Brightside Nursery Infant School

Healthy Lunch

Boxes

We believe eating well is important for children’s health and development.

A healthy, enjoyable lunch gives children the energy they need to learn, play and do well at school.

Please support the school’s Healthy Lunch Box Policy by following these guidelines.
What should I put in my child’s lunch box? A good variety of foods that fit into different food groups will help your children to eat a balanced lunch providing the energy they need to get the most from their day.

A packed lunch should include items from the following food groups

**Carbohydrate foods**

Foods like pasta, bread, rice or couscous. A sandwich would be a good choice from this food group.

**Fruit and vegetables**

It is important that we all eat lots of variety from this group – at least 5 portions a day.

**Meat, fish or alternatives**

Cold meat, tinned fish, boiled egg or hummus are good options to put in sandwiches.

**Dairy products**

Dairy foods are particularly important for growing children. Good sources of calcium which could be part of a packed lunch are cheese and yoghurt.
Lunch box ideas

You know what your child will eat but here are a few ideas

Sandwiches
- Ham, chicken or other meat
- Cheese
- Tuna
- Egg

Dairy products
- Fruit Yoghurt
- Fromage frais
- Smoothie

Fruit
- Grapes, bananas, strawberries,
  Blueberries, apples, pear, plum tomatoes etc

Vegetables
- Pieces of cucumber
- Carrot sticks
- Celery
Other items that you could include are

- breadsticks
- crackers
- rice cakes
- rice salad
- pasta salad
- cheese sticks
- raisins and other dried fruit
- oat biscuit

What about crisps and cake?

The above items form the basis of a healthy packed lunch. If your child's packed lunch includes some of these items then it is acceptable to include one or two of the following

- a packet of crisps
- a small chocolate biscuit
- a small piece of cake eg flap jack
What is not allowed?

Sweets and chocolate bars will be sent home with a note to explain that these items are not acceptable. We will also discourage foods such as chocolate spread sandwiches, chocolate mousse and chocolate croissants.

No nuts or nut products are allowed in your child’s lunch box.

Although most of our children are provided with a nutritious packed lunch we sometimes see lunch boxes which contain packets of sweets, large cakes eg swiss rolls, packets of biscuits and crisps and none of the items from our lunch box ideas list.

This is not acceptable because it provides too much sugar and fat and no nutrients to promote health and learning. Children cannot concentrate or maintain their energy levels unless they eat a balanced diet.
What about drinks?

Water is provided on the table for all children and this includes children having a packed lunch.

The NHS advises……..

If your child is thirsty, it's better to give them water than to encourage a taste for sweet drinks.

You may include a bottle of water in your child’s lunch box but this should not be flavoured water.

Why?

A small bottle of flavoured water can contain as much sugar as a plate of doughnuts! If the flavoured water is sugar free then it usually contains sweeteners.

Flavoured water has been described as “chemical soup in a water bottle.”

The best choice for children is water with no artificial chemicals, no food colourings, and no corn syrup – in other words plain
water!

To summarise:

We are actively encouraging children to bring a healthy packed lunch.

Some items are allowed in moderation

- cake
- biscuits
- crisps

whilst others are not allowed at all

- sweets
- chocolate bars - Mars, Snickers etc
- flavoured drinks including water
- nuts or nut products

For the health and safety of our children we do not allow the following in our school

- Glass bottles, ring pull cans
- Flasks (with hot or cold contents)
- Swapping food (due to food allergies)

Some practical tips

- You can make up a lunch box the night before and store it in the fridge
- Vary the sort of bread you use - cut whole meal pitta bread into strips to have with a dip
- Add an ice pack to keep the food cool
- Encourage your child to help prepare their lunch - children are more likely to eat something they have helped with.

For more ideas: http://www.eatwell.gov.uk/agesandstages/children/lunchboxsect/