



The Federation of Sacred Heart & St Mary's RC Primary School, Battersea

PACKED LUNCH POLICY

Approved By	Governors
Reviewed On	November 2024
Review Due	November 2026
Review Cycle	Biennial

Policy Rationale

This policy aims to give clear guidance 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.

This policy applies to all packed lunches consumed within school, on school trips and school journeys taking place during the school day. It also applies to packed lunches provided by the school.

Guidance and tips on providing healthy packed lunches can be found at the NHS link below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes>

Contents of Packed Lunches

NHS UK recommends a balanced lunch box should contain:

- Starchy foods like bread, rice, potatoes or pasta.
- Protein foods like meat, fish, eggs or beans.
- A dairy item, like cheese or yoghurt.
- Vegetable or salad and a portion of fruit.

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.) **We are a Water only school.** The school will provide facilities for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at lunchtimes.
- Confectionary such as chocolate bars and sweets.
- Chocolate spread as sandwich filling.
- Nuts and nut products.
- Chewing gum.
- Sugared/toffee/salted popcorn/crisps.

Special Diets and Allergies

We ask that all parents/carers be aware that a number of children at Sacred Heart and St Mary's have diagnosed food allergies or medical conditions. The school recognises that some pupils may require special diets that do not follow the healthy food policy exactly. In these cases, 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 specific nut allergies we ask parents to refrain from including nuts and peanut butter in lunches. Refer to Appendix one for suggested packed lunch items.

Please be aware of nut allergies. We recommend you visit the www.allergyinschools.co.uk website for accurate, reliable information on managing allergies in schools.

Sacred Heart and St Mary's are NOT nut free schools

It is not possible to guarantee and enforce a nut free zone. Staff cannot monitor all lunches and snacks brought in from home. A free from environment can create a false sense of security and does not safely prepare children for environments where nuts may be present. Age appropriate education and awareness is important. The school(s) also need to consider other children with food allergies and it is not practical to restrict them all. There are procedures in place to minimise the risk of reaction via cross contamination in school.

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.
- Bring packed lunches in reusable plastic containers, rather than disposing of plastic bags and bottles.

Staff

To support a whole school approach, staff are encouraged to comply with this policy when bringing in packed lunches and choosing to eat with pupils.

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, ensure that pupils with a packed lunch and pupils having school meals are able to sit and eat together.

Monitoring

To promote healthy eating, we will regularly monitor the content of packed lunches and involve pupils and staff. We 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. Any sweets will be confiscated until the end of the day. These may be substituted with a piece of fruit.

Waste and Disposal

The school will, within reason, send any uneaten packed lunch food items back home. The rationale for this is that parents can also monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake with the school.

Appendix 1

The 'Always, Sometimes, Never' suggested approach to Packed Lunches at Sacred Heart and St Mary's RC Primary Schools.

Packed lunches should 'Always' include:

- At least one portion of fruit or a fruit smoothie (maximum portion 150 mls), and one portion of vegetables every day. Grapes and cherry tomatoes should be halved lengthways for Early Years/Reception class children.
- Meat, fish, eggs, or a non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, houmous, falafel) every day.
- Oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks.
- A starchy food such as any type of bread (white or wholegrain rolls, pitta bread or wraps), pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or another cereal every day.
- A dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais every day.
- A drink of water (plain and unflavoured.)

Packed lunches can 'Sometimes' include:

- A meat product such as a sausage roll or an individual pie or corned meat.
- A cake or biscuit, although these preferably should not be chocolate coated.
- A packet of crisps (small packet approximately 30g).

Packed lunches should 'Never' include:

- Any confectionery such as chocolate bars e.g. dairy milk/galaxy, chocolate-coated biscuits and sweets.
- Fast food take away food.
- Any extremely sugary soft drinks, such as a fizzy drink (even if labelled as 'sugar-free', 'no added sugar' or 'reduced sugar' as these drinks can contribute to tooth decay and provide little nutritional value).