

Packed Lunch Policy



'Let your light shine!'

Reviewed and updated: July 2026

Ratified by Governors: 15.7.26

Next review: July 2029

Signed: ... 

Name: Laura Martin

(Executive Headteacher)

Date...15.7.26

Signed:..... 

Name: Peter Hilton

(Chair of Governors)

Date...15.7.26

Our Approach

At our schools, we want every child to feel happy, healthy and ready to learn. A balanced lunch plays a really important part in helping children to stay focused and energised throughout the day.

Whilst school meals meet national School Food Standards, we also work in partnership with families to ensure packed lunches follow the same healthy principles.

This policy supports families by offering clear, practical guidance on how to provide a healthy, balanced packed lunch. It applies to all packed lunches brought from home and consumed on the school premises or during educational visits during the normal school day.

What we aim to achieve

- Support children's health, wellbeing and concentration
- Encourage lifelong healthy eating habits
- Ensure packed lunches reflect government food standards expectations
- Reduce foods high in fat, salt and sugar in line with national guidance

What should be included in a packed lunch

To help children get the right balance, we recommend including foods from the key food groups each day:

Every packed lunch should include:

- ✓ Starchy food (for energy)
e.g. sandwich, wrap, pasta, rice, couscous (wholegrain where possible)
- ✓ A source of protein
e.g. meat, fish, egg, beans, hummus or lentils
- ✓ Fruit and vegetables
 - At least one portion of each (more is even better)
- ✓ Dairy (or dairy alternative)
e.g. cheese, yoghurt, milk
- ✓ A healthy drink
 - Water is best
 - Milk is also suitable
 - Fruit juice (up to 150ml)

These recommendations reflect national guidance for balanced lunches and healthy diets for children.

Morning Snacks

We encourage all snacks brought into school for morning break to reflect the same healthy eating principles outlined in this policy and the School Food Standards. Healthier choices such as fruit, vegetables and other nutritious snacks help children to maintain concentration and energy levels throughout the school day. Snacks high in sugar, salt or fat, including sweets, chocolate bars and similar confectionery items, should not be brought into school for break times. Where concerns arise regarding snacks brought into school, these will be addressed in the same supportive manner as packed lunch concerns, with staff working in partnership with parents and carers to promote healthier alternatives.

Where unhealthy snacks are brought to school on a regular basis, the school may contact parents/carers to discuss suitable alternatives and provide further guidance where required.

Healthier swaps (helpful ideas)

We understand busy mornings! Simple swaps can make a big difference:

Instead of...	Try...
White bread	Wholemeal or 50/50 bread
Crisps	Rice cakes, wholegrain crackers, veg sticks
Chocolate bars	Fruit, yoghurt, homemade snack
Sugary drinks	Water or milk

Foods we ask families to limit

To support children's health (and align with national priorities to reduce sugar and processed foods), please avoid or limit:

 Fizzy drinks and energy drinks

- ✗ Sweets and chocolate bars
- ✗ Large quantities of crisps or salty snacks
- ✗ Highly processed foods (e.g. sausage rolls, pastries)
- ✗ Foods high in fat, salt and sugar

These foods can affect children's energy levels, concentration and long-term health.

A note on treats

We know treats are part of normal life!

- Small items like a biscuit or slice of cake are fine occasionally
- We encourage these to be part of a balanced lunch, not the main focus

Allergies and safety

Parents should notify the school of any diagnosed food allergies or dietary requirements and update us if these change.

To keep everyone safe:

- ⊘ No nuts or nut products

Clearly label lunchboxes

Avoid sharing food between children

Choking Hazard Guidance

To help keep children safe, please ensure foods such as grapes, cherry tomatoes and similar round items are cut lengthways. Remove stones and pips from fruit before packing.

Supporting your child

You can help by:

- Involving your child in choosing or preparing their lunch
- Trying new foods in small amounts
- Using leftovers creatively
- Keeping portions appropriate for your child

Packed lunches can provide up to a third of a child's daily food intake, so small changes really do make a big difference.

Our role in school

We will:

- Promote healthy eating through the curriculum and worships
- Support children to make sensible choices
- Contact families if we have concerns (in a supportive way)
- Provide guidance and ideas where helpful
- We provide access to fresh drinking water throughout the school day.

Food Storage

As we do not have refrigeration facilities for pupils' lunches, packed lunches should be brought in an insulated lunch bag with an ice pack wherever possible.

Working together

Where packed lunches regularly do not reflect the guidance within this policy, the school may contact parents/carers to offer support and discuss healthy alternatives.

We recognise that every family is different and we will always approach this with understanding and flexibility.

Our aim is not to judge, but to work in partnership with you to ensure every child is well nourished and ready to learn.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or on receipt of updated government guidance on school food standards.