

Packed Lunch Guidance

Yew Tree Primary School



Date of Policy:	November 2025
Responsibility:	Healthy Schools Leader
Review Date:	November 2028
Consultation:	This guidance was developed following consultation with staff, parents/carers and governors following advice from Sandwell Health & Development Team.

ETHOS STATEMENT

It is the aim of the Governing Body of Yew Tree Primary School to develop policies and procedures which support the school's vision of:

“Learning Without Limits”

INTRODUCTION

The school is dedicated to providing an environment which promotes healthy eating and enables pupils to make informed choices about the food they eat. Ensuring children are healthy is a key part of our vision for Yew Tree children.

It is our intention to support an approach so that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide pupils with healthy and nutritious food which meet national standards and healthy eating guidance.

The guidance was drawn up using a range of national organisations, including information from the Children's Food Trust, which are linked below. The guidance applies to all pupils and parents/carers providing packed lunches to be eaten within school or on school trips during normal school hours.

- <http://whatworkswell.schoolfoodplan.com/articles/category/45/engaging-parents-and-governors>
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-school-food-in-england
- www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/schools/schools-help

It is important that schools, as educators, work to support children growing up with healthy lifestyles. Current information and data, both nationally and locally, demonstrates that obesity rates are increasing which emphasises the importance of this work taking place in schools to counter this trend.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The guidance was drafted by the Healthy Schools Leader and Head Teacher, in consultation with staff and governors, following communication with parents/carers and our community about our approach to promoting healthy eating at our school.

The guidance aims to:

- To promote consistency between packed lunches and food provided by schools, which must adhere to national school food standards (www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/schools/the-standards)
- To make a positive contribution to children's health
- To encourage a happier and healthier population of children and young people

We encourage **all** children to eat school lunches as these meet the nutritional guidelines from the Standards for School Food. As school meals are universally free to all infant children (from Reception – Y2), children in these year groups are not permitted to bring a packed lunch (this policy is currently rolled out to YR & Y1 with it due to be extended to Y2 in September 23). Therefore, we request the support of parents/carers in ensuring all infant pupils eat school meals rather than packed lunch.

However, if parents/carers of infant pupils have concerns about dietary needs, food intolerances or general likes/dislikes, we encourage them to discuss this with the class teacher and/or a senior leader. If junior children have a packed lunch this must be provided in line with our packed lunch guidance.

Packed lunches prepared by the school caterers adhere to the National School Food Standards. The school encourages parents/carers to provide children with packed lunches that are in compliance with these standards. This is achieved by promoting healthy packed lunch options using the principles of the "eat-well" plate.



Information can be obtained at www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide

PROVISION FOR PACKED LUNCHES

- The school will provide appropriate and attractive facilities for pupils eating packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- The school will work with parents/carers to encourage packed lunches to meet the standards listed below.
- As fridge space is not available, pupils are advised not to bring items in their packed lunch which require refrigeration.
- Wherever possible the school will enable pupils eating packed lunches and pupils eating school lunches to sit together.

Packed lunches should, ideally, regularly include:

- At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day.
- 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 or fromage frais every day.
- Only one snack item (recommended maximum of 100 calories as suggested by www.nhs.uk/change4life/food-facts/healthier-snacks-for-kids/100-calorie-snacks#GQeHJcrKimyt3ocz.97)

Packed lunches can occasionally include:

- Meat products, such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages.
- Crisps are not encouraged regularly but, if provided as the regular snack item, choose baked crisps or small packets.
- Low sugar squash drinks or fruit juices

Packed lunches should not include:

- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, high sugar cereal bars, processed fruit bars and sweets.
- Energy drinks & fizzy drinks (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). The school will provide cups and water at lunchtimes.
- Packed lunches must not contain nuts or nut-based products to ensure the safety of all students.

SPECIAL DIETS & ALLERGIES:

The school should be made aware of any food allergies or intolerances as it has procedures in place to manage these in school (even if your child has a packed lunch). Any food allergies and other special dietary requirements can be accommodated within school.

MONITORING:

Packed lunches may be reviewed by staff at Yew Tree Primary School. As part of this, they may have conversations with children about healthy eating habits and may promote good food choices. Where packed lunches brought into school aren't in line with the packed lunch policy advice will be given and we may contact parents/carers to discuss.

If a child regularly brings a packed lunch which is wholly inappropriate, i.e. nothing but crisps and chocolate, then items may be confiscated and replaced with a healthier alternative. Parents/carers would be contacted for a discussion.