance (updated February 2025) confirms that schools should promote a whole-school approach to healthy eating, including developing healthy packed lunch policies for pupils who do not take school meals.

Key points from the latest guidance:

- Schools are expected to **create a culture and ethos of healthy eating** across the whole school day.
- Packed lunches should reflect the same nutritional principles as school meals:
 - **Fruit and vegetables every day**
 - **Starchy food (preferably wholegrain)**
 - **Protein (meat, fish, eggs, beans, lentils)**

- **Dairy or calcium-rich alternatives**
- **Water available at all times**
- Confectionery and sugary drinks should not be included; cakes and biscuits only occasionally.
- Annual audits and monitoring are recommended to ensure compliance.

You can find the official guidance here:

- [School Food Standards: Resources for Schools \(DfE\) \[gov.uk\]](#)
- Government Packed Lunch Advice – School Food Trust [\[healthylunch.org.uk\]](https://www.healthylunch.org.uk)