

Belmont Cheveley Park Primary School



Packed Lunch Policy

Last updated: July 2025

Review date: July 2026

Article 24

Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must work to provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries to achieve this.

Introduction

To grow and stay healthy children need to eat a nutritionally well-balanced diet. Schools are an influential setting and can contribute significantly to improving health and well-being of pupils.

Good nutrition in childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many children are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables.

Packed lunches can contribute to almost a third of a child's weekly food intake and therefore need to be balanced and nutritious.

Aim

To ensure that packed lunches (brought in from home) reflect the standards for school meals.

To ensure snacks brought in from home (to be eaten at playtime) support a balanced and healthy diet.

Rationale:

- Schools are required to positively promote the health and wellbeing of its pupils. Work around healthy eating is a high priority.
- The content of lunchboxes and snacks needs to reflect the requirement of schools to meet minimum food and nutrition standards for school meals.
- To encourage healthy eating habits from an early age and improve the overall nutrition of pupils.

Objectives

- To improve the nutritional quality of packed lunches in schools and the eating habits of children at lunchtimes.
- To encourage healthy eating habits in childhood that can influence health and wellbeing in later life.

Implementation

This packed lunch policy fits within a wider context of promoting a whole school approach to food and healthy eating.

- **Children's packed lunches should** include items from the 5 main food groups;

Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta

These starchy foods are a healthy source of energy. Packed lunches should include 2 or more portions e.g. pasta salad, sandwich, bread sticks, crackers, rice.

Fruit and Vegetables

These foods provide vitamins, minerals and fibre. Lunches should include at least 1 portion of fruit and 1 portion of vegetables/salad, or more e.g. carrot/cucumber sticks, cherry tomatoes, a piece of fruit.

Milk and Dairy Foods

These foods provide calcium for healthy bones and teeth. Include 1 portion at lunch e.g. yoghurt, fromage frais, cheese, milk.

Meat, Fish, Eggs, Beans

These foods provide protein for growth. Packed lunches should include 1 portion of these foods e.g. boiled egg as filling in a sandwich, mixed bean salad.

Drinks – any drinks provided in lunch boxes **should only** include either plain water, milk (semi-skimmed), unsweetened fresh fruit juice, diluted fresh fruit juice, low sugar squash, fruit or dairy based smoothies. Fizzy drinks and energy drinks are not permitted.

In order to ensure the nutritional quality of packed lunches, please do not send sweets or chocolate bars into school – but chocolate biscuits and small cakes are acceptable, as these are in line with the school dinner policy.

In order to ensure the nutritional quality of snacks (to be eaten at playtimes), please do not send sweets, crisps or chocolate bars into school. These items will be taken off children and returned home.

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.**

Packed Lunch Containers

It is the responsibility of 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. Packed lunch boxes should all be clearly named and regularly cleaned.

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.

Dining Facilities for Pupils Bringing Packed Lunch

The school will provide an appropriate area where pupils who choose to bring packed lunches can eat. For the majority of the time, this is the school hall but in periods of warm and dry weather, we do allow children to eat their packed lunches outside, should they choose to do so.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school will carry out monitoring of packed lunch provision – where there **may be concerns over a child's food/nutrition intake and/or content of packed lunches**, this can be dealt with timely and sensitively. Parents and carers will be contacted should there be concerns.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's agreed policy review process. In addition any major legislative or governmental changes regarding school food may lead to this policy being amended.