

In September, Junior children can bring a packed lunch to school instead of taking a hot school meal at lunch time, if they so wish. I thought this would be a good opportunity to clarify our expectations on what can be sent into school for a packed lunch. We want to help support parents as much as possible to make healthy choices for their children's meals, so please do support us.

Our school kitchen must adhere to very strict nutritional guidelines about what can and cannot be included in school meals. This includes any salt, sugar and saturated fats. All menus compiled by our cook must meet these standards and all recipes are scrutinised for their nutritional content before being served to the children.

Generally, we would like parents to ensure that packed lunches are of a similar healthy standard to school meals, but we recognise that it can be difficult to navigate the array of different types of foods and to ensure variety in packed lunches.

*Therefore, to clarify our rules for packed lunches, they can include anything so long as there are **no**:*

- Nuts (to safeguard those with allergies)
- Fizzy drinks
- Crisps
- Sweets and chocolate bars

*Please note that:*

- Cakes and biscuits are allowed – but please limit to maybe 3 a week.

### **Where possible, packed lunches should include:**

- One portion of pasta salad, sandwich, bread roll or pitta bread.
- Cooked meat or boiled egg as a filling in a sandwich.
- One portion of fruit and vegetables e.g. carrot/cucumber sticks, cherry tomatoes, apple, banana etc.
- One portion of yoghurt or cheese.
- One drink (water preferably)



We also recommend children eat fruit or yoghurt as their pudding choice. However, cereal bars, raisins or **one** chocolate bar can be eaten., but preferably not every day.

Please do not overfill lunch boxes, children only have 45 minutes to eat their lunch and have a play with their friends!



### ***Examples of a good packed lunch***

#### **Example 1-**

Ham/cheese/egg/pasta/tuna Sandwich /pitta  
Yoghurt  
Apple/grapes/banana  
Small chocolate bar.



#### **Example 2-**

Pasta pot  
Cheese square  
Carrot sticks  
Cereal bar

As a parent, I know how hard it is to ensure children eat a healthy packed lunch. Below are some healthy tips which may help.

- Instead of cakes, chocolates and biscuits, try currant buns (without icing), fruit bread, tea cakes and malt loaf.
- Always include a **drink** to help your child concentrate. Go for still water or unsweetened fruit juice. Remember, the hidden sugar and to check labels for example one Carpri Sun drink contains 7 and half teaspoons of sugar; would you have that much sugar in you tea/coffee?
- Cook some extra pasta, rice or potatoes with dinner the night before to make into an effortless and tasty salad for lunch the next day.
- **Freeze a carton of pure juice, milk or yoghurt** and place in a mini sandwich bag. It will be defrosted by lunchtime and keep your lunchbox cool in the meantime!
- **Make easy swaps** – for example, if your child likes something sweet, give them raisins or a small can or pot of chopped fruit instead of a chocolate bar. If they prefer savoury foods, try plain popcorn, rice cakes or crunchy carrot sticks instead.
- Keep a selection of breads in the freezer for sandwiches. Then you can just take out which one you need for one day's lunchbox and defrost it on a plate or in the microwave.
- Using a different type of bread, each day, can make lunchboxes more interesting. Try granary, wholemeal or whole white bread, pitta, fruit bread, bagels, English muffins, chapatti or wraps.
- **Don't forget the dairy** – low-fat custard, fromage fraise, rice pudding or yoghurt are very popular and good for growing bones!
- **Provide fruit in small pots** which are easy and quick to eat, e.g. chopped canned pineapple, satsuma pieces (peeled), raisins, dried apricots, grapes, peeled and chopped kiwi fruit.
- When you are preparing vegetables or salad for dinner, cut up a few extra carrots, cucumber or celery sticks for lunch the next day to reduce the time spent preparing lunch!

Thank you all for your continued support.

Mrs Thorpe