

Our visions and values:

- Protecting children's right to play learn and have a voice.
- Keeping parents involved in children's development
- Governors and staff leading the way on quality
- Working partnership with health professionals and schools
- Being ethical, respectful and tolerant

Packed lunch policy

Responsible governors	Business Committee
Last review date	19 th June 2025
Date of next review	Summer 2026 or as necessary to ensure that it remains in line with EYFS, Ofsted, and food hygiene requirements and guidance.
The policy is available for staff at:	School offices and shared drive
And for parents/carers at:	Emailed to all parents. School offices, website

Policy audit

version	Revision date	Revised/reviewed by	Section revised
V1	April 2025	Kevin Murphy, LBWF Language simplified by Alison Emmett	

1.0 Policy Statement

At Forest Alliance of Nursery Schools, we are committed to promoting healthy eating and ensuring food safety in accordance with these guidelines and aims:

- [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#)
- [Health and Safety regulations including food hygiene regulations and safe storage practices](#)
- We support the Government's Public Health Service ambition for children to have a healthy weight for height range and be well nourished.
- [Healthy Early Years London guidance](#)
- [The DFE's Help for Early Years](#)
- [The NHS Children's food: safety and hygiene](#)

We aim to support children's health, development, and well-being by encouraging these things:

- balanced, nutritious meals
- making our schools safe and inclusive for all dietary needs.

2.0 Aims

These are the reasons we have this policy:

- To tell parent/carers what we expect in packed lunches brought from home.
- To make sure packed lunches brought from home give children healthy, balanced, and nutritious food. This will meet their needs:
 - to be physically active

- to learn
- to grow well, and
- to be healthy.
- To comply with food hygiene and safety regulations.
- To meet EYFS requirements for nutrition, independence, and self-care.
- To protect children with allergies and dietary needs.
- To align with the packed lunch guidance from Healthy Early Years London.

3.0 Packed Lunch Guidelines

Drinks, such as water and milk, are available for your child during the day. If you are sending a drink, only these are OK:

- water
- milk, or
- an unsweetened calcium-enriched dairy alternative.

Your child has a small stomach. Make sure that portion sizes are the right size for them. Make sure that food provided is in manageable pieces. Pieces that are too big are a choking hazard for your child.

A healthier packed lunch contains one portion of each of the four main food groups:

One or two portions of starchy foods:

- Have variety across the week
- Send at least one wholegrain starchy food each week.
- Examples are: bread, wrap, chapatti, bagels, pasta, rice, noodles, couscous or potatoes.
- This is part of the main meal. It might be part of the dessert

At least one portion of vegetables and/or one portion of fruit:

- Include a variety of different vegetables and fruit each week.
- Examples are: carrot, cucumber, celery stick, chopped tomato and fresh, tinned, frozen, dried fruit such as sliced apple, chopped grapes, or raisins.
- Remember, dried fruit is not OK as a snack.
- Aim for your child to have 5 different vegetables and fruit across each day.

One portion of beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins:

- Provide a variety of different foods each week.
- Examples are: kidney beans, chickpeas (hummus), lentils (dahl), tofu, quorn, egg, sliced meat or poultry in sandwiches.

One portion of dairy or an unsweetened calcium enriched alternative:

- This includes cheese in a sandwich, milk to drink, unsweetened yoghurt or fromage frais, rice or semolina pudding.

Items for parents/carers to avoid:

- ✗ Sugary foods (chocolate and sweets, such as chocolate buttons, chocolate biscuit, cereal bar, processed dried fruit product).
- ✗ Crisps and processed snacks high in salt or fat. (snack items such as crisps, puffs, pulse or grain-based crisps, coated or flavoured dried vegetables).
- ✗ Sugary drinks (fizzy drinks, squash, energy drinks).
- ✗ Nuts or nut-based products (strictly prohibited due to allergies). Buy nut-free pesto: it often has cashew nuts in it.

4.0 Safe Storage & Handling of Packed Lunches

To make sure we follow food safety rules:

- Families must send all packed lunches in a lunchbox that:
 - has a clear name label.
 - is insulated.
- Please include an ice pack. This will help keep perishable food fresh.
- We can't put lunch boxes in the fridge. Send food that remains safe at room temperature. We keep packed lunch bags in a special storage area.
- We can't heat/ re-heat food. This is to keep good food hygiene. Children can bring hot food in a suitable thermos flask or container.
- Staff will check that lunches are up to food safety and healthy eating standards.
- We will send any unsafe or unsuitable food home. We will explain this to families.
- We only let children eat their OWN food.
- Children who bring in packed lunch eat together with their peers.

5.0 Waste and Disposal

When it's practical, staff will send leftover packed lunch food items back home. We do this for two reasons:

- for parents/carers to check what their child has consumed during the day
- so that parents/carers who have concerns about what their child is eating can talk to their child's key person about those concerns.

6.0 Parental Notification (Food Allergies)

- Parents/Carers must notify the school in writing of any food allergies, intolerances, or dietary requirements. We recognise that some children may require a special diet. In this case parents/carers should notify the school.
- **Packed lunches should be handed directly to a staff member at drop-off to ensure compliance with our policy.**
- Staff may inspect lunchboxes to check they follow food safety and allergy guidelines.

7.0 Allergy & Food Safety Policy Compliance

- We operate a strict NO-NUT policy— we shall remove any nut-based products and return them to parents/carers.
- Parents/Carers must prepare and store all food at home safely, following food hygiene guidelines.
- Parents/Carers must ensure food is fresh and appropriate for their child's dietary needs.
- If school has a concern about a child's diet or food safety, we shall discuss it with the child's parents/carers.

8.0 Non-Compliance & Right to Refuse Packed Lunches to safeguard all children

Parents/Carers must stick to our allergy, food hygiene, and healthy eating guidelines.

If a lunch does not meet our standards, we reserve the right to:

- Provide a suitable meal at an additional cost to parents/carers at a cost of **£3.50**.
- Refuse to allow packed lunches until compliance is ensured.

- Report ongoing non-compliance as a safeguarding concern. This is in line with EYFS regulations.

If a child comes without a packed lunch, we will call families to bring one in, or charge if we have to provide lunch at a cost of **£3.50**.

9.0 Support for Parent/Carers

If you need support to provide a healthy packed lunch, we are happy to offer guidance and resources. Please speak to a member of staff if you would like help.

You can also find guidance and ideas on these websites:

<https://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-early-years>

<https://healthforunder5s.co.uk/sections/preschool/preparing-the-perfect-packed-lunch/>

<https://www.bda.uk.com/resource/healthy-packed-lunches.html>

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>

Parental Declaration

I, [Parent/Carer Name], confirm that:

✓ I understand and agree to follow the Packed Lunch Policy at Church Hill/Low Hall Nursery Schools.

✓ I will not include any nuts, nut-based products or high-risk foods in my child's packed lunch.

✓ I will ensure all food is safe, fresh, and appropriate for my child.

✓ I acknowledge that if I do not comply with this policy, the school may refuse the packed lunch and provide an alternative meal at an additional charge.

Parent/Carer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

_____ end _____