



Otlely Pool and Bramhope Cluster
Ashfield Primary School
School Packed Lunch Guidelines

Background

In developing this policy for our cluster, we have consulted with head teachers, children and parents in all of the cluster primary schools, through face to face and written consultation events. The results of these consultations are available upon request.

This policy is based on the Leeds model policy, which was developed in the following way:

The content of the policy has been written by the Leeds School Food Advisors and agreed by key stakeholders including Councillors, The Health and Wellbeing Service, Leeds Youth Council, Leeds Catering Agency and Public Health. It has also been written in consultation with representation from a cross-section of schools in Leeds. Teachers, senior leadership, school support staff, pupils, School Food Ambassadors and parents have all been involved in the development of this policy.

Aim of the policy

To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide pupils with a healthy, balanced and nutritious lunch, promoting equality for all pupils and ensure consistency between school meals (see appendix 6) and packed lunch policies.

National and Local Guidance

This policy has been written to reflect the School Food Standards that were revised in January 2015. It has also been written to reflect the Eatwell plate model of healthy eating (appendix 1) and supports key outcomes of The School Food Plan. The policy supports Ofsted's commitment to assess pupils' knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy and our school's ethos of healthy eating.

Where, when and who the policy applies to

This policy applies to all pupils, staff and parents or carers providing packed lunches to be eaten within school or on school trips during normal school hours.

Eating arrangements

What to expect from school:

Pupils bringing a packed lunch are able to eat together with those who eat a school meal and will be offered tasters of school meals when appropriate.

Evidence shows that school meals are more nutritious than packed lunches. Therefore, school meals are encouraged as the preferred option for all pupils.

We will provide an attractive, bright and clean environment for pupils to eat their packed lunches.

We will provide free, fresh drinking water for all pupils, therefore there is no need to include an additional drink in lunchboxes.

What is expected from Parents/ Carers

Please ensure you keep the contents of lunchboxes cool on warmer days by using an insulated bag and/or freezer block. Alternatively, you can freeze items of the lunch such as yoghurts or sandwiches.

We use a Traffic Light system to categorise foods into Red, Yellow and Green foods (appendix 2). Foods categorised as red are not allowed in school lunches. Food categorised as red are not allowed in school lunches or school meals. Yellow foods can be included several times each week and Green foods can be included as often as children and parents wish, and are encouraged to be eaten on a daily basis. A leaflet is provided which summarises the policy for ease of reference. Parents are expected to make their own decisions about the frequency of yellow and green foods in their child's packed lunch: school will not be involved in these decisions.

Special diets and allergies

It is acknowledged that some special diets may not allow lunchboxes to comply with the policy. The school will work with all families to ensure that lunchboxes are as healthy and nutritious as possible and will agree alternatives where possible.

Our school catering service is committed to meeting the dietary needs of all pupils so we encourage pupils to eat a school meal where the packed lunch policy does not support their needs. Please inform the school of any special dietary requirements in writing, supported by a letter from the GP when possible.

Monitoring

School staff will monitor the contents of packed lunches. In response to feedback from children and families, school council and school food ambassadors may talk to children about packed lunches from time to time to gather feedback, but will not be involved in implementing the policy. We will share findings with parents and pupils where appropriate.

Healthy packed lunches will be acknowledged and rewarded with positive praise, stickers, house points and/or a place on the top table. We will not punish children who bring in unhealthy packed lunches (eg by moving down the ladder or verbal reprimand) or stigmatise children who are unable to meet the policy.

How we will support the guidelines?

Pupils and parents or carers who regularly struggle to provide a packed lunch in line with the policy will be supported sensitively on an individual basis. If disallowed items (Red foods) are found in lunchboxes, the school will remind pupils and parents/ carers of the policy and will usually swap the item with a piece of fruit or vegetables, returning the item at the end of the school day. If unhealthy foods or portion sizes are repeatedly brought into school, a copy of this policy and appendices will be sent home offering alternatives and solutions to help families support the policy and protect their children's health.

We will support parents by sending home affordable menu ideas, recipes, portion guidance and useful tips for healthy packed lunches (see appendices 3, 4, 5).

We will support pupils through education and practical learning in the curriculum.

We will ensure that messages within our 'whole school food policy' are consistent and in line with this policy.

Review

We welcome pupils and parents/carers to discuss the content of the policy with school at any time and offer ways to help us improve healthy eating.

