

Policy for
Packed Lunches in School

Name of School: Our Lady Star of the Sea RC Primary School

Policy approved and adopted: Reviewed November 2010

Due for review: November 2012

Overall aim of the policy:

To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide the pupil with healthy and nutritious food that is similar to food served in schools, which is now regulated by national standards.

Why the policy was formulated:

This policy was formulated by the Governing Body on 27th February as part of their contribution to a healthy schools initiative.

The school council was also consulted and were involved in the monitoring of packed lunches. This work will be on-going and the Governors will be updated as to the effectiveness of its implementation through the Headteacher's report.

National guidance:

The policy was drawn up using a range of national documents including information and a draft policy from the School Food Trust, the Food in schools toolkit (Department of Health) and Food policy in schools – a strategic policy framework for governing bodies (National Governors' Council, (NGC) 2005).

Where, when and to whom the policy applies:

To all pupils providing packed lunches to be consumed within school or on school trips during normal school hours beginning from March 2008.

Food and drink in packed lunches: what the policy states:

The school will ...

- provide facilities for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.
- work with the pupils to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements.
- work with parents to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.

- A fridge space is not available in school; pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible to stop the food going off.
- Wherever possible, the school will ensure that packed lunch pupils and school dinner pupils will be able to sit and eat together.

Packed lunches should include:

- At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day.
- Meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus, peanut butter and falafel) every day.
- Oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks.
- A starchy food such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals every day.
- Dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day.
- Water only, still or sparkling, fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies.

Packed lunches should not include:

- Snacks such as crisps. Instead, include nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit (with no added salt, sugar or fat). Savoury crackers or breadsticks served with fruit, vegetables or dairy food are also a good choice.
- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits and sweets. Cakes and biscuits are allowed but encourage your child to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.
- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages/chipolatas should be included only occasionally.

Special diets and allergies

The school also recognises that some pupils may require special diets. 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.

Assessment, evaluation and reviewing

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by teaching staff/catering staff/midday meal supervisors/pre-identified pupil packed lunch helpers.

Healthy lunches will be rewarded by stickers.

Parents and pupils who do not adhere to the Packed Lunch Policy will receive a leaflet in the packed lunch informing them of the 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.

Please note: pupils with special diets will be given due consideration.

Involvement of parents/carers

Pupils are normally expected to eat the lunch provided by the school. However, parents of pupils wishing to have packed lunches for a particular reason are expected to provide their children with packed lunches which conform to the packed lunch policy. In turn, the school will keep the parents and the School Nutrition Action Group/Packed Lunch group informed as per the methods detailed below under "Dissemination of the Policy".

Linked Policies

- Food Technology
- Science
- PSHE
- R.E.

Dissemination of the policy:

The school will write to all new and existing parents/carers to inform them of the policy via the school newsletter.

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 and Healthy Living weeks to promote this policy as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating.








All school staff, including teaching and catering staff, will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.

Signed:



Dated:

At a glance - the NEW packed lunch policy

For a balanced packed lunch select these healthier foods and drinks

	Fruit and 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, peanut butter 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 and Dairy Food	Include a dairy food such as semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day.
	Drinking Water	Free, fresh drinking water should be available at all times.
	Healthier Drinks	Include only water, still or sparkling, fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies.

Avoid including these foods in packed lunches

	Snacks and Confectionery	Chocolate bars, chocolate coated biscuits and sweets.
	Meat Products	Meat products such as sausage rolls, pies, corned meat and sausage/chipolatas should be included only occasionally,

FIRST Draft Letter to Parents

Headteachers may find this draft letter to parents useful when beginning consultation on implementing a Packed lunch Policy.

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you will be aware, there is increasing concern about rising rates of obesity and related health problems in children. As a school, it is part of our responsibility to teach children how to eat healthily. Our school meals have improved significantly recently and the school has now decided to introduce a policy for packed lunches.

