



Government packed lunch advice

The UK government has produced packed lunch guidance to support the implementation of school food standards for school lunches and to ensure that all children benefit from eating quality food during the school day.

The guidelines are:

- At least one portion of fruit and at least one portion of vegetables or salad every day to be included in packed lunches.
- Meat, fish or another source of non-dairy protein should be included on three or more days per week. Non-dairy sources of protein include lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, houmous and falafel.
- An oily fish, such as salmon, should be included at least once every three weeks.
- A starchy food, such as bread or pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other cereals, should be included every day.
- A dairy food, such as semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard should be included every day.
- Free, fresh drinking water should be available at all times.
- Include only water, still or sparkling, fruit juice, semi-skimmed or skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies.
- Snacks such as crisps should not be included. Instead include 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 such as chocolate bars, chocolate-coated biscuits and sweets should not be included. Cakes and biscuits are allowed but these should be part of a balanced meal.
- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned beef and sausages/chipolatas should be included only occasionally.