



Packed Lunch Policy



Produced by Janet Tetlow on behalf of the Governing Body

Ratified Sept 2025

Review Sept 2027

1. Introduction

What children eat at school is important and school lunches have to meet strict standards to provide 1/3 of a child's nutrient requirements. Research from the Food Standards Agency (School Lunchbox Survey, 2004) and later research by the School Food Trust has shown that the majority of lunchboxes surveyed were high in fat, sugar and salt. A Plymouth Grove school survey carried out in October 2018 showed that one quarter of packed lunches were too high in high fat snacks and sugary drinks and over one half had sweet snacks.

2. Aim

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with parents, pupils and staff with the following aims:

- To improve the nutritional quality of packed lunches and other foods taken into schools.
- To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home (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 changes.
- To contribute to the self-evaluation for review by Ofsted. 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. This packed lunch policy promotes a whole school approach to food and healthy eating.

3. The policy

- The school will work with the pupils to provide attractive dining room arrangements.
- The school will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards.
- The school will ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.
- Pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible to stop the food going off.
- Glass bottles and tins are not permitted due to safety issues that could arise.

Food contained in a packed lunch

Packed lunches should be based on the Eat Well plate model (see appendix 1) and should include the following every day:

- Fruit and Vegetables - at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad. □
- Non-dairy source of protein - meat, fish, egg, beans or pulses such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel.
- A starchy food like bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals.
- Dairy foods such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais
- Drinks - the school provides water but healthy drinks, such as water, 100% pure fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies can be brought.
- Oily fish, such as salmon, should be included at least once every three weeks.

To keep packed lunches in line with the food based standards for school meals, packed lunches should **not** include:

- High fat, high salt, high sugar snacks such as crisps, sweet popcorn, other high fat / salt packet savoury snacks such as crisps.
- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits and sweets.
- Chocolate spread, honey, jam or marmalade as a sandwich filling.

Produced by Janet Tetlow on behalf of the Governing Body

Ratified Sept 2025

Review Sept 2027

- Cereal bars and fruit bars.
- Fizzy / sugary drinks or fruit flavoured squash. This includes diet drinks and energy drinks which can contain high levels of caffeine and other additives and are not suitable for children.
- **NUTS are NOT permitted at anytime**

Occasionally, the following may be included: ☐

- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages / chipolatas should be included only occasionally due to their high fat and salt content.
Fridays:
- Cakes, plain biscuits or crisps are allowed on Fridays

Special diets and allergies

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. For these reasons pupils are also not permitted to swap food items.

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. 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 area / facilities for packed lunch bags, in the most convenient 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.

Assessment, evaluation and reviewing:

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by staff

- 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.
- The school will give a child a school meal if the packed lunch is inadequate. The parent will be charged for this meal.
- Pupils with special diet or food allergies will be given due consideration.

4. Dissemination of the policy

The school will write to all new and existing parents / carers to inform them of the policy. The policy will be available on the school's website and will be incorporated into the school prospectus. The school will use opportunities such as parents' evenings to promote this policy as part of the whole school approach to healthier eating. All school staff, including teaching and catering staff as well as the school nurse will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.

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

Appendix 1 – Eatwell plate

