

# Packed Lunch Guidance

Every day in my lunch box, there **should** be...

## At least one portion of unprocessed fruit

We find favourites are fruit kebabs on the school lunch dessert table. We also cut fruit into melon or orange boats so they are easy to eat!

Whole, unprocessed fruit is healthier than processed fruit snacks and fruit juice drinks, as it contains vitamins, minerals, water and fibre, and does not cause the devastating tooth decay we see in young children today.



## At least one portion of vegetables

Children love carrot and cucumber sticks from our school salad bar.

We always have a choice of vegetables for school lunch too and hide veg into sauces etc.



## A source of protein such as meat, fish, egg, lentils, hummus

School lunch pupils have the option of ham, egg, tuna, cheese as a tasty sandwich filling.

We also put pulses into our pasta and rice salads and hummus or plain yoghurt as a dip on the salad bar!



## Oily fish such as salmon, mackerel or sardines

This is beneficial and recommended at least every 3 weeks.

This is why we put salmon nibbles on the school menu and sometimes mackerel pate as a sandwich filling or a salad bar dip!



## A starchy food

Bread, pasta, rice, couscous, crackers, noodles or potatoes.

In the school lunch we use 50% wholegrain bread and pasta.



## Dairy or dairy alternatives

Milk, cheese, plain yoghurt, soya drinks.

We have organic yoghurt, milk and dairy alternatives available daily on the school lunch menu.



## A low sugar drink

Water is the best form of hydration!

Free drinking water is available at school and we also provide organic milk.



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Every day in my lunch box, there **should not** be...

## Crisps

Crisps are high in fat and salt and should be given occasionally so we are suggesting giving crisps only once a week.

Try swapping for plain popcorn, wholegrain pretzels, wholegrain crackers, rice cakes or seeds.



## Confectionery or Sweet Snacks

**Chocolate bars, chocolate coated biscuits, cereal bars, flavoured yoghurts, fruit flakes or winders.**

Cakes and plain biscuits are allowed as part of a balanced diet. Good snacks are plain popcorn, fruit bread, banana muffin or carrot cake.



## Processed meat products

**Sausage rolls, Peperami, and pasties.**

These should only be included on an occasional basis.



## Juice or Fizzy drinks

These are banned items from a packed lunch box.

(Sparkling plain water is allowed)



Try to avoid **processed** packaged foods as these contain high levels of **fat, sugar and salt**.

*Watch out for clever marketing and look at the label as some foods contain more sugar than a chocolate bar or a can of coca cola.*

## Other things to consider...

### Balanced Choices

- Include a mix of fruit, vegetables, protein, and carbohydrates in small, manageable portions.

### Portion Sizes

- Please provide child-sized portions suitable for under-5s. Large items can be overwhelming and increase choking risk.

### Oral Health and Safety

- Encourage low-sugar foods and avoid sticky snacks.
- Promote regular toothbrushing and water-only hydration.
- Ensure safe portion sizes and choking prevention.

### Cut Food Appropriately

- Grapes, cherry tomatoes, and similar foods should be cut lengthways into quarters.
- Avoid whole nuts and hard foods that are difficult to chew.

### Supervision Reminder

- Children will always be supervised during eating, but safe preparation at home is essential.

### Texture Matters

- Choose soft fruits and cooked vegetables where possible.
- Avoid sticky or very chewy items that may pose a choking hazard.