

## Getting your Five a Day



Eating 5 portions of fruit and vegetables has been suggested to reduce the incidence of cardiovascular disease and some types of cancer.

One portion for a child is approximately what would fit in the palm of their hand.

Try to present your child with as wide a variety as possible. Fresh, frozen and dried fruits and vegetables all count as does the tomato sauce around baked beans or tinned spaghetti.

Fruit juice and unsweetened fruit smoothies may count only once per day and should be a meal accompaniment to reduce the fruit sugars harmful effects on teeth.

Beans and pulses also count as just one of your five a day no matter how much is consumed.

**Morning break.** All children in Nursery through to Year 2 will receive a free piece of fruit or vegetables a day at break-time. We encourage you to provide only a fruit or veg snack for mid-morning break.

**Lunch time.** Aim to include at least one portion of their five a day in their packed lunch

- Dried fruits such as sultanas, raisins, apricots and mango are easy to eat options for packed lunches. Cherry tomatoes or carrot, celery, cucumber or pepper cut into sticks are also a good choice.
- Add salad to their sandwich or other starchy food option.
- A flask of warm vegetable soup is another alternative.

**On the way home.** Children are often very hungry after a day at school and may be willing to try something new when they are hungry. A fruit or vegetable snack is a much healthier option than crisps biscuits and sweets.



## Guidelines for Healthy Packed Lunches at Bishops Down.

School meals have to be prepared using national guidelines to ensure they provide a healthy balanced diet, but it is just as important that the food in a packed lunch brought to school is prepared following similar principles. This means packed lunches should provide plenty of foods that contain the nutrients that children need, and fewer foods that are high in sugar and saturated fat.

This information is designed to give you some ideas for healthy packed lunches and why particular foods should be included for your child's health but also the foods that should not be included. We are aware that some children have special dietary needs either because of food allergies or intolerance or because of ongoing medical conditions such as Type 1 diabetes or coeliac disease, you may have a child who is particularly active and so has greater calorific needs. If this is the case these guidelines may need to be modified to meet their individual dietary needs.

The school would be grateful if you would adhere to these guidelines for packed lunches both when your child is eating at school but also when they are going on school trips.



## Guidelines for Healthy Packed Lunches

**It is recommended that a packed lunch should include something from each of the following four food groups.**

### 1. Starchy foods

- These are foods that provide slow release energy and should be about one third of the lunch.
- Includes bread, rice, pasta, noodles and potatoes.
- A traditional sandwich is absolutely fine but for added variety you may wish to try bagels, pitta bread, ciabatta, wraps, baguettes or rolls.
- Encourage your child to eat different varieties of bread; wholemeal, seeded and rye bread are healthier bread options.
- Rice, noodles, lentils, couscous, bulgur wheat and pasta can make an excellent basis for a salad, served with fruit and vegetables. Protein such as tuna, chicken, prawns or soya can also be added.
- Left over pizza, omelet or quiche can also be used as an alternative to a sandwich.
- Bread sticks, plain rice cakes or crackers served with cheese are also acceptable.



## 2. Protein

- Provides the vital nutrients for growth. Found in meat, fish, eggs, dairy foods and beans and pulses.
- Try to keep the amount of saturated fat down. These are often higher in processed meats such as sausages and meat pies.



## 3. Fruit, vegetables and salad

- The antioxidant properties of this food group have been shown to reduce the incidence of cardiovascular disease and help in the prevention of some types of cancer.



- They are also an important source of dietary fibre, vital for a healthy digestive system.
- Try to include at least one portion in every packed lunch and aim for at least 5 portions each day. (More about how to include five-a-day later.)

## 4. Dairy

- Milk, cheese and yogurt are also part of a balanced diet to provide calcium.
- Small pots of custard or rice pudding are alternatives.



## Other packed lunch items.

### Cakes, biscuits and desserts.

- Many parents like to include a sweeter item, similar to a dessert, in their child's packed lunch. This is acceptable, although not essential to meet their nutritional needs. Be aware that shop bought cakes and cookies are often higher in saturated fat and sugar than home-made ones, so aim for a small portion.
- Hot cross buns, fruit scones and malt loaf are healthier options.
- Dairy desserts such as yoghurt, mousse, custard and rice pudding, or low sugar jelly are good alternatives.



## Drinks

- Tap or bottled water or milk based drinks without added sugar.
- Fruit juice and fruit smoothies should also have no added sugar.
- Avoid sugary drinks that can add a lot of unnecessary extra calories and are more harmful to teeth.

**Portion sizes.** Consider carefully the portion sizes that you include in your child's packed lunch. They should have the amount that they can finish comfortably, with little or no waste. Children are encouraged to eat all of their school meal as the portion sizes are carefully regulated but you need to discuss with your child what you would like them to finish from their packed lunch. Children will be encouraged to eat the majority of their savoury items first. A small piece of cheese eaten after the sweet items or a drink of water has been shown to help prevent dental decay.

**Vegetarians.** If your child is vegetarian it is essential that they still get sufficient protein and iron for their growth and development. Good sources of protein include eggs, Quorn, pulses (beans, lentils and peas) and foods made from pulses such as tofu, hummus and soya mince. Vitamins B12 and D may be more difficult to source in a vegetarian diet. Fortified breakfast cereals, eggs, dairy products, margarine and yeast extracts such as Marmite are good sources.

### **Foods that should not be included**

- **Nuts, peanut butter and kiwi fruit and other products with nuts or kiwi**  
We have a number of children and staff with severe nut allergies & a child allergic to kiwi, so we aim to keep the school a nut & kiwi free environment at break and lunch times.
- **Sweets, chocolates and fizzy drinks**  
Of little nutritional value and harmful to teeth.
- **Chocolate covered items, e.g. KitKats and other chocolate coated biscuits and cakes**  
Cakes and biscuits baked with cocoa to make them chocolate flavour are acceptable.
- **Crisps and other fried potato snacks should not routinely be included.**  
As children having school dinner are served chips on a Friday a packet of crisps or similar may be included in packed lunches on Fridays only.