

## **A Healthy Lunchbox**

It has been clinically proven that children's learning, concentration span and behaviour tends to deteriorate after an unhealthy lunch. A healthy lunch box should contain the following:

- Complex carbohydrates (bread, pasta, rice);
- Proteins (fish, egg, meat, cheese);
- Fresh fruits and vegetables;
- Fluids (juice, milk and water).

Warm conditions encourage the growth of bacteria, so it is very important to keep lunch boxes cool. Please ensure your child's lunch box contains a frozen ice pack. Alternatively, try freezing your child's lunch time juice box or water bottle and adding it at the last minute. It will have defrosted by lunchtime and kept your child's food chilled. Please ensure to provide food your child likes and will eat.

Children are only permitted to eat the contents of their own lunch boxes.

Please select age appropriate foods for your child and send pre-chopped or sliced foods to avoid the risk of choking. All children must be seated for snack and lunchtime to ensure the learning of table manners in a social environment. This could also be introduced at home.

Spoons, forks and drinking cups are all readily available at the nursery, please kindly refrain from sending these from home.

Children need starchy foods for energy. Nutritious meals packed with fibre, protein, carbohydrate and vitamins will also help your child's growing bones and give them a healthy dose of brain power for the afternoon ahead.

### Some ideas for Sandwiches and Wraps

Vary between wholemeal, granary, multi-grain and white bread. You could also try crepes/pancakes, potato cake, malt loaf, hot cross buns or scones.

### **FILLINGS/TOPPINGS**

- Meat – wafer thin cooked meats, cubed chicken/turkey breast with tomato and lettuce, cheese, roast chicken & hummus, leftover cold meats (chicken, turkey, meatloaf, sausages etc) with salad, chicken and mashed avocado
- Fish – tuna mayo & sweetcorn, tuna salad, sardine and tomato, fish paste and cucumber
- Vegetarian – grated cheese, cheese spread, cream cheese, Quorn slices and salad, cottage cheese with pineapple, cheese and grated carrot with a little mayo, veggie sausages, vegetarian pate with cucumber, cheese and coleslaw, egg salad/egg mayo, cheese and pickle, Marmite
- Sweet – High-fruit jam/fruit spread, nut-free chocolate spread\*, honey, treacle, lemon curd

### Some Ideas for Fruits and Vegetables

Any combination of the following, in a small pot or bag:

- Raisins, sultanas, pumpkin/sunflower seeds, ready to eat dried apricots, dates or prunes
- Whole fruits – apple, banana, pear, peach, plum, grapes, strawberries (whatever is in season)
- Fruit salad pot – any combination of prepared fruit: strawberries, melon, mango, pineapple, kiwi, etc.
- Homemade fruit puree, smoothie or apple sauce (you can add strawberry, peach, etc)
- Fruit jelly made with fruit pieces and pure fruit juice.
- Salad pot – any combination of prepared raw vegetables: cucumber, lettuce, pepper, celery, cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, mangetout, slices of avocado sprinkled with a little lemon juice etc

### Some Ideas for Snacks

- Yogurts and squeeze tubes of fromage frais
- Cheeses - miniature, grated, cubed, cottage, cream
- Crackers, breadsticks, bread rolls, oat cakes, rice cakes
- Chunks of raw vegetables and fresh fruits
- Chicken satay pieces or barbeque drumsticks
- Mini-yogurt drinks (danone, actimel, laban)
- Mini portions of dried fruit and raisins
- Vegetable chips made from carrot, sweet potato or beetroot
- Pasta or rice salads
- Cereal and dried fruit bars
- Hard boiled eggs
- Sandwiches
- Mini croissants, pizzas or sausage rolls
- Mini sausages, rissoles or burgers

### Variation

Try to keep your options creative as well as appealing and offer variety not only each day, but also over the course of the week.

SIMPLE TOUCHES TO A LUNCH BOX CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE TO A CHILD'S DAY. MANY ARE EASY TO ACHIEVE.

- Draw faces on your child's banana
- Decorate containers with stickers
- Cut sandwiches with different shaped cookie cutters
- Pop in a little note or photo
- Surprise them and involve your child!

WE SUPPORT A HEALTHY EATING AND ALLERGY MANAGEMENT POLICY THAT EXCLUDES:

- Crisps
- Sweets/Lollies
- Chocolate
- Fizzy drinks
- Nuts (of any nature) including peanut butter and Nutella