

Bell Farm Primary School

Packed Lunch Policy



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.

The policy should form part of the overall food in school policy.

2. Aim

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with parents/carers, pupils, school council 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 and consumed in school (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/carers providing packed lunches and other foods to be consumed within school (or on school trips) during normal school hours. This packed lunch policy fits within a wider context of promoting a whole school approach to food and healthy eating.

3. The policy

- The school will work with the pupils to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements.
- The school will work with parents/carers to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.
- 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, in warm weather.
- Glass bottles and tins are not permitted due to safety issues that could arise.
- All uneaten food and waste will be kept in the lunchbox and returned home with the child so that parents are able to monitor their child's food consumption.

4. Food contained in a packed lunch

Packed lunches should be based on the 'Eat Well' plate model 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, or Quorn.
- **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 lunch boxes can also include a health drink, such as water, 100% pure fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies.
- **Oily fish**, such as salmon or tuna, should be included as often as possible.

These foods should be kept to a minimum:

- High fat, high salt, high sugar snacks such as crisps, sweet popcorn, other high fat / salt packet savoury snacks such as crisps.

These foods should not be included:

- Any food containing nuts or nut based products.
- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits, sweets and chewing gum.
- Fizzy / sugary drinks. This includes diet drinks and energy drinks which can contain high levels of caffeine and other additives not suitable for children.

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.
- Cakes and plain biscuits are allowed but children should be encouraged to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.

5. Special diets and allergies

We are a 'nut free school' and therefore all packed lunches must not contain any nut or nut based products.

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/carers 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.

6. 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/carers 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.

7. Storage of Packed Lunches

The school will provide storage area / facilities for packed lunch bags, in the most convenient and appropriate 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.

8. 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/carers to discuss this.
- Pupils with special diet or food allergies will be given due consideration.

9. 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.

Status of Non-Statutory Policy	Date
Authored by Anne Cooper & Debbie Overton	November 2015
Policy reviewed	January 2022
Agreed by Staff	January 2022
Agreed by Governors	N/A
Review	Every three years (Jan 2025)