

## Healthier Eating for our Children

At Pattishall CE Primary School, we care about your children and want to give them the best start in life so that they have the best life chances. We know that that is what you want too. If we work together, we can help each other to achieve this.

Eating well is important and **has a massive impact on learning**: which is why we want to work with you. Children need the right foods to give them energy and nutrients not just to grow and develop normally, but to be able to focus so that they can learn.

A healthy, enjoyable lunch provides children with what they need to learn and play at school.

Pattishall School recommends the hot lunches provided in school to easily ensure children have a varied and balanced diet. These meals are provided free of charge for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Please contact the school office for more information on this.

**If you prefer your child to have a packed lunch, please support the school's policy by following the following guidelines.**

### Practical Tips for a Healthy Lunchbox

- Try to vary the contents of the lunchbox daily; ensuring your child is getting the variety of nutrients that their body needs.
- Involve your child in preparing their lunchbox; they are more likely to enjoy food they made themselves.
- Wash fruit and vegetables before use.
- To keep food fresh, make sure it is stored properly; lunches packed the night before need to be stored in the fridge.
- If using rice, make sure it is cooled quickly and stored in the fridge overnight.
- To keep lunches fresh during the day, use a cool bag and put in a reusable ice pack.
- If your child refuses to eat brown bread, try a 50:50 variety or make sandwiches using a slice of white bread and a slice of brown. For variety, use pitta strips, crackers, bread sticks or vegetable sticks with a dip.
- Always try to add a little salad to a sandwich. To avoid soggy sandwiches, dry the salad before use.
- You can use leftovers; for example: rice and curry, pizza or pasta and sauce.

For more information or advice, go to:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/childhealth6-15/Pages/Lighterlunchboxes.aspx>

<http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/>

<http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/childrens-food-trust/parents/your-childs-food-at-school/packed-lunches/>

### **What is a healthy packed lunch?**

A healthy, packed lunch is a balanced meal providing a variety of nutrients from four food groups:

**Carbohydrates:** Bread. Try different types such as pitta, wraps, chapattis or rolls. Other starchy foods such as pasta, potatoes, rice or couscous. Whole grain varieties are best for fibre which is vital for a healthy digestive system.

**Protein:** Lean meats such as chicken, turkey or ham. Include oily fish (pilchards, sardines or mackerel) at least once every three weeks. Eggs including quiche or omelette. Meat alternatives such as tofu. Meat products such as sausage rolls, sausages, pies, pastries and fried foods should not be included more than once a fortnight. Use butter, margarine and mayonnaise sparingly or use low fat alternatives. **No nuts are allowed in school** (this includes Peanut Butter and Chocolate Hazlenut spreads).

**Fruit and Vegetables:** Add tomato or lettuce to a sandwich. Try a small salad as an alternative to a sandwich. Fresh fruit Dried fruit such as raisins or apricots. Finger foods such as cherry tomatoes, cucumber sticks or celery. Great with a dip like houmous. Aim to include at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetable each day.

**Dairy:** Cheese. Yoghurt. Milk. Low fat varieties are healthier.

**Drinks:** Staying hydrated helps children to concentrate and feel well. We recommend water, milk or pure fruit juice.

**Treats:** A sweet treat in the lunchbox is absolutely fine, as part of a balanced diet. The children have more time to digest and burn off quick release carbohydrates and sugars at lunchtime.

### Breaktime Snacks

Snack foods tend to be high in fat, sugar and salt. Foods high in fat can lead to excessive weight gain and heart disease. High sugar foods are bad for teeth. Foods containing high levels of salt can increase blood pressure and lead to heart disease.

Also, the children only have 15 minutes at playtime – this means that there is not enough time to process the sugar. If they have had a sweet treat the excess energy as a result will cause them to lack focus in their Maths lesson.

Fruit is provided, free of charge, to children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

For a healthier snack try:

- Dried fruit
- Fresh fruit
- Fresh vegetables (with or without a dip)
- Fruit salad
- Fruit bread
- Rice cakes
- Breadsticks
- Crackers and cheese

We don't allow chocolate (including chocolate biscuits), sweets or fizzy drinks unless it is for a special occasion in school. Please also try to avoid those snacks with very high sugar content, such as some cereal bars or 'Fruit Winders'.

**Due to pupil allergies, no nuts are allowed in school.**

We cannot thank you enough for your support on this matter – we just want the children to be in the best possible place in order for them to achieve their very best. We know that you want that too.

With kindest regards from all the team.