These guidelines will be formally reviewed as part of our three year review cycle, informed by contributions from our School Council and/or School Food Ambassadors and other key people including parents and subject to any national guidance development.

Sharing the policy

We will send home a full copy of the policy to parents of children choosing a packed lunch, and those who wish to swap from a school meal to a packed lunch, at the beginning of their swap to packed lunches.

These guidelines are also available in full on our school website.

Key messages and useful tips will be shared via newsletters as required.

Reviewed by governing board of Ashfield Primary School 22/11/2023

To be reviewed Autumn 2026

Appendix 1

The Eatwell Plate

In our policy, foods from the purple slice shown below are not allowed in packed lunches:



Appendix 2

Packed Lunch Leaflet

The aim of our policy is...

To keep up our success of being a Healthy School, we think all children should enjoy a healthy lunch. This guidance is to help packed lunches be as healthy as school meals which meet the School Food Standards.

www.schoolfoodplan.com/standards

How we will support the policy ...

- We will ensure that free, fresh drinking water is available at all times and we strongly encourage a water only policy. It is not essential to include a drink in packed lunches as water is provided.
- We will provide menu ideas and practical advice for healthy, affordable packed lunches.
- We will reward pupils who bring in healthy packed lunches with praise, prizes and/or certificates.
- We will allow pupils who bring a packed lunch and pupils who have a school dinner to sit and eat together.
- We will ensure we listen to our pupils' and parents' views and ensure that this policy is fair and meets everyone's needs.
- Our traffic light system is in line with the School Food Standards for school meals.

Why have a policy for packed lunches?

Eating a healthy packed lunch or school meal is important to help children stay healthy, feel good and improve their ability to learn.

Our packed lunch guidance has been developed in response to parent surveys and observations of children's packed lunches, that found some less healthy foods that can affect energy levels, concentration, behaviour and health.

A healthier packed lunch focuses on the four main food groups of the eatwell plate, foods in purple the small section are not allowed to be eaten in school.



TOOL 21

PACKED LUNCH POLICY LEAFLET



Leeds Packed Lunch Guidance

This policy has been created in consultation led by our School Council, supported by parents, governors and the Leeds Health Wellbeing Service

Red foods

These foods are not allowed in school lunch boxes.

- Chocolate bars or sweets
- Crisps
- Cereal bars (these can be high in fat and sugar).
- Chocolate biscuits and cake bars
- Processed fruit products such as winders (these can be high in sugar).
- Sugary drinks such as Caprisun, Ribena, squash, fizzy drinks and energy drinks.



Amber foods

These types of foods could be included occasionally as part of a balanced packed lunch.

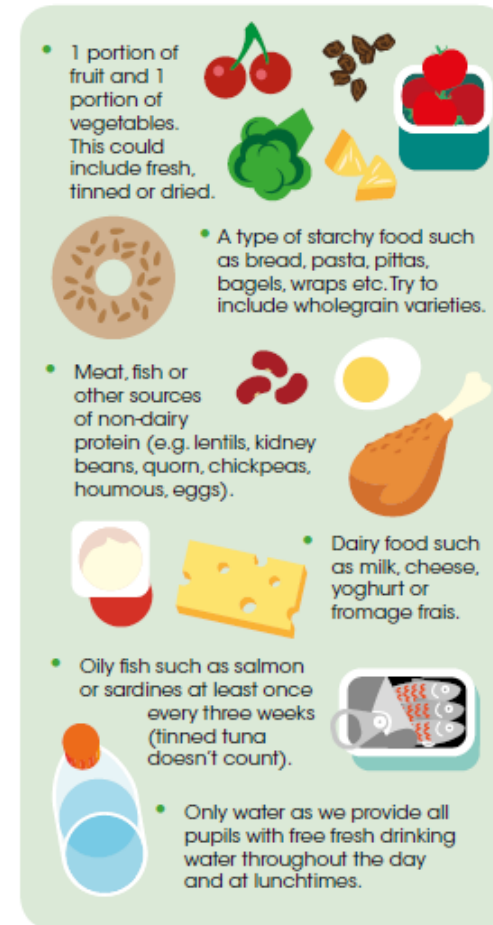
- High salt or fat snacks such as, snack-a-jacks, crackers, bread sticks.
- Small plain or fruit cakes such as scones, tea cakes or malt loaf.
- Plain biscuits, flapjacks or fig rolls
- Processed meat products such as sausage rolls, pies, corned beef, pasties, pepperami or sausages.



