

Lunchbox guidelines for parents – appendix 1

We promote healthy eating at Sudley Infants

The contents of your child's lunchbox is an important part of their daily life – good habits established before your child is 7 will help to ensure that your child leads a balanced and healthy life. Eating the right sorts of food will help your child to perform well at school, to concentrate better and to develop healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime. For most parents trying to get your child to eat fruit and vegetables is sometimes difficult and varies so much between families. Although we are concentrating on lunchboxes in school we very much hope that when going on a picnic/car trip etc. you will refer to these guidelines.

What is healthy eating? A balanced mixture from the main food groups.

Plenty of

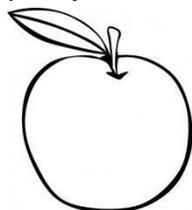
- ❖ fibre-rich foods such as bread, pasta, cereals, rice which provide energy vitamins, minerals and fibre.
- ❖ fruit and vegetables – fresh, frozen, dried, canned or as juice – five portions a day are recommended.

Reduced fat milk and dairy products. Eating moderate amounts of protein – increasing beans and pulses. Restricting fat especially saturates the type found in fatty meats, cheeses and butter. Restricting sweet foods to meal times only.

What would be good in lunchboxes?

Raw vegetables – cucumber (sliced or cut into lengths for dipping), coleslaw, peppers, baby carrots, cherry tomatoes.

Cooked vegetables – cold new potatoes, tinned vegetables (sweetcorn is always popular) – plenty to choose from in this category.



Fruit – melon (cut into chunks), grapes (cut in half), oranges (peeled and wrapped). If your child cannot peel the fruit please prepare it beforehand.

Dried fruit of any type – packets of raisins, apple rings, apricots.

Savoury snacks – cold cooked sausages (vegetarian), pork/vegetable pies, rolls and pastries, cheese dippers, spring rolls, samosas, pizzas and breadsticks. Bread/rolls – why not try granary, tortillas, wraps. Low fat crisps where and when possible and not every day.

Sweet snacks – apple tarts, dried fruit bars, low sugar flapjacks, yoghurts etc. Try to avoid butter spread and replace with low fat/calorie salad creams. Chocolate covered biscuits e.g. kit-kat/club style biscuits should be restricted during the week

All ideas can be prepared at home or bought ready made from shops and supermarkets.

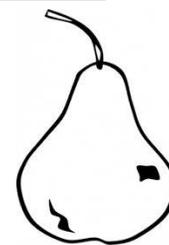
Drinks – we encourage the children to have sugar free drinks, tap water is always available from the dinner staff.

Containers and packaging – although we have members of staff in the dining room they will not be able to help all children at the same time therefore it is important that your child can open/close bottles/cans, unwrap cling film/foil etc. themselves.

We ask children to put all wrappings, leftover food, fruit skins etc. back into their lunchbox so you can see what they have or have not eaten. If a child is not eating a large percentage of their lunch the class teacher will pass this information on to you.

Food hygiene – tummy upsets are often caused by mild food poisoning or lack of food hygiene. You can reduce the risk of this by

- ❖ washing your hands well before starting to prepare the lunchbox
- ❖ not using a chopping board that has been used to chop meat
- ❖ following manufacturers' freezing instructions carefully
- ❖ washing the lunchbox thoroughly each day
- ❖ reminding your children to wash their hands before meals – school staff do this too



It is important to keep food cool to avoid growth of bacteria, especially in the summer or in warm classrooms. Cold rice is notorious for causing tummy upsets so take care to rapidly cool cooked rice and keep it in the fridge. There are several ways to keep lunchbox food cool:

- ❖ small items can be frozen and then put in the lunchbox in the morning. They will gradually defrost and keep any surrounding food cool too. Remember that this will only work with small things – large items may not defrost in time for lunch.
- ❖ adding ice-cubes to drinks will help to keep the lunchbox cool
- ❖ using a mini-ice pack
- ❖ buying an insulated lunchbox

Shopping for equipment – there is a wide variety of lunchboxes on the market – involving your child in choosing a favourite colour or cartoon character can get lunch off to a good start.

Choose a lunch box:

- ❖ that your child can open easily
- ❖ that is insulated or has a place where you could put a small ice pack

Choose a drinks flask

- ❖ that is leak proof
- ❖ easy to open and close
- ❖ that is wide to use for soups, pasta etc.

Just as with the food it is important to make sure your child likes the drink you put in the lunchbox. Water is provided by the school, also your child might like to take his/her water bottle from class into the dining hall. Avoid sugary, fizzy or caffeinated drinks. Consider sending in milk but make sure it is kept cold in a container. Fresh fruit smoothies are brilliant as they mix fruit and dairy products.

Other items: paper napkins or kitchen roll, plastic cutlery and coloured stickers to write messages on, or other packaging that your child will find attractive.

Special occasions – why not celebrate festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Diwali, Chinese and Jewish New Years by including some festive food? Halloween half-apples can delight your child. If your child's birthday falls on a school day, make a surprise lunch box – put in a card or sticker – this would be a great talking point with the other children on the table.

Please note - chocolate bars, nuts and bags/packets of sweets are not allowed in school. If a staff member sees any of the above in your child's lunchbox they will be put to one side and the class teacher will draw your attention to this issue.

Remember, we have many dietary requirements in the school which include allergies and long term medical conditions that could be affected by having contact with some foods.

We hope we can all work together and continue developing healthy eating together for the benefit of your child and the whole school community.

HAPPY COOKING, PREPARING AND EATING! from

Ms R Thomas, Headteacher and Mrs Ridehalgh, Healthy Lifestyles Coordinator