

Alexandra Primary School



Packed Lunch Policy

September 2026-2027

Approved by: Caroline Schloss

Date: 09 July 26

Last reviewed on: n/a

Next review due by:

July 2027

Version update history: Version 1

Contents

1. Document Control and Approval.....	4
1.1 Approval and Review Dates.....	4
1.2 Policy Status and Distribution.....	4
2. Policy Statement and Rationale	4
2.1 Purpose of the Policy	4
2.2 Legislative and Statutory Context	4
2.3 Scope of the Policy	4
3. Policy Development and Stakeholder Engagement	5
3.1 Consultation Process.....	5
3.2 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Considerations.....	5
4. Packed Lunch Standards and Requirements.....	5
4.1 Permitted Foods and Drinks	5
4.2 Prohibited Items	6
4.3 Special Dietary Needs and Allergies.....	7
4.4 Food Safety and Storage	7
5. Promoting Healthy Packed Lunches	7
5.1 Education and Communication with Parents and Pupils	7
5.2 Pupil Involvement and Ownership.....	8
5.3 Staff Roles and Responsibilities	8
6. Implementation, Monitoring, and Compliance.....	8
6.1 Implementation Plan.....	8
6.2 Monitoring Procedures	9
6.3 Addressing Non-Compliance	9
6.4 Reporting and Record-Keeping.....	9
7. Policy Review and Continuous Improvement	10
7.1 Review Cycle and Responsibility.....	10
7.2 Stakeholder Feedback and Policy Update	10
8. Roles and Responsibilities.....	10
8.1 Governing Body	10
8.2 Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team	10
8.3 Staff	10
8.4 Parents and Carers.....	10
8.5 Pupils.....	11
9. Communication and Accessibility.....	11
9.1 Policy Availability	11
9.2 Supporting Materials and Guidance	11

9.3 Translation and Accessibility	11
10. Appendices.....	12
10.1 Appendix A: Example Packed Lunch Menu	12
10.2 Appendix B: Guidance for Parents and Carers.....	12
10.3 Appendix C: Monitoring and Audit Template.....	13
10.4 Appendix D: Policy Consultation Summary	13
11. References.....	14

1. Document Control and Approval

1.1 Approval and Review Dates

This policy was approved by the Governing Body on July 9th, 2026. The next scheduled review will take place in July 2027, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or school practice.

1.2 Policy Status and Distribution

This is a non-statutory policy. It is intended for all staff, parents, carers, and pupils at Alexandra Primary. The policy is published on the school website, included in the parent handbook, and available from the school office upon request.

2. Policy Statement and Rationale

2.1 Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all pupils who bring packed lunches to Alexandra Primary are provided with food that supports their health, wellbeing, and ability to learn. The policy aims to promote healthy eating habits, reduce the risk of diet-related health issues, and align with national standards for school food. By setting clear expectations for packed lunches, the school seeks to create a supportive environment where healthy choices are the norm, and all pupils are empowered to thrive physically, emotionally, and academically.

2.2 Legislative and Statutory Context

This policy is underpinned by the School Food Standards (The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014), which, while statutory for school-provided meals, are recommended as a benchmark for packed lunches. The Children and Families Act 2014 requires schools to promote healthy eating, while Section 21 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on schools to promote the health and wellbeing of pupils. The policy also reflects the requirements of the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF), which expects schools to demonstrate active promotion of healthy lifestyles, and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), particularly in relation to safeguarding pupils with allergies or health risks. The policy is aligned with the latest DfE statutory guidance on Healthy Eating in Schools (2014) and incorporates current best practice as outlined by Public Health England, the British Nutrition Foundation, and the Food for Life programme.

2.3 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all pupils at Alexandra Primary who bring packed lunches to school, including during the school day, on educational visits, school trips, and any off-site activities where pupils are required to provide their own lunch. It applies to all staff responsible for supervising pupils at lunchtime, as well as parents and carers who provide packed lunches. The policy also informs the expectations for external providers, volunteers, and visitors where relevant.

3. Policy Development and Stakeholder Engagement

3.1 Consultation Process

The development of this policy was informed by meaningful consultation with the school community. Parents, carers, pupils, and staff were invited to contribute their views through surveys, focus groups, and open meetings. Feedback was sought on the types of foods typically included in packed lunches, perceived barriers to healthy eating, and suggestions for supporting positive change. The consultation process was designed to be inclusive and accessible, with opportunities for all stakeholders to participate, including those for whom English is an additional language. The outcomes of this engagement directly shaped the policy's content, ensuring it reflects the needs, values, and aspirations of the school community.

