



Packed Lunch Policy

2026 – 2027

Date written:	September 2026
Date agreed by Governors:	September 2026
Date to review:	September 2027

'The Love of Christ Shines Here'

Our School is Christ-centred where Gospel values permeate our daily lives.

We extend our hand of friendship to the wider community in the spirit of love, peace and justice.

We create opportunities to celebrate the uniqueness of every child and nurture them through a stimulating and enriching curriculum.

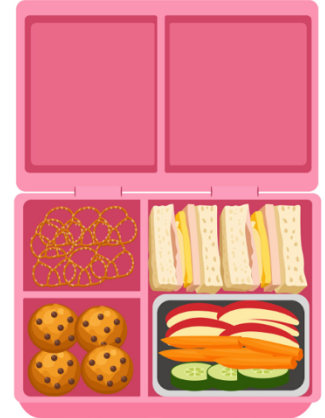


1. Introduction

At Our Lady and St. Philomena's Catholic Primary School, we believe good health is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. As a Rights Respecting School, we acknowledge under Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child the importance of working together with parents and carers to provide children with nutritious food so that they stay healthy. Together, we share a duty of care to ensure children realise these rights.

Article 24: *Children have the right to good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment.*

We are actively addressing concerns around rising childhood obesity, poor dietary health, and the impact of ultra-processed foods on pupils' behaviour and concentration. This policy sets out clear expectations for foods brought into school from home.



2. Aims and Objectives

- To equip pupils and families with practical ways to establish lifelong healthy eating habits.
- To ensure all packed lunches brought from home are healthy, safe, tasty, and nutritious.
- To maintain strict statutory compliance regarding allergen awareness, food safety, and pupil wellbeing.
- To foster an inclusive dining environment where all pupils can eat together safely.

3. Nutritional Standards for Packed Lunches

The school aligns its guidelines with national School Food Standards. A balanced packed lunch should include:

- **Fruit and Vegetables:** At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad every day.
- **Protein:** Meat, fish, eggs, or non-dairy protein sources (such as lentils, chickpeas, hummus, or falafel) every day. Oily fish (e.g. salmon or tuna) is recommended at least once every three weeks.
- **Starchy Foods:** Bread, wraps, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, or potatoes every day. Wholemeal options are strongly encouraged.
- **Dairy or Alternatives:** Cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais, milk, or calcium-fortified plant alternatives every day.
- **Drinks:** Still water, lower-fat milk, or unsweetened fruit juice/smoothies (max 150ml). Free, fresh drinking water is always available in school.



Restricted and Prohibited Items

- **Meat Products:** Items such as sausage rolls, pies, corned meat, and chipolatas should be included only occasionally.
- **Snacks and Confectionery:** Crisps, chocolate bars, sweets, and high-sugar confectionery are not permitted from Monday to Thursday. Instead, dried fruit, seeds, vegetable sticks, or savoury crackers are encouraged.
- **Treat Friday:** On Fridays only, pupils may include one small snack item (such as crisps or a small cake/biscuit) as part of a balanced meal, matching the school's hot dinner treat menu.
- **Fizzy/Energy Drinks:** Canned or bottled fizzy drinks, energy drinks, and drinks in glass containers are strictly prohibited at all times for safety and health reasons.

4. Allergy Safeguards and Benedict's Law Compliance

In accordance with statutory duties under Benedict's Law and our school duty of care, the school enforces rigorous allergen controls to protect vulnerable pupils:

- **Nut-Free Zone:** Our school operates a strict **nut-free policy**. Packed lunches must not contain peanuts, tree nuts, peanut butter, Nutella/hazelnut spreads, or any products explicitly stating "contains nuts".
- **No Food Sharing:** Pupils are strictly instructed and supervised not to trade, share, or sample food items from other children's lunchboxes.
- **Cross-Contamination Controls:** Dining tables are cleaned and disinfected between lunch sittings. Staff monitoring the hall are trained to recognise severe allergic reactions and anaphylaxis symptoms.
- **Alignment with Allergy Policy:** This document operates in direct conjunction with the standalone **Whole-School Allergy and Anaphylaxis Safety Policy**, which details individual healthcare plans (IHCPs) and emergency medication protocols.

5. Special Dietary, Cultural, and Religious Needs

We recognise that pupils may require dietary adaptations due to verified medical conditions, allergies, or religious and ethical choices (such as Halal, Kosher, Vegetarian, or Vegan diets).

Parents and carers are asked to inform the school office of any specific dietary requirements. Staff will work collaboratively with families to ensure packed lunches meet these needs while adhering to safety and nutritional principles.

6. Dining Facilities and Social Inclusion

Packed lunch children and hot dinner children sit together in the dining hall so that mealtimes remain a social, inclusive experience. Weather permitting, outdoor dining space ("Al fresco") is provided under staff supervision.



7. Storage, Containers, and Food Hygiene

- **Containers:** Parents must provide a clearly labelled packed lunch box or bag. To maintain food safety and prevent bacterial growth, parents are strongly advised to include an insulated ice pack.
- **Glass Containers:** Glass bottles and glassware are strictly prohibited for safety reasons.
- **Storage Facilities:** The school provides designated storage areas within or near classrooms. While the school maintains a safe environment, parents remain responsible for the safe preparation and thermal packing of items prepared at home.

8. Waste Management and Parental Feedback

To help parents monitor their child's daily intake:

- All uneaten food items, wrappers, and packaging will be sent home in the pupil's lunchbox where practical.
- This visual feedback allows parents to track what was consumed and raise any appetite or dietary concerns with school staff.

9. Monitoring, Support, and Non-Compliance

The school monitors packed lunch contents to ensure pupil health and safety:

Level	Issue Observed	Action Taken
Step 1	Minor non-compliance (e.g. crisps brought on a Tuesday)	Staff will gently remind the pupil. A polite guidance slip will be placed in the lunchbox for parents.
Step 2	Severe allergen risk (e.g. nut product brought to school)	The item will be immediately removed, safely stored, and returned to the parent at home time. An alternative healthy food item will be provided so the child does not go hungry.
Step 3	Repeated non-compliance	The class teacher or Headteacher will contact parents directly to discuss support strategies and resolve any challenges or sensitivities.