



Packed Lunch Policy

Policy Title:	Packed Lunch Policy
Last Review:	August 2026
Next Review:	August 2027
Responsibility:	Bursar, Headmaster
Other relevant policies:	Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy Food Allergy Policy Health and Safety Policy Off Site Activities and Educational Visits Policy

Introduction

The majority of our parents choose to have a hot school meal for their children. We believe it is easier to provide all nutrients children need in a hot, freshly cooked meal which is provided by our inhouse catering team. Sample menus can be viewed on the school website.

However, the school also recognises that some parents prefer to provide a packed lunch for their child. We ask that parents who choose the packed lunch option for their children must complete a 'lunch opt out form' and adhere to providing their child with a healthy, well-balanced lunch.

Aims

The West House School Packed Lunch Policy aims to ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide pupils with healthy and nutritious food that is similar in quality to food served in schools and meet national standards. The school wishes to promote consistency between packed lunches and food provided by the school, to make a positive contribution to children's health. This policy was devised using a range of sources including from the Children's Food Trust.

School setting

The school will take into account particular special educational and health needs, cultural and religious beliefs which may impact on diet when applying this policy.

Application

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

Food and drink in 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 to encourage packed lunches to meet the standards listed below.
- As fridge space is not available, pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible. Soups and other hot foods should be brought in a thermos flask. Carrier bags are not appropriate containers.
- Packed lunches should be placed in the upper dining room upon arrival. Lunch boxes/bags should be taken home at the end of each day.
- For logistical reasons, pupils bringing packed lunches will eat in the upper dining room

Packed lunches should include:

- At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day. Across the week, try to provide a variety of different fruits and vegetables.
- Meat, fish, eggs, or a non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, soya, chickpeas, hummus, falafel) every day.
- Oily fish such as salmon or sardines, 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. Across the week, try to provide three different types of starchy foods including at least one wholegrain/wholewheat variety.
- A dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais (lower sugar) or custard every day.
- Pretzels, crackers and cheese, vegetables or breadsticks with a dip.
- A sugar-free/low sugar/fruit-based dessert option such as malt loaf, banana loaf.
- A drink of water or squash ('sugar free' or 'no added sugar') – no other drinks are permitted.

Packed lunches can occasionally include:

- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages
- Cakes and biscuits, but encourage your child to eat these as part of a meal

Packed lunches must not include:

- Salty snacks such as crisps.
- Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits, cereal bars, processed fruit bars and sweets.
- Fruit juice, smoothies, sugary soft drinks and fizzy drinks, cans.
- Nut or nut products because of the danger to other children with allergies – **we are a nut free school.**

Occasionally (Once a week)

Packed lunches can include a special treat once a week on Friday

- Snack sausages
- Cereal bars, flapjacks, oat-based biscuits
- Biscuits, with no added chocolate and no more than one portion
- A small piece of cake
- A pure fruit smoothie

They must still not include crisps, chocolate bars, chocolate covered biscuits or nuts.

Managing packed lunches

Packed lunches can be difficult to manage and it can be difficult for parents to think of ideas for their contents. You can visit the [Change4Life](#) website or use the [NHS Food scanner app](#) to choose healthier options when shopping.

Special diets and allergies

The school is aware of food allergies and has a procedure in place to manage food allergies and other special dietary requirements within school in its Food Allergy Policy.

Some children may have verified medical conditions requiring special diets that do not meet standard guidelines. In this case, parents are urged to be responsible for ensuring that packed lunches are as health as possible. For these reasons, pupils are also not permitted to swap food items.

Assessment, evaluation and review

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by teaching staff and teaching assistants. Where packed lunches that aren't in line with the packed lunch policy are regularly brought into school, parents will be contacted by the school Matron to discuss this.

Involvement of parents/carers

We encourage all children to eat school lunches. However, parents of pupils wishing to have packed lunches for a particular reason are expected to provide their children with packed lunches which are in line with our packed lunch policy. In turn, the school will keep the parents informed on a regular basis.

Sharing the Policy

The school will ensure that all parents/carers are aware of the policy by sharing information via email, Engage, and the school website.

The school will use opportunities such as parents' evenings and other events to promote this policy as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating.

The policy will be shared with all staff, including teaching and catering staff and matron.