Green foods

You can put these in lunch boxes everyday or as often as you like.

- 1 portion of fruit and 1 portion of vegetables. This could include fresh, tinned or dried.
- A type of starchy food such as bread, pasta, pittas, bagels, wraps etc. Try to include wholegrain varieties.
- Meat, fish or other sources of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, quorn, chickpeas, houmous, eggs).
- Dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt or fromage frais.
- Oily fish such as salmon or sardines at least once every three weeks (tinned tuna doesn't count).
- Only water as we provide all pupils with free fresh drinking water throughout the day and at lunchtimes.



Appendix 3

Portion Size Guide

Portions seem to be getting bigger- crisps, chocolate bars, fizzy pop drinks, take aways, pizza – even plates seem to be growing! To make sure children don't end up with the same amount of food as an adult, we have to think about what portion is right for them. This will make sure they have enough energy to learn and play but also stay a healthy weight.

Check out the guide below for what makes up a healthy lunchbox.

	VEGETABLES	FRUIT	STARCHY FOOD	MEAT, BEANS, FISH, EGGS	DAIRY	TREAT
COULD INCLUDE	Carrot, pepper or cucumber sticks, grated carrot, cherry tomatoes, vegetables such as peas or sweetcorn as part of a salad.	Grapes, kiwi, melon, apple, banana, strawberries, fruit salad, fruit kebabs, tinned fruit in juice, or dried fruit.	Wholemeal bread/ half and half bread, rice, pasta, wraps, potatoes, pittas.	Lean cooked ham, chicken, boiled eggs, beef, chickpeas, tuna, mackerel, lentils, quorn, tofu, kidney beans or broad beans.	Yoghurt (low sugar varieties) fromage frais, cheese spread, cheese portions, rice pudding, soft cheese.	Fruit loaf, banana bread, fruit muffin, baked samosa, plain breadsticks with houmous or tzatziki, small plain or fruit cake.
PORTION SIZE	One child's handful of vegetables.	Dried fruit: 1 dessert spoon. Fresh and tinned fruit: one child's handful.	Two slices of bread from a medium sized loaf, one medium pitta pocket, one wrap or one child fist size of cooked rice or pasta. Two or three egg sized potatoes.	One child's palm size, thickness of the little finger.	A 125g pot of yoghurt or fromage frais, rice pudding or a small matchbox (30g) size piece of cheese. <i>Ensure dairy replacements have added calcium in them.</i>	Approximately ½ a child's size palm.

Match up some swaps you could make in your lunch box to make it super healthy, or choose new ones.

Let's get swapping!!

Items to swap



Healthy swaps



Appendix 5

Suggestions for Packed lunches

Packed Lunch

LOW COST MENU IDEAS

TOOL 19

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
OPTION 1					
	<p>Tuna & sweetcorn pasta salad</p> <p>An apple</p> <p>Small tub of rice pudding</p> <p><i>Cost*: 55p/77p</i></p>	<p>Egg salad sandwich</p> <p>Small tub of tinned pineapple</p> <p>Slice of fruit cake with soft cheese spread</p> <p><i>Cost*: 63p/90p</i></p>	<p>Ham & soft cheese sandwich</p> <p>A banana</p> <p>Small tub of carrot sticks</p> <p><i>Cost*: 50p/75p</i></p>	<p>Beef & onion salad sandwich</p> <p>Tub of rice pudding & raisins</p> <p>A banana</p> <p><i>Cost*: 65p/£1.03</i></p>	<p>Mackerel potato salad</p> <p>A slice of fruit loaf</p> <p>Cherry tomatoes</p> <p><i>Cost*: 57p/77p</i></p>

*Costs were calculated based on the average price across 6 'bargain' style stores across Leeds (2015), including Tesco's Everyday Value range. Costs given denote average cost for primary/secondary pupil portions in accordance with statutory portion sizes.

OPTION 2

DAY 1



Rice with peas and a boiled egg
A handful of grapes
A small slice of malt loaf
Cost*: 55p/77p

DAY 2

Ham & cheese salad sandwich
A banana
3 oatcakes
Cost*: 60p/£1.01



DAY 3



Cheesy tuna & pea pasta salad
A handful of grapes
A fromage fraise
Cost*: 64p/92p

DAY 4

Mixed bean & sweetcorn rice salad
Small handful of dried fruit
A handful of grapes
Cost*: 56p/96p



DAY 5



Ham, pea & soft cheese pasta salad
Small slice of plain sponge cake
An apple
Cost*: 78p/£1.16

*Costs were calculated based on the average price across 6 'bargain' style stores across Leeds (2015), including Tesco's Everyday Value range. Costs given denote average cost for primary/secondary pupil portions in accordance with statutory portion sizes.

