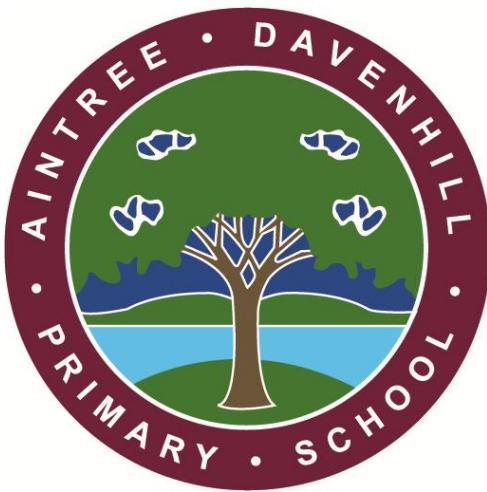


Aintree Davenhill Primary School



Packed Lunch Policy

Review Date: July 2026

Aim

This policy is in place to:

- Provide guidelines on the expectations for packed lunches brought from home
- Ensure packed lunches brought from home provides children with healthy, balanced and nutritious food, which meets their needs to be physically active, to learn, grow well, and be healthy.
- Comply with food hygiene and safety regulations.
- Meet requirements for nutrition, independence and self-care.
- Protect children with allergies and dietary needs.

Why do we need a policy?

The government has placed a duty on schools to ensure that every child is healthy and has invested hugely in improved school meals, free fruit for schools and ***The Children's Food Trust (formerly The School Food Trust)*** which encourages healthy eating. The trust recommends we have a policy and this one is based on their model. Eating healthily is important because it will help children to:

- **Be fitter and healthier now and later in life**
- **Learn more quickly and behave better**

School meals conform to government nutritional guidelines with less sugar, fat and salt and more fresh fruit and vegetables. School lunches also provide a good balance of 'complex carbohydrates' such as pasta, rice, bread or potatoes with dairy and other protein foods. There is no reason why a packed lunch cannot provide the same nutrition as a cooked meal.

Who does it apply to? When and where?

To all pupils and Parents/Carers providing packed lunches to be eaten within school or on school trips during normal school hours.

The policy

- The school will provide facilities for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is available.
- The school will provide appropriate dining room arrangements.
- The school will work with Parents/Carers to ensure that packed lunches align with the guidance in this policy.
- Parents/Carers should provide children with a suitable container which they can eat their lunch from (rather than need to take food out and place it straight onto the table) – a plastic box with a removable lid is ideal.
- As fridge space is not available in school, Parents/Carers are advised to send lunch boxes in insulated bags with freezer blocks when appropriate.
- All lunchboxes must be clearly labelled with the name of the child that it belongs to.
- Parents/Carers must ensure that the food provided is suitable for their child's individual developmental needs and is prepared in a way to prevent choking.
- Children must only eat food provided from home that is in their packed lunch.

Food to include in packed lunches

- At least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day
- Meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel) every day
- Oily fish, such as salmon, at least occasionally
- A starchy food such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals every day
- Dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard everyday
- Cereal bars rather than cakes or biscuits
- A drink – water is best or fruit juice, milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies

Food to be included *less often* in packed lunches

- Snacks such as crisps
- Chocolate coated biscuits or wafers
- Meat and pastry products such as sausage rolls and pies

Food that *should not* be included in packed lunches

- Confectionary such as chocolate bars
- Sweets
- Nuts, peanut butter or any other product containing nuts
- Fizzy drinks

Safe Storage & Handling of Packed Lunches

To ensure compliance with food safety:

- Refrigeration is not available; therefore Parents/Carers should pack food that remains safe at room temperature.
- School will provide an appropriate storage area for packed lunch bags.
- All packed lunches must be provided in a clearly labelled, insulated lunchbox. In warmer months, it may be necessary to include ice packs to keep perishable food fresh.
- Staff will monitor lunches for compliance with food safety and healthy eating standards.
- Any unsafe or unsuitable food will be returned home, and Parents/Carers will be informed.
- Children are only allowed to eat their OWN food.

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.
- Staff may inspect lunchboxes to ensure adherence to food safety and allergy guidelines

Allergy & Food Safety Policy Compliance

- We operate a strict NO-NUT policy—any nut-based products will be removed and returned to Parents/Carers.
- All food must be safely prepared and stored at home following food hygiene guidelines.
- Parents/Carers must ensure food is fresh and appropriate for their child's dietary needs.
- Any concerns about a child's diet or food safety will be discussed with Parents/Carers.
- Make sure that food provided is in manageable pieces and is not a choking hazard for your child

[Early Years Choking Hazards Poster - Foundation Years](#)

[Early Years Choking Hazards Table - Foundation Years](#)

[Preparing Food Safely for young children \(video\) - Early Start Nutrition](#)

Waste and disposal

The school will send any uneaten packed lunch food items back home. The rationale for this is that Parents/Carers can monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake with school.

Special Diets

Aintree Davenhill recognises that some children have verified medical conditions requiring special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case, Parents/Carers are urged to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible.

Assessment, Evaluation and Reviewing

Packed lunches are reviewed by lunchtime staff as part of their supervision of the children. Information relating to pupils on special diets will be shared with lunchtime staff.

Publication of the Policy

The school will share a copy of this policy with all new Parents/Carers as part of the induction process. The policy will also be available on the school's website. The school will use opportunities such as Parents/Carers' meetings to promote this policy as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating.

All school staff, including teaching and catering staff, will be informed of this policy and will support its implementation.