

Medlock Primary School



School Meal and Packed Lunch Policy

March 2021
Review - March 2024

At Medlock Primary School, we believe that good food is vital to children's health and academic achievement, as well as enhancing children's social learning experiences.

Many studies have shown that hunger affects concentration and that well-nourished children fare better at school. Equally, the comradery of sharing experiences whilst enjoying a meal can enhance children's ability to form positive and meaningful relationships. These principles underlie our School Food Policy.

The children at Medlock are encouraged to treat meal times as an integral part of the school day. It is a time to share news and experiences as well as to simply enjoy each other's company. Teachers, learning assistants and office staff are encouraged to join the children. They model appropriate behaviour, good manners and support all children to develop social skills.

Universal Free School Meals (UFSM)

Since September 2014, the Children and Families Bill places a legal duty on state-funded schools in England to offer a free school lunch to all pupils in Reception, Year One and Year Two through the introduction of the Government's Universal Infant Free School Meals (UFSM) Policy.

Free School Meals (FSM)

Eligibility criteria for all groups entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) are listed below.

- **Income Support**
- **income-based Jobseeker's Allowance**
- **income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- **support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999**
- **the guaranteed element of Pension Credit**
- **Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)**
- **Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit**
- **Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)**

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

Your child may also get free school meals if you get any of these benefits and your child is both:

- **younger than the compulsory age for starting school**
- **in full-time education**

Further information can be found via the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

We would encourage all eligible families to to apply.

Hot Meals Menu

At Medlock Primary School all pupils will routinely be offered up to 3 meal options daily. These will include chef's choice, baked potato sandwich or . A salad bar is freely available for all children to select additional food items to complement their meal with fruit, salad and bread. There is always fresh water and milk available. Desert options always include a yoghurt and fruit option. When children are out and about on school trips, a school packed lunch will be provided.

All menus are prepared in line with the legal requirements of the School Food Standards.

All food is cooked on the premises.

Catering for pupils with special dietary requirements

Medlock Primary School caters for all dietary requirements that we are made aware of. We currently offer Halal options, a daily Vegetarian option and all of our food is 'nut free'.

Parents should inform the school of any special dietary requirements (including allergies) in order that we can provide a meal which meets their child's needs. All records of allergies and other dietary requirements are held by both the school office and the kitchen.

Quality

All our school meals are cooked daily in the school kitchen and are made in accordance with all statutory food standards and quality standards.

Reluctant Eaters

No child will be forced to eat anything that they don't like although they will be encouraged to try foods which they may not have had experience of.

The amount of food children eat is monitored and liaison with parents (through their class teacher) ensures issues are picked up quickly. We actively encourage parents voicing

concerns about their children's eating so collaborative support can counter any issues a child may have.

The Dining Experience

The Nursery children eat in the Foundation Unit's dining room and are supported by their teachers and Key workers.

Reception, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two children all eat in the main dining hall. Nursery children eat in a dedicated early years dining space.

The children having school meals are served at the counter and carry their meals to a table. Children who have a packed lunch collect the food from the appropriate trolley before sitting.

Politeness and manners are encouraged. It is the expectation that all interactions are calm, polite and appropriate to context. Pleases and thank yous are expected at all times and adults and older children model this for the younger children.

Once children have finished their meal, they clear their own tray at the waste disposal points provided. Packed lunch children throw away empty packets and rubbish. Uneaten food is packed into their lunch box to support parents monitoring their child's eating habits.

At Medlock Primary School, we firmly believe that the dining experience is crucial in developing good food habits and also contributes to a successful afternoon in the classroom. We are therefore constantly looking for ways to further improve the dining experience through feedback from parents and children.

Curriculum

We understand that providing a wholesome lunch for children is only half the battle. We also need to equip children with the skills they need to feed themselves and, to develop healthy eating habits. Therefore, cooking lessons are a part of our school curriculum, form part of our enrichment programme and opportunities to cross link cooking and food preparation into the wider curriculum are encouraged.

Break Time Snacks and Refreshment

All children are provided with a daily fruit or vegetable snack. No charge is made for this. Children are not allowed to bring break time snacks to school.

Milk is offered to all children up to the age of 5 years. Then, if parents wish, they can pay for their child to continue to have milk as part of their daily routine.

In Nursery and Reception classes, children are given the option of having milk with added fluoride. This is on a 'opt in' basis with parents giving consent for their child to receive fluoride enriched milk. If they don't opt in, non-enriched milk is provided.

Children are encouraged to drink water from the school water fountains during break times but they are also allowed to access water during learning as all classes have space for water bottles in each room. Water bottles are to be provided by parents. There are water fountains for children on each floor with plans for more water fountains to be installed. Juice or flavoured water is not permitted during the school day except as part of a child's packed lunch box.

Packed Lunches

Research undertaken by the 'School Food Plan' showed that many parents mistakenly imagine that a packed lunch is the healthiest option. The School Food Plan demonstrates that it is far easier to get the necessary nutrients into a cooked meal. The School Food Plan research also showed that only 1% of packed lunches meet the nutritional standards that currently apply to school food. Packed lunches are therefore strictly monitored so that they are in accordance with our 'Medlock Meals' School food policy.

All children have the option of bringing a packed lunch to school.

Children who bring a packed lunch to school are subject to the same support and expectations as those who opt to have a cooked meal (as outlined above in the 'Dining Experience' section).

To support families provide an appropriate and healthy packed lunch Medlock Primary School will;

- will provide facilities for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is available;
- provide healthy lunches guidance at the beginning of academic year (appendix 1);
- monitor the content of school lunches and liaise with home (through the class teacher) to ensure the content of packed lunches follows the guidance provided.

To Monitor packed lunches staff use the following guidance based on the NHS document 'The Eatwell Plate'

www.food.gov.uk/healthiereating/eatwellplate/

Packed lunches could INCLUDE:

- **Sandwiches with savoury filling**
- **Cereal bars rather than cakes and biscuits.**
- **Seeds, fruit, crackers and cheese, and vegetable or bread sticks**
- **Roti (instead of parantha)**
- **Curries (vegetable or chicken)**
- **Boiled rice**

Packed lunches should NOT INCLUDE:

- **Fast food**
- **Sandwiches made with sweetbreads (E.g. brioche) or sweet fillings such as chocolate spread or jam**

- **More than one 'treat' (chocolate bar, biscuit or crisps)**

Where monitoring raises a concern, said concern is then passed to the parent by the class teacher. If appropriate, the guidance sheet will again be provided. If monitoring raises further concerns, school will endeavour to source appropriate support both internally through pastoral support and externally through the school nurse service to enable parents to provide a healthy packed lunch for their child. If these steps are not successful, parents or carers will be asked to come in for a consultation with the Head Teacher or Governors.

Special diets

The school also recognises that some pupils may have verified medical conditions requiring special diets that do not allow for the standards to be met exactly. In this case, parents are urged to discuss this with their class teacher and to be responsible in ensuring that packed lunches are as healthy as possible. Evidence may be requested to support dietary requirements.

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



At a glance - the NEW packed lunch policy

For a balanced packed lunch select these healthier foods and drinks

	Fruit and Vegetables	Include at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad every day.	✓
	Meat & Alternatives	Meat, fish or another source of non-dairy protein should be included every day. Non dairy sources of protein include lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus, peanut butter† and falafel.	✓
	Oily Fish	Include oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks.	✓
	Starchy Food	A starchy food such as any type of bread or pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other cereals, should be included every day.	✓
	Milk and Dairy Food	Include a dairy food such as semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day.	✓
	Drinking Water	Free, fresh drinking water should be available at all times.	✓
	Healthier Drinks	Include only water, still or sparkling, fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies.	✓

Avoid including these foods in packed lunches

	Snacks	Snacks such as crisps should not be included. Instead, include nuts†, seeds, vegetables and fruit (with no added salt, sugar or fat). Savoury crackers or breadsticks served with fruit, vegetables or dairy food are also a good choice.	✗
	Confectionery	Confectionery such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits and sweets should not be included. Cakes and biscuits are allowed but encourage your child to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.	✗
	Meat Products	Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies corned meat and sausages/chipolatas should be included only occasionally.	✗

†Be aware of nut allergies. Refer to the school policy on nuts or visit www.allergyinschools.co.uk for more information.