3.2 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Considerations

Alexandra Primary is committed to ensuring that the packed lunch policy is fair, inclusive, and sensitive to the diverse needs of all pupils. The policy recognises that pupils may have specific dietary requirements related to medical conditions, allergies, religious beliefs, or cultural practices. Reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate these needs, and parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns with the school. The policy avoids assumptions about family circumstances and provides practical support for families who may face barriers to providing healthy packed lunches. All communications and guidance are available in accessible formats, and translation is provided where necessary to ensure all families can engage fully with the policy.

4. Packed Lunch Standards and Requirements

4.1 Permitted Foods and Drinks

To support healthy eating and align with statutory guidance, only the following items are permitted in packed lunches at Alexandra Primary:

- A sandwich, pitta pocket, wrap, or similar with a healthy filling (e.g., lean meat, fish, egg, cheese, hummus, or vegetables)
- A yogurt (plain or low-sugar varieties preferred)
- A cereal bar or fruit bar (must not contain chocolate or confectionery)
- A piece of fresh fruit or a fruit salad
- Raw vegetable sticks (e.g., carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes, celery, cucumber) or a small salad
- Rice or pasta salads with healthy ingredients
- Soup in a flask (vegetable, lentil, chicken, or similar)
- Dips (e.g., hummus, tzatziki) with breadsticks or vegetable sticks
- Cheese and crackers (plain, low-salt crackers)
- Water (still, unflavoured)

● **Crisps ONLY ALLOWED ON FRIDAYS**

These permitted items are based on the School Food Standards and recommendations from the British Nutrition Foundation and Public Health England. The aim is to provide a balanced meal with a variety of food groups, supporting pupils' energy, concentration, and overall health.



4.2 Prohibited Items

The following items are **not permitted** in packed lunches at Alexandra Primary:

- Any food or drink not listed in section 4.1
- Foods high in sugar, salt, or fat (e.g., crisps, salted snacks, pastries, sausage rolls, pies)
- Chocolate, chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits, or any confectionery
- Sweets, chewing gum, or sugary snacks
- Cakes, muffins, or sweet pastries
- Sugary drinks, including fizzy drinks, squash, flavoured water, energy drinks, or milkshakes
- Processed meats high in salt or fat (e.g., salami, pepperoni)
- Nut products (the school is nut-free due to allergies)
- Any food or drink containing caffeine or artificial sweeteners

These restrictions are in place to protect pupils' health, reduce the risk of allergies and adverse reactions, and ensure consistency with the School Food Standards. Parents are asked to check ingredient lists carefully and to avoid all prohibited items.

4.3 Special Dietary Needs and Allergies

Alexandra Primary is committed to safeguarding the health and wellbeing of all pupils, including those with allergies, intolerances, or special dietary requirements. Parents and carers must inform the school of any medical or dietary needs, including allergies to specific foods (e.g., nuts, dairy, gluten). The school maintains up-to-date records of all pupils with dietary needs and communicates relevant information to staff responsible for lunchtime supervision.

Where a pupil's dietary needs require adjustments to the permitted items, parents should discuss these with Maria Lopez to agree an appropriate alternative. The school will work with families, healthcare professionals, and catering staff to ensure safe and suitable arrangements are in place. All packed lunches must be clearly labelled with the pupil's name, and allergen information should be provided where necessary.

The school follows the statutory requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) in relation to safeguarding pupils with allergies and will take all reasonable steps to prevent cross-contamination and accidental exposure.

4.4 Food Safety and Storage

To ensure food safety and minimise the risk of foodborne illness, parents and carers are asked to:

- Provide packed lunches in a suitable, clean, and reusable lunchbox or bag
- Include a cool pack or frozen drink to keep food fresh, especially in warm weather
- Avoid perishable foods that may spoil if not kept chilled
- Clearly label all lunchboxes with the pupil's name and class
- Ensure all containers are easy for pupils to open independently
- Avoid glass bottles or containers to prevent breakage

Staff will remind pupils not to share food or drinks with others, to reduce the risk of allergic reactions and cross-contamination. Any food that is not eaten will be returned home in the lunchbox, so parents can monitor what has been consumed.

5. Promoting Healthy Packed Lunches

5.1 Education and Communication with Parents and Pupils

Alexandra Primary recognises that supporting healthy packed lunches is a shared responsibility between school and home. The school provides clear, positive guidance to parents and carers through:

- Regular information sessions and workshops on healthy eating and lunchbox ideas
- Written guidance, including sample menus and practical tips, sent home and available on the school website
- Digital resources, such as videos, recipes, and links to trusted organisations (e.g., British Nutrition Foundation, Food for Life)

- Newsletters and reminders highlighting the importance of balanced lunches and celebrating healthy choices

Pupils are taught about healthy eating as part of the curriculum, including through science, PSHE, Belly Bugs scheme and food technology lessons. The school uses assemblies, displays, and themed events to reinforce key messages and encourage pupils to make positive choices.

