



# Roundhay St John's Primary School

## Packed Lunch Policy

Date of policy: March 2026  
Review date: March 2029  
Headteacher: L Briggs  
Chair of LAC: J Thompson

# 1. Introduction

At Roundhay St John's, we are committed to teaching the children about how to make sensible food choices as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. This packed lunch policy has been developed by drawing on key government guidance associated with healthy eating and the school day. This packed lunch policy is supported by what is taught in our curriculum where healthy eating is discussed and promoted in a number of subjects. 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.

The Eatwell guide demonstrates how to get the balance right by showing the proportion of each of the five food groups that should be eaten each day. School meals and packed lunches represent a third of a child's daily intake of foods and nutrients, which presents a great opportunity to promote healthy food choices for children. The government provides regulations for healthy school meals and packed lunches and recommends that foods from the high fat and/or sugar group on the Eatwell guide should not be included in a packed lunch.

## 2. Aims

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 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 give clear guidance to parents/carers, pupils, governors, and staff on providing a healthy packed lunch
- To make a positive contribution to children's health by encouraging healthy eating habits in childhood, setting a trend for lifelong changes

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 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 to ensure that packed lunches abide by the standards listed below.
- The school will promote a healthy lifestyle across the curriculum, and staff will be expected to comply with the policy when bringing in packed lunches and eating these with pupils.
- 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.

- 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.
- Parents will follow the advice given in this policy and in the following websites and leaflet: [NHS Healthier Families](#) [Parents Action](#)
- 
- The school will support parents by holding healthy eating workshops and providing ideas for healthy packed lunches.

## 4. Food contained in a packed lunch

Packed lunches should be based on the EatWell guide and should aim to include all of the following every day:

**Fruit and Vegetables** - at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad.

**A non-dairy source of protein** - meat, fish, egg, beans or pulses, such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus or falafel.

**A starchy food** like bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other types of cereals.

**Dairy foods** such as milk, cheese, yoghurt or fromage frais.

**Drinks** - the school provides water but only healthy drinks, such as water, 100% pure fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies should be included in your child's packed lunch.

**Oily fish** such as salmon should be included at least once every three weeks.

As part of the packed lunch policy, children's packed lunches **should always** include:

- ✓ A starchy food, such as bread, potato, rice, pasta, or yam
- ✓ At least one item of fruit, vegetable or salad
- ✓ A balance of foods from different food groups

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

- ✗ Chocolate or food items containing chocolate
- ✗ Other confectionery such as sweets and chewing gum
- ✗ Fizzy or sugary drinks
- ✗ Fruit flavoured squash drinks such as Ribena, Fruit Shoot or Capri Sun,
- ✗ Diet or energy drinks which contain high levels of caffeine and other additives, and are not suitable for children
- ✗ Fast food such as hamburgers or chips

Packed lunches should also not include any nuts or food which may contain nuts.

Occasionally the following may be included:

- Snacks such as crisps
- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages

- these foods have a very 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

### For a healthier snack:

- ✓ Replace cakes and pastries with fruit bread or teacake
- ✓ Replace salted savoury snacks, such as crisps, with popcorn (not sweet or toffee), breadsticks, rice cakes or cheese and crackers
- ✓ Include dried fruit or fruit salad
- ✓ Drink water, milk, 100% juice, sparkling water, fruit smoothie, or a yoghurt or milk drink

Children who eat school dinners will be asked to choose a vegetable or salad item as part of their lunch.

## Special diets and allergies

The school 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.

## 5. 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 areas/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.

## 6. Assessment, evaluation and reviewing:

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by teaching staff, support staff, midday meal supervisors and school food ambassadors. We will encourage children to make healthy packed lunch choices through promotions and campaigns in school and the healthy eating curriculum and we will always work with parents who may find it difficult to engage with their child in this.

## 7. 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 in hard copy from the

office for anyone who cannot access it online. The school will use opportunities such as parents' evenings and special workshops to promote this policy as part of the whole school approach to healthier eating. All school staff, including teaching and catering staff, and the school nurse, will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.

## 8. Working with parents and carers

We hope that all parents and carers will support this packed lunch policy. We will offer advice and guidance to parents/carers on packed lunches if required. We will offer a range of ways to support parents/carers including regular information on newsletters, workshops, an information leaflet created by the children, and useful websites to be displayed on the school website.

## 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.

### 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](http://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 Guide, 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



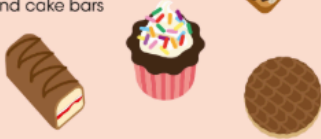
- Crisps



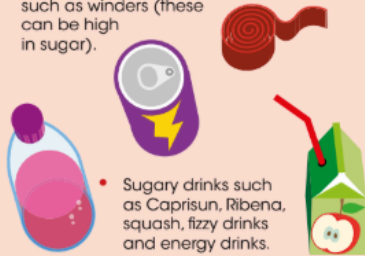
- Cereal bars (these can be high in fat and sugar).



- 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.

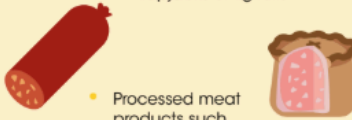
- High salt or fat snacks such as, snack-a-jacks, crackers, bread sticks.



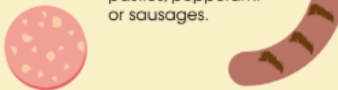
- Small plain or fruit cakes such as scones, tea cakes or malt loaf.



- 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.