

Foods to avoid:

Many foods are marketed as 'healthy' and 'ideal for lunch-boxes', but many are neither, here are some things to watch out for:

- Cereal Bars: often have high sugar and fat content.
- Savoury Snacks: are often highly processed and as such contain high levels of salt and saturated fats.
- 'Real Fruit' snacks: saying a product is made of real fruit gives it a healthy spin, but check the packaging, some can contain as much as a whopping 63% sugar!
- Flavoured yogurts: some yoghurts can contain as much as 5 teaspoons of sugar! Choose yogurts carefully.

Making lunch boxes can be a bit of a chore, especially if your child brings home uneaten food. Encourage them by letting them help prepare and pack their dinner, talk to them about what needs to go in and why certain foods are kept as treats and not included everyday. Talk about '5 a day'.

Keep it cool— consider investing in a small insulated box/bag, to make sure that in the hotter weather food is kept at a safe cool temperature.

Thank you for your support



Healthier Packed Lunches for Children

What you need to know



Eating well is important. Children need to eat well as it will give them energy and nutrients to grow and develop, be healthy and active.

A healthy lunch box should help to improve your child's attention, behaviour and learning throughout the day and into the afternoon.

Use the information in this leaflet to help make your child a healthier packed lunch. Please support the school's food and drink policy by following these guidelines.

What is a healthy packed lunch?

Starchy foods

These release energy and keep up a child's energy level. Each packed lunch should be based on a starchy food such as bread, potato, rice, pasta, noodles or cous cous.

- ♦ Try different types of breads such as pitta bread, wraps and bread rolls.
- ♦ Wholegrain varieties are best for fibre, which is important for our digestive system.

Milk and dairy

Foods which contain calcium are crucial for strong bones and teeth. Examples are cheese, yoghurt, milk and fromage frais.

Meat and other sources of protein

Proteins help the body grow and repair itself. Protein foods include chicken, egg, ham, fish, and beans (kidney beans, chick peas, hummus or falafel).

Fruit and vegetables

Children need these for vitamins and minerals. Include 1 portion of fruit and 1 portion of vegetables or salad in your child's dinner. These can include fresh, tinned or dried (dried fruit can contain a lot of sugar so only include these occasionally). You could:

- ♦ Add salad to a sandwich
- ♦ Include finger foods—cherry tomatoes, cucumber, celery and carrot sticks with a dip such as hummus.

Drinks

Cartons of fruit juice are very convenient (and can be frozen to provide an ice pack to help keep chilled food cold), however remember, like dried fruit, they are high in sugar and should be restricted to meal times. Consider diluting fruit juices with water, using no added sugar juice or just water for a healthier option.

Lunches should not include:

chocolate bars
chocolate coated biscuits
sweets

Cakes and biscuits are allowed but encourage your child to eat these only as part of a balanced meal.