5.2 Pupil Involvement and Ownership

Pupil voice is central to the success of this policy. Pupils are involved in:

- Reviewing and updating the packed lunch policy through the school council or pupil forums
- Peer education, where older pupils support younger children in making healthy choices
- Participating in healthy eating challenges, competitions, and themed days
- Providing feedback on school food and packed lunch provision

By engaging pupils in the process, the school fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, helping to embed healthy habits for life.

5.3 Staff Roles and Responsibilities

All staff play an active role in promoting healthy packed lunches. Lunchtime supervisors, teachers, and support staff are responsible for:

- Modelling healthy eating behaviours and attitudes
- Encouraging and praising pupils who bring balanced, healthy lunches
- Monitoring packed lunches discreetly and sensitively, in line with the policy
- Providing support and guidance to pupils who may be struggling to eat healthily
- Communicating any concerns or issues to Maria Lopez or the pastoral team

Staff receive regular training on healthy eating, food safety, and allergy awareness to ensure they are confident in supporting pupils and implementing the policy.

6. Implementation, Monitoring, and Compliance

6.1 Implementation Plan

The packed lunch policy will be introduced to the school community through a comprehensive communication plan, including:

- Launch assemblies for pupils, explaining the reasons for the policy and what it means in practice
- Information sessions for parents and carers, with opportunities for questions and discussion
- Distribution of written guidance and sample menus
- Training for staff on monitoring and supporting healthy packed lunches
- Regular reminders and updates through newsletters, the school website, and parent meetings

The policy will be embedded in the school's culture and routines, with clear expectations set from the outset. New families will receive information about the policy as part of the admissions process.

6.2 Monitoring Procedures

Packed lunches will be monitored regularly to ensure compliance with the policy and to support pupils and families in making healthy choices. Monitoring will include:

- Discreet spot checks by lunchtime supervisors or designated staff
- Periodic audits of packed lunch contents, with anonymised data used to identify trends and areas for improvement
- Feedback from staff, pupils, and parents on the effectiveness of the policy
- Recording any incidents of non-compliance, concerns about pupil wellbeing, or requests for support

Monitoring will be carried out in a supportive and non-judgemental manner, with the aim of encouraging positive change rather than punishing non-compliance.

6.3 Addressing Non-Compliance

Where a packed lunch does not meet the requirements of the policy, the following steps will be taken:

1. The pupil will be reminded of the policy and encouraged to make healthier choices in future.
2. A polite, informative note will be sent home to parents or carers, explaining the issue and offering support or guidance.
3. If non-compliance persists, a meeting will be arranged with Maria Lopez to discuss barriers and agree a plan of action.
4. The school will offer practical support, such as sample menus, workshops, or referrals to external agencies if appropriate.
5. In cases where a pupil's health or wellbeing is at risk (e.g., due to allergies or consistently inadequate nutrition), the school will work closely with parents and relevant professionals to ensure the pupil's needs are met.

The school's approach is based on partnership, understanding, and support, rather than blame or sanction.

6.4 Reporting and Record-Keeping

All monitoring, incidents of non-compliance, and stakeholder feedback will be documented using the templates provided in Appendix C. Records will be maintained securely and used to inform policy review, staff training, and reporting to the Governing Body and Ofsted as required. Any safeguarding concerns will be recorded and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection policies.

7. Policy Review and Continuous Improvement

7.1 Review Cycle and Responsibility

This policy will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if required by changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or school practice. The review will be led by Maria Lopez, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body. The review process will include analysis of monitoring data, feedback from stakeholders, and consideration of emerging best practice.

7.2 Stakeholder Feedback and Policy Update

Feedback from parents, carers, pupils, and staff is actively sought and valued. The school will use surveys, meetings, and informal conversations to gather views on the effectiveness of the policy and suggestions for improvement. Any significant changes to the policy will be communicated clearly to all stakeholders, and opportunities for further consultation will be provided. The school will remain alert to updates in statutory guidance, health trends, and local authority advice, ensuring the policy remains current and effective.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for approving the packed lunch policy, monitoring its implementation, and ensuring it meets statutory requirements. Governors will review monitoring data, receive reports from the Headteacher, and participate in policy review and consultation processes.

