

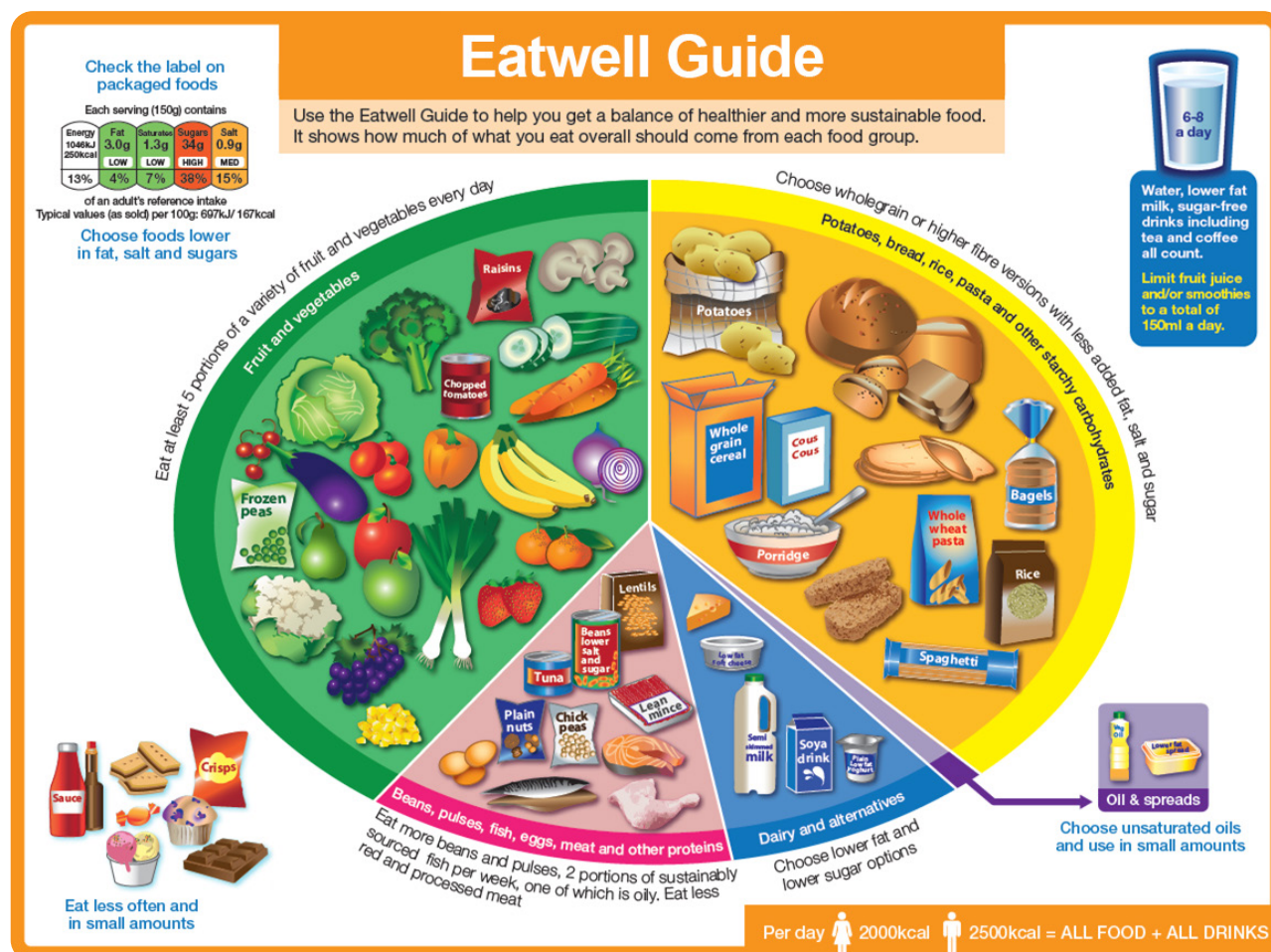


Guidance for Free School Lunch Parcels

This guidance has been reviewed by LACA with input from DfE and PHE and sets out some general principles for putting together a lunch parcel, providing lunches over the five days each week children are e-learning from home. Lunch parcels should support parents/carers to prepare simple and healthy lunches for their child/children at home.

The Department for Education has published wider guidance on providing school meals during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

- Food parcels should contain a balance of items from the different food groups, to reflect a healthy balanced diet for a child, as depicted by the *Eatwell Guide* (below) and in line with the School Food Standards.



