Midday supervisors: school food standards



The School Food Standards are designed to ensure that food provided to children and young people (CYP) in school is nutritious and of a high quality. They apply to all food served on school premises up to 6 pm, which includes breakfast clubs, break times, school lunches and after-school food provision. Parties, celebrations, food tech lessons and school events are exempt.

The role

Midday supervisors are some of the most important people in the school food environment. They play a big role in supporting the nutrition of CYP by monitoring the nutritional content of lunchtime meals, and promoting healthy eating habits amongst them.

How to monitor packed lunches

Agree with SLT on how you'll monitor packed lunches.

What incentives will CYP get for having a balanced lunch, or trying new foods? How will you respond to packed lunches that don't conform to school policy?

Will you give CYP an alternative hot or cold meal and return the food at the end of the day? Will you send home a reminder in the lunchbox?

A great packed lunch has:

- at least one portion of fruit and vegetable or salad e.g. apple, grapes, carrot sticks, tomatoes, cucumber.
- at least one starchy food such as any type of bread (50/50 or wholegrain rolls, pitta bread or wraps), pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or another cereal every day.
- meat, fish, eggs, or a non-dairy protein (e.g., lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, houmous, falafel) every day.
- a dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day.
- water or milk.
- one healthy snack, for example dried fruits.

When talking to children about food, try to avoid labelling foods as "healthy", "unhealthy", or "fattening". Pressuring children to eat a certain food can make them feel stressed, as can bargaining with them using dessert as a prize. Instead, try getting children excited about trying new foods: tell them it makes them "see in the dark" or "makes them strong". You can ask children what they like and don't like about a new food, and share what you like about it too, whether that's texture, smell or taste.

SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS