



Oadby, Wigston and Leicestershire Schools Academy Trust

# OWLS Academy Trust

New Lubbethorpe Primary School, Tay Road, Lubbethorpe, Leicester, LE19 4BF  
Tel: 0116 216 9963

March 2025

Dear Parents

## Food Waste from Packed Lunches

Food waste is a significant contributor to climate change, and around 9.5 million tonnes of food is wasted each year in the UK. To help combat the detrimental impact of food waste, the Government introduced the Environment Act 2021, which, amongst other things, seeks to tackle waste, increase recycling and improve our natural environment.

Under this act, on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 new regulations come into force which make it mandatory for all non-domestic properties that produce any food waste to arrange separate collection by licensed waste carriers. This new legislation is going to place additional burdens on all of our schools, both from increased costs of refuse collection and as a result of having to separate food waste at source. I am sure you will agree that as much of our income and staff time as possible should be directed towards teaching and learning and supporting our children's development, but in order to achieve this it is important that we look to minimise our costs elsewhere.

Waste from children's packed lunch boxes typically includes uneaten food and packaging materials, many of which could be recycled if they could be cleaned before being placed in the bin. For this reason some of our schools have already adopted a policy whereby all waste from packed lunches must be returned to the child's lunchbox when they have finished eating, to be disposed of appropriately at home.

In light of the new legislation, and reflecting that the waste from packed lunch boxes arises as result of parental choice and not directly from our schools' activities, we have therefore decided that with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 it will become Trust policy that all waste from packed lunches, for children and staff, must be returned to the lunch box and taken home for disposal. This decision is driven as a result of both financial and environmental considerations, but carries an additional benefit that you will be able to see what your child is or is not eating each day enabling you to adjust the quantity and/or content of their lunch box accordingly, helping you to make best use of the family budget.

Our catering staff are separately making arrangements for separating and disposing of food waste from school meals. Other food waste is generated by our schools from sources such as fruit peel and cores from the school fruit scheme, and from cookery lessons in school. We will be actively exploring options to prevent as much of this waste as possible from going into food waste bins, including exploring options for composting organic waste.

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter, please contact your head teacher in the first instance.

May I thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Merry  
CEO, OWLS Academy Trust