

Packed Lunch Guidelines

The Policy was formally adopted by the Senior Leadership
Team on: 01 January 2024

Aims

These guidelines reflect our Healthy Schools Accreditation, and aims to ensure that packed lunches reflect the standards for school meals. We want to give support and advice to parents/carers, pupils, governors and staff on providing a healthy packed lunch.

We believe that a healthy packed lunch can contribute to the health of children and young people and needs to be consistent with the nutritional standards provided by school meals.

The guidelines apply to all packed lunches consumed within the Academy, on trips and journeys taking place during the academy day. It also applies to packed lunches provided by the Academy.

Development of the Guidelines

The guidelines have been developed by drawing on key government guidance associated with healthy eating and the school day. The Eatwell plate demonstrates how to get the balance right, by showing the proportion of each of the five food groups that should be eaten each day. School meals and packed lunches represent a third of a child's daily intake of foods and nutrients, which presents a great opportunity to promote healthy food choices for children and young people. The Children's Food Trust provides guidance for healthy school meals and packed lunches and this recommends that foods from the high fat and/or sugar group on the Eatwell plate (e.g. crisps and chocolates) should not be included in a packed lunch.

Content of Packed Lunches

We ask that all packed lunches be based on the School Food Trust's food based standards for packed lunches (appendix 1) and should include the following:

- Fruit and Vegetables; at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables
- Protein; meat, fish, egg or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus or dhal)
- Oily Fish; such as tinned or fresh mackerel, sardines, salmon, tuna

- Carbohydrate; starchy food such as bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes, chapattis and roti.
- Dairy; food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais, or calcium fortified Soya products, reduced fat versions of these should be used where possible.
- Drinks; water, pure fruit juice (no added sugar), semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, reduced fat and sugar yoghurt, milk drinks or smoothies. No fizzy drinks.
- Puddings; should be fruit based such as fruit salad, tinned fruit with yoghurt or custard, fruity rice pudding, fruit smoothies, fruit based crumble.

Packed lunches should not include any of the following

- Fizzy/sugary drinks in cartons, bottles or cans (including diet or energy drinks which can contain high levels of caffeine and other additives which are not suitable for children)
- Chocolate spread as sandwich filling
- Peanuts and peanut products
- Chocolate

In addition to advice on packed lunches, healthy snacks should also be consumed at breaktime. Examples of healthy snacks include: fruit, vegetables and salad. Chocolate, crisps and biscuits are not permitted at breaktime. Cereal bars are also not permitted.

Special diets and allergies

We ask that parents/carers be aware of nut allergies. The school recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not follow the National Food Standards exactly. In this case parents/carers are asked to make sure that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For these reasons pupils are also not permitted to swap food items. As some children in school have nut allergies we ask parents to refrain from including peanuts or peanut butter in lunches.

Packed Lunch Containers

We ask that parents/carers and pupils:

- Provide a packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period. We recommend parents/carers to include an ice pack with packed lunches, to reduce the risk of harmful bacteria growing if left in warm temperatures.
- Bring packed lunches in reusable plastic containers, rather than disposing of plastic bags and bottles.

Facilities for packed lunches

We will:

- Provide appropriate facilities to store packed lunches
- Provide free, fresh drinking water
- Provide appropriate dining room arrangements for all pupils, regardless of whether they have a school lunch or packed lunch, and wherever possible.

Monitoring

To promote healthy eating we will periodically monitor the content of packed lunches and involve pupils and staff. The Midday Assistants will monitor lunchboxes as the children come into the hall for lunch. They will discuss any concerns regarding packed lunches with the class teacher if they feel the guidelines are not being adhered to. The academy will talk to parents/carers where necessary and offer guidance on bringing healthy packed lunches.

If a lunch is not deemed to meet nutritional standards parents will be advised on the changes that need to be made. We encourage all parents and carers to support these guidelines to ensure our children have a well balanced meal at lunchtime. We will offer advice and guidance to parents/carers on packed lunches if required.

the eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you eat a healthy, balanced diet.

Fruit & vegetables
 Eat lots! At least 5 portions.
 A third of your day's food.
 Good for vitamins, minerals, fibres.
 Fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or 100% juice all count.

Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods
 Have every meal an starchy food.
 A third of your day's food.
 Good for energy-giving carbohydrates, and for vitamins, minerals, fibres.
 Choose wholegrain, wholemeal or 'high fibre' varieties.

Milk & dairy foods
 Eat moderate amounts only.
 About 2 or 3 portions a day.
 Good for calcium, protein, vitamins.
 Choose lower fat versions.

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein
 Eat moderate amounts only.
 About 2 or 3 portions a day.
 Good for protein, minerals, vitamins.
 Pulses (beans, lentils) are a good alternative to meat.

Foods and drinks high in fat and / or sugar
 Eat and drink these only occasionally and in small amounts. Cut down on saturated fat.
 Choose lower fat and lower sugar versions when you can. Avoid salty foods.

The eatwell plate shows what proportion of your day's food should come from each group.

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For a balanced packed lunch select these healthier food and drinks.

Fruit & Vegetables: Include at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad every day

Meat & Alternatives: Meat, fish or another source of non dairy protein should be included every day. Non dairy sources of protein include lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel.

Oily Fish: Include oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks.

Starchy Food: A starchy food such as any type of bread or pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other cereals should be included every day.

Milk & Dairy Food: Include a dairy food such as semi-skimmed milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day.

Drinking Water: Fresh drinking water should be available at all times.

Healthier Drinks: Include only water, still fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies.

Avoid including these foods in packed lunches.

Snacks: Snacks such as crisps should not be included. Instead include nuts/seeds, vegetables and fruit, savoury crackers or breadsticks served with fruit, vegetables or dairy foods are also a good choice.

Confectionary: Confectionary such as chocolate bars, chocolate coated biscuits and sweets should not be included. Cakes and biscuits are allowed but encourage only as part of a balanced diet.

Meat Products: Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages should be included in only occasionally.