

Beeston Fields Primary and Nursery School



Healthier packed lunches for children

Written in conjunction with Beeston Fields Parent Forum



**“ A healthy, enjoyable lunch gives children the energy
they need to learn and play at school”**

The information in this leaflet follows the government's packed lunch guidelines. We ask all parents to achieve these.

What is a healthy packed lunch?

A healthy packed lunch is a balanced meal providing a variety of nutrients, to be found in four food groups

Starchy Foods

Base each meal on a starchy food, such as bread, potato, rice, pasta, yam.

Starchy foods give energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

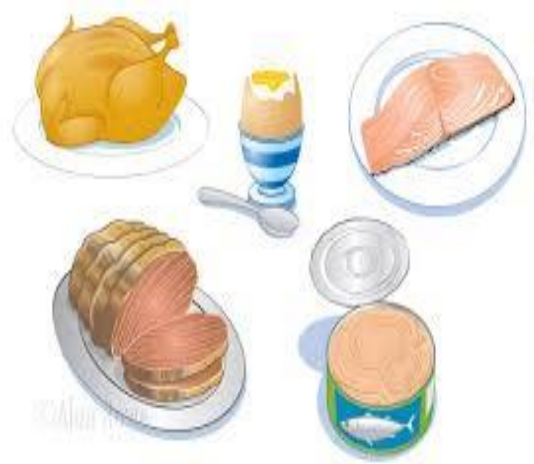


Whole grain varieties are best for fibre, which is vital for a healthy digestive system

Meat and Alternatives

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

- 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



Milk and Dairy Foods

Include a dairy product or dairy alternative,

such as fromage frais or tzatziki.

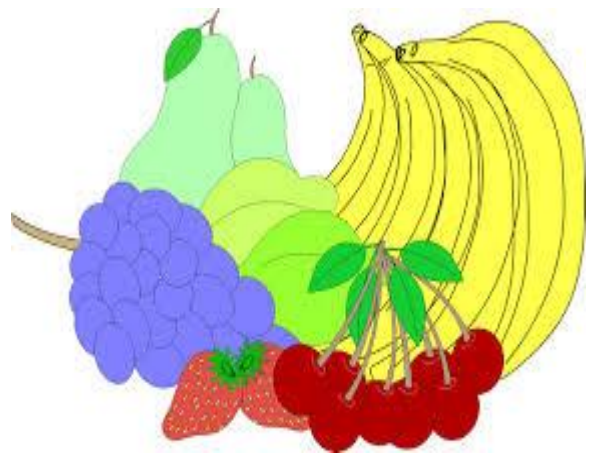
These foods provide calcium necessary for strong bones and teeth, as well as providing protein and vitamins.



- 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.



- Use fresh fruit and vegetables, which are in season to help the environment and enjoy variety!
- All packed lunches should contain at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetable or salad.

Do's and Don'ts

Drinks

Drinks, especially water, help children to concentrate and feel well. Water is freely available in school.

- Other healthy drinks such as milk, pure 100% juice, sparkling water, fruit smoothie or yoghurt or milk drink can also be included

Snacks and Confectionary

Packed lunches should not contain any items containing chocolate, sweets, salted savoury snacks or crisp like products.

Alternatives could be:

- Fruit loaf, banana cake, sugar free jelly and these are just a few of the choice you can make
Please avoid jam or chocolate spread sandwiches

If your child does bring in unhealthy snacks we may remove them and provide a healthy alternative.

Practical Tips for a Healthy Lunchbox

- ♥ Buy a cooler bag for their lunch box or a cool pack. This keeps their packed lunch cool until lunchtime.
- ♥ Freeze Yoghurts, they will then stay cool and keeps everything else cool until lunchtime.
- ♥ Try to vary the contents of the lunchbox daily. That way you can ensure your child is getting the variety of nutrients their bodies need to function and grow.
- ♥ Involve your child in preparing their lunchbox. They are more likely to enjoy food they have made themselves.
- ♥ 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.
- ♥ 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 in a separate sandwich bag or tub.
- ♥ Make a lower-fat salad dressing by mixing it with some low-fat yoghurt or semi skimmed milk.
- ♥ You can use leftovers; for example, rice and curry, vegetable pizza or pasta and sauce.
- ♥ Make a salad using rice, potato or pasta from the night before, mixed with vegetables, beans and so on.



Foods not allowed	Healthier Alternatives
Any Chocolate including chocolate covered biscuits	Packet of raisins or other dried fruit
Sweets	Fruit bars or 100% fruit snacks
Fried Crisps	Baked crisps such as wotsits or walkers baked Pitta with reduced fat hummus Carrot sticks or cucumber sticks, rice cakes, bread sticks
Jam or chocolate spread in sandwiches	Tuna, cheese, lean meat
Fizzy Pop	Water, milk, pure 100% fruit juice, fruit smoothie or yoghurt drinks

We feel very strongly at Beeston Fields that children who bring a lunch from home to eat in school have food which is healthy and nutritious and follows the Governments national standards.

Eating healthily is not just about reducing obesity levels. It is important because it helps children to:

♥ Be fitter and healthier now and later in life

♥ Learn things more quickly and behave well

We also understand that children can be very fussy eaters and our aim is not to have hungry children in school or to worry parents. If you have any concerns regarding packed lunches we will be really happy to talk to you. Please speak to a member of the office team.