

PACKED LUNCH GUIDE

We are committed to providing children with meals, snacks and drinks that are healthy, balanced and nutritious

At the beginning of lunch children are helped to wash their hands and find their named lunch box at the table. We will support them to settle down to eat their lunch and join in conversations with their friends and adults.

We will encourage them to eat their sandwich/ savoury foods before sweet foods. We will top up their water bottle.

We ask you to note a few points:

- ✓ Please label your child's bag/box clearly.
- ✓ Please ensure that your child's drink bottle is easy for them to drink from, some can be difficult and require help each time. Please make sure the bottle is named. Do not send fruit juice or cordial.
- ✓ Please put an ice pack in your child's lunch to keep it cool .
- ✓ We are unable to warm up food.
- ✓ Please provide cutlery.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to give small portions if your child has a small appetite and will struggle to eat it all. For example sandwiches made from one slice of bread instead of two or a few crisps in a pot instead of a whole packet.
- ✓ Cereal bars are low in fat and can be a healthier alternative to chocolate biscuits.
- ✓ We will return uneaten food (apart from yogurts and drink

cartons). This is so that you can see what they have eaten. If they have eaten everything, we will throw away any empty packaging.

- ✓ Dessert items such as small cakes or small chocolate coated biscuits but please do not put treats like sweets or chocolate bars in your child's lunch box. We promote healthy eating at pre-school and treats can cause problems with the other children making them jealous.

Allergies

Even if your child does not suffer from a food related allergy, some children's reactions to certain foods can be life-threatening. Children with allergies are welcome at lunch club and for this reason we ask that egg products and peanuts / nut products are **not** included in lunches.

We hope your children will enjoy their lunch with us. Packing a lunch for children can be a challenge so here are some tips:

1. Bread, cereals or potato

Start a packed lunch off with some starchy carbohydrate to give your child long-lasting energy. Ideas at a glance: Bread or roll, bagel, pitta bread, French stick, Scotch pancakes, muffins, fruit scones, currant buns, fruit bread, malt loaf, crisp bread and crackers, pasta and rice salads. Wholegrain breads are fine occasionally, but young children have small stomachs and too much fibre can fill them up so they won't eat energy rich foods needed for growth and interfere with the absorption of minerals.

2. Fruit and vegetables

Ideas: Salad in sandwiches and rolls, tomatoes, apples, pears, satsumas, bananas, grapes, melon, plums,

nectarine, tinned fruit pieces, fruit salad.

3. Meat, fish or alternative

Ideas: Slices of ham, chicken and turkey, quiche, pork pie, canned tuna and salmon or houmous.

4. Milk or dairy

Ideas: Milk, cheddar, edam, cheese triangle, low fat soft cheese, cottage cheese, fruit yoghurt, fromage frais, drinking yoghurt, pots of rice pudding.

5. Drink

We will provide drinking water. Please supply a named drinks bottle.

6. Portion size

We encourage the children to eat up all their packed lunch. They will bring home what they don't want or can't eat so you can see what they have eaten. Please only send what you expect your child to eat. Cutting up sandwiches and fruit, (especially cherry tomatoes and grapes) into small manageable child size pieces is a good idea.

7. Familiar food

Pre-school packed lunches are not a good time to introduce new foods for the first time to your child. It may be upsetting for the child if they are hungry and don't like the food they have been given.

Please talk to a member of staff if you would like more information.

