



Packed Lunch Policy

(for primary academies)



Policy	Packed Lunch Policy
Date of review	September 2025
Date of next review	September 2028
Lead professional	Director of Estates and Facilities/ Catering Manager
Status	Non-Statutory

Rationale

Trinity Multi-Academy Trust (Trinity MAT) and its academies believe that a healthy packed lunch contributes to the health of children and young people and we are committed to the fact that healthier children learn more effectively, behave better and have a higher quality of life. This policy aims to give clear guidance to parents/carers, pupils, Governors and staff on providing a healthy packed lunch, and the aims of each academy to establish an environment that promotes the health and wellbeing of everyone by ensuring that all food provision and food messages are healthy and consistent.

Academy meals are prepared off-site in a professional kitchen run by Trinity MAT, and fully conform to government nutritional guidelines producing lunches with less sugar, fat and salt and more fresh fruit and vegetables. In addition, academy lunches provide a good balance of complex carbohydrates such as pasta, rice, bread or potatoes with dairy and other protein foods. We firmly believe that a packed lunch should provide the same nutrition as a cooked meal and this guidance offers assistance to ensure that food brought into the academy as a packed lunch, which is either made at home or brought in externally, fulfils these requirements.

Guidance

For general guidance regarding the preparation of healthy packed lunches, parents/carers may wish to consult the following sources:

- British Nutrition Foundation - healthy packed lunches (<https://www.nutrition.org.uk>)

- NHS - Change4Life - lunchbox ideas and the Eatwell Guide (<https://www.nhs.uk>)

It is expected that most children have a sandwich as the main part of their packed lunch however alternatives are now widely available or, as is preferable, easily made at home.

Common and healthy sandwich fillings include:

- Tuna
- Marmite/Vegemite & cheese
- Egg salad
- Ham, cheese & tomato
- Cucumber, cheese & carrot
- Cucumber & avocado
- Corned beef & mustard
- Cheese & pickled onion

Other alternative mains in a packed lunch might include:

- Pasta salad including tuna & sweetcorn, red pepper
- Vegetable or chicken cous-cous
- Pitta Bread and hummus
- Vegetable wraps

In addition to the main part of their meal a packed lunch should include:

- One portion of fruit every day (or a fruit salad)
- One portion of vegetables every day
- Meat, fish, egg or a source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, beans, soya or hummus) every day (usually as part of a sandwich, wrap or salad)
- Oily fish, such as salmon or tuna
- A starchy food such as brown/wholemeal bread, pasta, rice, noodles, couscous or potatoes (used as a salad) every day
- Dairy food such as cheese, low fat yoghurt or fromage frais

Healthy desserts should be fruit based such as fruit salad, tinned fruit with yoghurt or custard, fruity rice pudding, fruit smoothies, fruit-based crumble.

Children will be allowed ONE of the following food items and only as part of a balanced meal (i.e. included with the guidance above):

- A bun
- A piece of cake (homemade or shop bought)

Packed lunches MUST NOT include:

- Meat and pastry products such as sausage rolls, pies or pasties
- Nuts or nut products (although they can be healthy) because of the danger to other children with allergies
- Extra salt to add to food after it has been cooked
- Sweets or fizzy drinks

Packed Lunch Containers

We ask that parents/carers:

- Provide a packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime period. We recommend parents/carers to include an ice pack with packed lunches, to reduce the risk of harmful bacteria growing if left in warm temperatures.
- Bring packed lunches in reusable plastic containers, rather than disposing of plastic bags and bottles.

Staff

To support a whole school approach, staff are encouraged to comply with this policy when bringing in packed lunches and eating these with pupils.

Special diets and allergies

We ask that parents/carers be aware of nut allergies. Our academies recognise that some pupils may require special diets that do not follow the National Food Standards exactly. In this case parents/carers are asked to make sure that the relevant academy is made aware of this and that in these circumstances packed lunches are as healthy as possible. For these reasons pupils are also not permitted to swap food items. As some children and staff in school have nut allergies we ask parents not to including peanuts or peanut butter in lunches.

Parents/carers are strongly advised to check that any pre-packed products/sandwiches purchased as a direct sale to be used in packed lunches have the required allergen labelling with ingredient and allergen information and that they properly check that information.

Parents/carers must NOT use products/sandwiches in a packed lunch for a child that has an allergy to any of the ingredients in any of the products/sandwiches.

Other Considerations

- Year 6 children are provided with a room if they wish to fast and pray during Ramadan, after consultation with the Senior Management Team
- During SATs week, all Year 6 pupils are offered a free healthy breakfast
- The trust encourages the use of Fairtrade products when making up packed lunches
- The trust encourages the use seasonal, local and British sourced food

Drinking Water

Drinking water is available to all children throughout the day. Pupils are provided with an individual water bottle from which to drink. These are cleaned and filled on a daily basis.

To promote healthy eating we will monitor the content of packed lunches and involve pupils and staff. Unhealthy food, or food not following the guidelines above, will be removed by staff, returned to the child/parent at the end of the day and an alternative, such as a piece of fruit, will be provided.