8.2 Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for leading the implementation of the policy, ensuring all staff are aware of their roles, and allocating resources as necessary. They will oversee monitoring, address any issues of non-compliance, and report to the Governing Body on progress and impact.

8.3 Staff

All staff are expected to support and model the principles of the packed lunch policy. This includes promoting healthy eating, monitoring packed lunches, providing guidance to pupils and parents, and reporting any concerns to the designated lead. Staff should participate in relevant training and contribute to policy review and development.

8.4 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for providing packed lunches that meet the requirements of the policy. They are encouraged to seek support or advice from the school if needed and to communicate any special dietary needs or concerns. The school values partnership with parents and welcomes feedback on the policy and its implementation.

8.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to follow the packed lunch policy, make healthy choices, and respect the needs of others. They are encouraged to participate in policy review, share their views, and act as ambassadors for healthy eating within the school community.

9. Communication and Accessibility

9.1 Policy Availability

The packed lunch policy is available to all members of the school community. It is published on the school website, included in the parent handbook, and available in hard copy from the school office. The policy is highlighted to new families during the admissions process and to all parents at the start of each academic year.

9.2 Supporting Materials and Guidance

To support understanding and implementation of the policy, the school provides:

- Sample packed lunch menus (see Appendix A)
- Healthy lunchbox guides and practical tips (see Appendix B)
- Links to trusted resources, such as the British Nutrition Foundation and Food for Life
- Workshops and information sessions for parents and carers
- Visual displays and reminders in the school dining area

These materials are designed to be practical, accessible, and culturally sensitive, recognising the diversity of the school community.

9.3 Translation and Accessibility

Alexandra Primary is committed to ensuring all families can access and understand the packed lunch policy. Translations are available on request, and the policy can be provided in alternative formats (e.g., large print, audio) as needed. Staff are available to discuss the policy with parents and carers who may have questions or require additional support.

10. Appendices

10.1 Appendix A: Example Packed Lunch Menu

Sample Menu 1:

- Wholemeal sandwich with chicken and salad
- Low-fat yogurt
- Cereal bar (no chocolate)
- Apple slices
- Carrot sticks
- Water

Sample Menu 2:

- Pitta pocket with hummus and grated carrot
- Cheese and crackers
- Fruit salad
- Cherry tomatoes
- Water

Sample Menu 3:

- Rice salad with mixed vegetables and tuna
- Plain yogurt with berries
- Breadsticks with tzatziki dip
- Satsuma
- Water

10.2 Appendix B: Guidance for Parents and Carers

Practical Tips:

- Use wholegrain bread, wraps, or crackers for added fibre.
- Include at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables each day.
- Choose lean proteins (e.g., chicken, turkey, fish, eggs, beans).
- Limit processed foods and avoid items high in sugar, salt, or fat.
- Use reusable containers to reduce waste and keep food fresh.
- Involve your child in planning and preparing their lunch to encourage healthy choices.

Frequently Asked Questions:

- *Can I include a treat in my child's lunch?*
The policy does not permit chocolate, sweets, or cakes. Healthier treats, such as fruit or a plain cereal bar, are encouraged.

- *What if my child has a food allergy?*
Please inform the school of any allergies. We will work with you to agree suitable alternatives.
- *Where can I find more ideas?*
Visit the school website or ask for a copy of our healthy lunchbox guide.

Useful Links:

- [British Nutrition Foundation – Healthy Lunchboxes](#)
- [Food for Life – Packed Lunch Guidance](#)

10.3 Appendix C: Monitoring and Audit Template

Packed Lunch Monitoring Record

Date	Number of Lunches Checked	Number Meeting Policy	Number Not Meeting Policy	Common Issues	Follow-up Action	Staff Initials
[dd/mm/yy]						

Comments:

- [Space for notes on trends, concerns, or positive examples]

10.4 Appendix D: Policy Consultation Summary

Stakeholder Engagement Summary:

- Consultation conducted via parent survey (response rate: [x]%), pupil focus groups, and staff meetings.
- Key themes: desire for clear guidance, support for healthy eating, need for flexibility for allergies/cultural needs.
- Policy updated to include sample menus, practical tips, and clear procedures for special dietary needs.
- Ongoing feedback mechanisms established via school council and parent forum.

11. References

- School Food Standards (The Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014)
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2002 (Section 21)
- DfE Statutory Guidance on Healthy Eating in Schools (2014)
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF, current version)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Public Health England Guidance on Healthy Eating
- British Nutrition Foundation: Healthy Lunchbox Guidance
- Food for Life (Soil Association): Packed Lunch Policy Templates
- School Food Plan
- Healthy Schools Programme
- [Local Authority Name] Public Health and School Food Guidance