OPTION 3

DAY 1



Ham & cheese salad sandwich
Oatcakes with peanut butter
Small tub of tinned pineapple
Cost*: 67p/£1.13

DAY 2

Tuna & sweetcorn pasta salad
Small tub of tinned peaches
A fromage frais
Cost*: 60p/85p



DAY 3



Chickpea & sweetcorn pasta salad
Small handful of dried fruit
Tub of rice pudding
Cost*: 54p/89p

DAY 4

Ham & cheese sandwich
Tub of carrot sticks
A clementine
Cost*: 49p/79p



DAY 5



Peanut butter & salad sandwich
A clementine
A fromage frais
Cost*: 51p/72p

*Costs were calculated based on the average price across 6 'bargain' style stores across Leeds (2015), including Tesco's Everyday Value range. Costs given denote average cost for primary/secondary pupil portions in accordance with statutory portion sizes.

Packed Lunch

TOOL 17

CREATIVE IDEAS AND TOP TIPS



Creative ideas and top tips for exciting packed lunches

EAT ME

Write little notes or surprise messages in lunchboxes.

Use fun and colourful Tupperware and swap it throughout the week.

Use stickers in and on lunch boxes to reward children for choosing to eat the healthy option in their lunchbox.



Play the smart swaps game - ask your child/children to swap food items to healthier alternatives. It's not about cutting food out but just making similar swaps.



MENU

Create a menu for the week and ask your child/children help and take ownership for their own menu. Make sure you guide them to choose a balance in line with the packed lunch standards.



How to include more fruit:

Core and slice an apple then put it back together and pop an elastic band around it - bite size crunchy slices that are ready to eat and won't go brown!



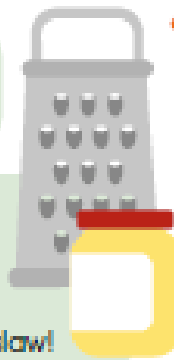
Make fruit kebabs - putting fruit on a stick makes it much more exciting!



Make a pick 'n' mix style fruit selection - more colours, more flavours and more fun.



Mix grated hard cheese with grated apple a squeeze of lemon and a little mayonnaise - this makes a fruity coleslaw!



How to include more vegetables:

Try sticks of carrot, cucumber or pepper or cherry tomatoes. Children are much more likely to eat veg if it's in bite-sized pieces, and if they don't have to peel it themselves.



Try grated carrot or pepper as sandwich fillers - these are sweet and crunchy and less likely to make bread go soggy.



Pasta and rice salads are an easy way to pop some extra veg in - try pea, sweetcorn, grated carrots, courgette, celery or pepper.



Appendix 6

School Food Standards (DfE)

(This policy has been designed to align with the standards to which school meals must adhere).

Fruit and vegetables

- One or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day
- One or more portions of fruit every day
- A dessert containing at least 50% fruit two or more times each week
- At least three different fruits and three different vegetables each week

Foods high in fat, sugar and salt

- No more than two portions of food that has been deep-fried, batter-coated or breadcrumb-coated, each week
- No more than two portions of food which include pastry each week
- No snacks, except nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruit with no added salt, sugar or fat
- Savoury crackers or breadsticks can be served at lunch with fruit or vegetables or dairy food
- No confectionery, chocolate or chocolate-coated products (at any point in the school day)
- Desserts, cakes and biscuits are allowed at lunch time. They must not contain confectionery.
- Salt must not be available to add to food after it has been cooked
- Any condiments must be limited to sachets or portions or no more than 10g or 1 teaspoon

Milk and Dairy

- A portion of food from this group every day
- Lower fat milk must be available for drinking at least once a day during school hours

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

- A portion of meat or poultry on three or more days each week
- Oily fish once or more every three weeks
- For vegetarians, a portion of non-dairy protein on three or more days each week
- A meat or poultry product (manufactured or homemade, and meeting the legal requirements) no more than once each week in primary schools

Starchy food

- One or more wholegrain varieties of starchy food each week
- One or more portions of food from this group every day
- Three or more different starchy foods each week
- Starchy food cooked in fat or oil no more than two days each week
- Bread- with no added fat or oil- must be available every day