



## **Packed Lunch Guidance**

This packed lunch guidance has been developed to help promote a culture of healthy eating. Article 24 of the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child states:

*Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must work to provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy.*

This guidance applies to parents /cares providing a packed lunch for their child

- To make a positive contribution to children's health by encouraging healthy eating habits in childhood that can influence health and wellbeing in later life
- To take a proactive approach to promoting healthy eating
- To give clear guidance to parents/carers and staff on providing a healthy packed lunch
- To ensure that all children have a healthy and nutritious midday meal that sustains and prepares them for their afternoon of play

### **The recommended contents of a healthy packed lunch includes:**

- Fruit and Vegetables; at least two portions of fruit or vegetables every day (a portion is the amount your child can fit into the palm of their hand). This could be fresh, dried or tinned fruit
- Carbohydrate; a starchy food every day such as bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes, chapatis/roti, plain crackers, breadsticks, rice cakes
- Protein; meat, egg or other source of non-dairy protein such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus, dhal, falafel
- Oily fish; tinned or fresh mackerel, sardines, salmon or tuna should be included at least once every three weeks
- Dairy; every day such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage-frais, custard or calcium fortified soya products - reduced fat if possible
- Drinks; (with no added sugar) such as pure fruit juice, semi-skimmed/skimmed milk, milk-based or yoghurt-based drinks, fruit smoothies
- A bottle of water; It is recognised that the concentration and behaviour of children improve when children drink water throughout the day. Dehydration can give children headaches and make them tired. Therefore, we encourage children to bring in water bottles daily. This is in addition to their packed lunch drink
- Dessert/pudding; such as a small cake, biscuit, cereal bar, fruit loaf/bun OR scotch pancake as part of a balanced meal. Please look carefully at packaging as many items that may look healthy can have high levels of sugar and fat. Look for those with 100 calories or less per portion and only include one-a-day for lunch.



### **Packed Lunches should not include:**

- Sweets/confectionery/chewing gum
- Fizzy or sugary drinks
- Energy drinks
- Items containing nuts are not allowed (for example, Nutella or Bombay Mix).  
Although these are healthy, some children are allergic to nuts and they can cause a severe reaction.

Please note, if found these items may be removed from your child's pack lunch and then returned to parents/carers at the end of the day.

### **Suggestions for a healthier snack:**

- Replace cakes and pastries with fruit bread or teacake
- Replace salted savoury snacks, such as crisps, with breadsticks, rice cakes, cheese and crackers or popcorn (not sweet or toffee)
- Include dried fruit or fruit salad
- Drink water, milk, 100% fruit juice, sparkling water, fruit smoothie, or yoghurt drink.

### **Packed Lunch Containers**

We ask that parents/carers:

- provide a packed lunch container where food items can be stored securely and appropriately until the lunchtime
- bring packed lunches in reusable plastic containers, rather than disposing of plastic bags and bottles
- Fridge space for packed lunches is not available so it is advisable to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with an ice pack to keep the food fresh
- Please note that food cannot be heated / reheated by staff members and should be safe to consume without requiring additional cooking time

### **Waste and disposal**

We will, within reason, send any uneaten packed lunch food items back home. The rationale for this is that parents can monitor what their child has consumed during the day and then raise any concerns over their child's food intake with staff members as appropriate.