The school believes that this will help your children to eat well. It will ensure that all pupils are following the School Food Trust guidelines and national standards for healthier eating and that when pupils learn in class about healthier eating this is reflected in the dining room.

However, before we introduce a formal policy, we wish to gather as many opinions as possible on the subject, including pupils, governors, our school cooks and you, the parents, before we decide what the policy should say.

We are inviting you to attend an open discussion on the subject on at If you are unable to attend at this time then please speak to a member of staff, send us an email or write a letter with your views on packed lunches.

We will also be consulting with our school cooks, the pupils and the governors so that we can create a policy that everyone will want to support. We will give you support, advice and time to adjust when the policy does come into place so that the change is as smooth as possible.

More information about packed lunches is available on www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/packedlunches

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Miss J. Jones



SECOND Draft Letter to Parents

Headteachers may find this draft letter to parents useful when implementing a Packed Lunch Policy. The Packed Lunch poster and packed lunch ideas can also be printed off and attached for more useful information for parents.

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you will be aware there is increasing concern about rising rates of obesity and related health problems in children. As a school, it is part of our responsibility to teach children how to eat healthily. Our school meals have improved significantly recently. After much discussion with pupils, parents, governors and our school cooks, we have decided to introduce a policy for packed lunches. This will help your children to eat well and ensure that all pupils are following the School Food Trust guidelines and national standards.

We understand that while some pupils already have fairly healthy packed lunch contents, for many families, this will require significant changes to shopping and eating habits; so we shall be introducing the policy gradually as well as running sessions about how to make packed lunches healthier. We would like all those having packed lunches to start gradually changing to healthier guidelines, with everyone following them by -
.....

We will continue to work with children in school to help them understand the need for this policy and the benefits which healthier eating will bring them.

As well as our new policy, please find attached some practical ideas for healthier packed lunches. More information is also available on www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/packedlunches

We shall be running the following sessions to show ideas on

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Miss J. Jones



Storage of Packed Lunches

1. The storage of packed lunches is very important. The container should be strong and large enough to easily contain all the items you wish to pack. It should also be of the insulated type.

In addition, the container should be capable of being thoroughly cleaned as soon as possible after use. A strong, plastic container is more suitable since it can be washed repeatedly and dried.

Small containers such as leakproof beakers are a good idea for the storing of drinks, etc.

2. Never add fresh food to unwashed containers. Do not reuse old polythene bags or food wrappings such as foil or cling film. Clean food packaging containers such as salad tubs or ice cream containers can be recycled provided they can be thoroughly cleaned. Do not use non-food containers for food use.
3. It is important that once the packed lunch has been prepared and packed, that it is stored properly. If you have prepared the lunch in advance it is important to store it in the “fridge” overnight or prior to consumption.
4. A “fridge” is not available at school so the lunch box will be kept in the coolest place possible, out of direct sunlight.
5. Separate store of mid-morning snack items is advised to prevent the lunch pack being opened and thus allowing the temperature to rise.
6. If you are unable to refrigerate the lunch following its preparation it may be worth considering preparing the lunch the night before and storing it in the freezer. The following morning it can be removed from the freezer and stored carefully in order to defrost before consumption.

Suitable fillings for freezing might be: chicken and sweetcorn; tuna, sweetcorn and mayonnaise; cheese and pickle; sausage and mustard.

Fillings not suitable for freezing will include: tomatoes, celery, lettuce, avocado, cottage cheese, egg mayonnaise. Of special concern will be high risk products that include: soft cheese, sliced meats, fish, eggs, smoked or cured foods, prepared vegetables, salads including those containing fruit, pasta, beans or rice, milk or milk products like yoghurt, cream and cream products, foods with untreated herbs and spices added.

Remember that the rise in temperature in the summer months will affect your packed lunch. Packed lunches can be fun, nutritious and safe provided you follow these guidelines.

Nutritional Guidelines

It is difficult to prepare a meal which contains all the essential ingredients needed for a balanced diet, bearing in mind varying nutritional needs. There are, however, sensible guidelines which can be followed in the preparation of packed lunches.