



Belmont Academy Packed Lunch Policy

Introduction

At Belmont, we are committed to teaching your child 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. Government strategy outlines an expectation on all schools:

To promote a culture of healthy eating the government now expects all schools to adopt whole school food policies. In particular, schools will be expected to develop healthy packed lunch policies so that those not yet taking up school lunches are also eating healthier.

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.

This policy applies to all pupils and parents providing packed lunches and other foods to be consumed within school or on school trips. This packed lunch policy fits within a wider context of promoting a whole school approach to food and healthy eating.

Aims

This policy has been drawn up with the following aims:

- To ensure the contents of lunchboxes reflect the requirements of schools to meet minimum food and nutrition standards for school meals;
- To make a positive contribution to children's health by encouraging healthy eating habits in childhood that can influence health and wellbeing in later life;
- To take a proactive approach to promoting healthy eating;
- To give clear guidance to parents/carers, pupils, governors and staff on providing a healthy packed lunch;
- To support parents by providing ideas for healthy packed lunches;
- To equip pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to make informed healthy lifestyle choices based on their nutritional understanding;
- To ensure that all children have a healthy and nutritious midday meal that sustains and prepares them for their afternoon learning.

Food contained in a packed lunch

Parents/carers of pupils who do not have school meals are expected to provide their children with packed lunches that are consistent with the nutritional standards based on the Eat Well plate model and the School Food Trust guidelines.

The recommended contents of a healthy lunch box are:

- Fruit and Vegetables; at least two portions of fruit or vegetables every day (a portion is the amount your child can fit into the palm of their hand). This could be fresh, dried or tinned fruit
- Carbohydrate; a starchy food every day such as bread, pasta, couscous, noodles, potatoes, chapatis/roti, plain crackers, breadsticks, rice cakes (cold items)
- Protein; meat, egg or other source of non-dairy protein such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus, dhal, falafel
- Oily fish; tinned or fresh mackerel, sardines, salmon or tuna should be included at least once every three weeks
- Dairy; every day such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage-frais, custard or calcium fortified soya products - reduced fat if possible.
- Drinks; (with no added sugar) such as pure fruit juice, semi-skimmed/skimmed milk, milk-based or yoghurt-based drinks, fruit smoothies.
- A bottle of water; It is recognised that the concentration and behaviour of children improve when children drink water throughout the day. Dehydration can give children headaches and make them tired. Therefore, we encourage children to bring in water bottles daily. This is in addition to their packed lunch drink.
- Dessert/pudding; such as a small cake, biscuit, cereal bar, fruit loaf/bun OR scotch pancake as part of a balanced meal.

Please look carefully at packaging as many items that may look healthy can have high levels of sugar and fat. Look for those with 100 calories or less per portion and only include one-a-day for lunch.

Packed Lunches should not include:

- Sweets/confectionery/chewing gum
- Fizzy or sugary drinks
- Energy drinks
- No more than two portions of food each week that includes pastry
- Items containing nuts are not allowed in school. Although these are healthy, some children are allergic to nuts and they can cause a severe reaction even when in other pupils' lunches.

For a healthier snack:

- Replace cakes and pastries with fruit bread or teacake
- Replace salted savoury snacks, such as crisps, with breadsticks, rice cakes, cheese and crackers or popcorn (not sweet or toffee)
- Include dried fruit or fruit salad
- Drink water, milk, 100% fruit juice, sparkling water, fruit smoothie, or yoghurt 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 follow the National Food Standards exactly. In this case parents/carers are asked to inform the school and make their child's lunchbox as healthy as possible. For this reason, pupils are not permitted to swap food items. **Please do not send your children with nuts or food containing nuts as we have a number of children with nut allergies.**

Provision for Packed Lunches

- School will provide dining room facilities where pupils can eat their lunches.
- School will ensure that fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.

Packed Lunch Containers

We ask that parents/carers and pupils:

- provide a packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period;
- bring packed lunches in reusable plastic containers, rather than disposing of plastic bags and bottles.

Children are not permitted to bring in hot food contained in flasks or other containers as these can cause a health and safety risk to other children. Parents require a hot meal for their child should select the school meal option.

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. If a child fails to eat their lunch this will be raised with the parent by the class teacher and in some circumstances this may also warrant a call home by office staff.

Curriculum

Whilst we fully respect individual food choices and understand that there are many different needs and tastes, we want to work with parents to educate children about healthy diet choices so that our children, through understanding a balanced diet, will develop a greater appreciation of a healthy lifestyle. The formal curriculum develops pupils' knowledge of healthy eating predominantly through PSHE, Science and Design Technology lessons.