

Practical Tips for a Healthy Lunchbox

Try to vary the contents of the lunchbox daily. That way you can ensure your child is getting a variety of nutrients their bodies need to function and grow.

Keep different breads in the freezer so you can just take out what you need for one day's lunchbox and defrost it. Using different breads will make the lunchbox more interesting and enjoyable.

If your child refuses to eat brown bread, try a lighter variety or make sandwiches using a slice of white and a slice of wholemeal bread.

For variety, use pitta strips, crackers, bread sticks or fruit and vegetable finger foods with a dip.

Always try to add a little salad to a sandwich. To avoid soggy sandwiches, dry the salad before adding it to the sandwich or put it in a separate sandwich bag or tub.

You can use leftovers, for example rice and curry, vegetable pizza or pasta and sauce.

Mix salad dressing or mayonnaise with some low fat yoghurt to make it lower in fat before adding it to a sandwich or salad.

Make a salad using rice, potato or pasta from the night before, mixed with vegetables, beans and so on.

Involve your child in preparing the lunchbox as they are more likely to enjoy food they have made themselves.

Food Safety

Always wash your hands before handling food. Wash fruit and vegetables before use.

Keep your lunch cool. Use a cool bag and put in a frozen drink or reusable ice pack. If you pack a lunch the night before, keep it in the fridge overnight.

Put food in clean containers, bags or wrappers.

If using rice ensure it is cooled quickly and stored in the fridge overnight.

The school promotes no nuts and no sesame seeds as some children are allergic to these. Please ensure the food you provide does not contain nuts or sesame seeds.

For more information or advice go to:

www.eatwell.gov.uk/agesandstages/children/lunchboxsect/ www.schooltrust.org.uk

Grazebrook Primary School 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, enjoyable lunch gives children the energy they need to learn and play at school.

Use the information in this leaflet to help make your child a healthier packed lunch.

Starchy Foods

Base each meal on a starchy food, such as bread, potato, rice, pasta, yam. Starchy foods give energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

Choose from:

Bread, try different types, such as pitta bread, wraps, chapattis, bread rolls, bread sticks or crackers.

Other starchy foods, such as pasta, couscous, rice or noodles.

Whole grain varieties are best for fibre, which is vital for a healthy digestive system.

Meat and Alternatives

Add some protein, for example meat, fish, eggs, beans or pulses. Protein foods build muscles and provide minerals.

Choose from:

Savoury sandwich fillings:

Lean meats, such as chicken, turkey or ham. Include oily fish, such as pilchards, sardines or mackerel at least once every three weeks.

Cheese, such as cottage cheese, edam, mozzarella, cheddar or soft cheese.

Egg, such as boiled or quiche.

Meat alternatives, such as quorn or tofu.

Or include dishes containing pulses, beans or meat, for example curry, casserole or bean salad.

Meat products such as sausage rolls, sausages and chipolatas, pies and pastries, fried foods should not be included more than once a fortnight.

Use butter, margarine, mayonnaise or salad dressings sparingly, because these can be high in fat, or use lower fat alternatives.

We are an allergy friendly school. Please help us by not packing any nut and sesame seed products as some children are allergic to these. Please ensure the food you provide does not contain nuts or sesame seeds.

Milk and Dairy Foods

Include a dairy product or dairy alternative, such as cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or tzatziki.

These foods provide calcium necessary for strong bones and teeth, as well as providing protein and vitamins.

Lower fat varieties are healthier.

Fruit and Vegetables

Don't forget to include fruit and vegetables. You can use fresh, frozen, tinned or dried.

Fruit and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals and fibre necessary for the body to function properly and to keep you strong and healthy.

A few ideas:

Add tomato, cress, lettuce or beetroot to a sandwich.

A vegetable dish, such as salad or roast vegetables.

Fresh fruit, such as apple, banana, pear or melon pieces.

Dried fruit, such as raisins or apricots.

Fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice) or vegetable salad.

Finger foods, such as cherry tomatoes, cucumber sticks or celery. Good with a dip, such as raita or guacamole.

Aim to include at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetable or salad.