Vary food items each week as this helps to ensure a good balance of nutrients are provided.



As a minimum each **School Lunch Parcel** should provide:

STARCHY FOODS

A variety of different types (such as bread, potatoes, pasta), to enable lunches to be based on these, such as:

1 loaf of bread or pack of 10-inch wraps

AND

3 baking potatoes or 1 pack of pasta / rice

Include some wholegrain varieties where possible, such as wholemeal bread.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

A variety of different types, to provide at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables each day.

Include at least **three** of the following examples:

1 cucumber, 5 large tomatoes / 1 pack of cherry tomatoes, 1 tin of sweetcorn in water, 5 carrots, 1 red pepper, 1 head of broccoli etc.

AND

Five portions of fresh fruit (e.g. apples, satsumas, bananas) OR 3 portions of fresh fruit + 1 tin of fruit in juice (e.g. pears, peaches, fruit cocktail)

PROTEIN FOODS

Protein foods (such as beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other non-dairy proteins), to provide a portion of food from this group every day.

Include at least **two** of the following:

1 pack sliced cooked meat (e.g. ham, chicken), 1 tin fish (e.g. tuna, salmon), 6 eggs, 1 tin of meat, 1 tin of lentils / pulses

AND

2 tins of baked beans - choose lower salt baked beans where possible

Meat and fish should be cooked or tinned. Consider alternating between different protein foods to provide variety.

DAIRY AND/OR DAIRY ALTERNATIVES

Dairy and/or dairy alternatives (such as milk, cheese, yoghurt), to provide a portion of food from this group every day, such as:

200g block of cheese + 1 litre of semi-skimmed milk

+ 500g pot plain lower-fat yoghurt OR 5 individual serving yoghurt pots

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Consider also including:

fruit malt loaf (190g or 5 individual bars)

1 jar of tomato- based pasta sauce (if providing pasta)



2. Food parcels should not contain items restricted under the School Food Standards (e.g. chocolate, confectionery, crisps).

The Standards allow desserts at lunchtime, and the items given as examples *on page 2* (i.e. fruit or lower-fat fruit yoghurt) would be good dessert options.

Any pre- prepared meals provided must also meet School Food Standards.

3. The examples *on page 2* of the types and quantities of foods that could be included in a parcel has been based on information from school caterers (taking into consideration additional costs such as distribution) and are for illustrative purposes.

Parcels can also be supplemented by food from the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme which can be added as additional items, especially for those in Key Stage 1.

4. Parcels should cater for all children of school age who require special diets (e.g. allergies, vegetarians, vegan or religious diets) and schools should ensure there are systems in place to avoid cross-contamination. The Department for Education has published allergy guidance for schools.

Parents may wish to discuss any concerns about their child's allergies with schools, to ensure that a lunch parcel is suitable or if an alternative method of support such as a voucher may be more suitable.

More guidance on handling **allergies** can be found on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

5. Chilled items such as milk may need to be substituted with ambient alternatives if refrigeration is not possible.

Caterers should prepare for food parcels by ensuring they have sufficient stocks of domestic-sized items such as tinned goods.

All products used should be clearly labelled and have any best before/use by dates clearly shown.

6. Families and schools may find 5 day lunch parcels easier than a more frequent approach. Minimise the fridge and freezer space needed to store foods, and do not rely on families having additional ingredients at home to prepare meals.

Caterers will already be working closely with their schools on the make-up of their lunch parcels.



Meal suggestions using items from the parcels might include:

Beans on toast or jacket potato and beans with grated cheese

Tuna or salmon and Cucumber Sandwich with cherry tomatoes

Tuna and sweetcorn on Jacket Potato

Cheese and tomato sandwich with cucumber or carrot sticks

Cheese, tomato and broccoli omelette with toast

Cheese on toast with tomato and cucumber sticks

Chicken, ham or tuna pasta bake

- using pasta, tuna or sliced cooked meat, and pasta sauce

Cook the pasta in boiling water, drain and mix all ingredients together, sprinkle with grated cheese and bake until golden brown.

Tuna pasta salad, using chopped cucumber, sweetcorn or pepper

Baked tuna, veggie or meat and sweetcorn wrap

- using wraps filled with tinned tuna/meat and sweetcorn, covered in tomato pasta sauce and grated cheese, popped under the grill to heat and melt cheese

Veggie pizza wrap

- using grated cheese, sliced peppers and tomato pasta sauce in a wrap and grilled

Fruit and yoghurt or malt loaf for pudding
