



## Healthy Eating and Healthy Lunchboxes

As part of our curriculum in school the children are taught about healthy eating and lifestyle choices. This is to help the children to make nutritious food choices and alongside regular exercise will help an individual to keep a healthy weight. It would be really helpful if you could support school in this area by talking to your child about making healthy choices, especially when making selections for packed lunches.

As you may already be aware the school asks that children **do not** have the following in their lunchboxes:

- Sweets, chewing gum and chocolate bars
- Nuts (due to children within school with severe nut allergies)
- Fizzy pop or energy drinks
- Chocolate spread, honey, jam or marmalade or other sugary sandwich fillings
- High fat, high salt, high sugar snacks such as crisps, sweet popcorn should be eaten as an occasional treat (maybe once a week and you could set a day such as a Friday when a lunchbox treat is allowed)

We advise that packed lunches are brought to school in insulated bags with a freezer block, where possible, to stop food going off. School cannot provide cooled storage areas and therefore cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school. Glass bottles and tins are not permitted due to health and safety issues that could arise.

Food contained in a packed lunch should be based on the Eat Well plate model and should include the following every day:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide/>

- Fruit and Vegetables - at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables or salad.
- A non-dairy source of protein – for example: meat, fish, egg, beans or pulses such as lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus and falafel.
- A starchy food like bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals.
- Dairy foods such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais.



School ensures that fresh drinking water is readily available at all times. If other drinks are desired with a packed lunch healthier drinks such as the following are recommended:

- 100% pure fruit juice
- Semi-skimmed or skimmed milk
- Yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies.

All uneaten food and waste will be kept in the lunchbox and returned home with the child so that parents are able to monitor their child's food consumption.

### **Here are a few steps that we will be taking in school to promote the uptake of fruit and vegetables at lunchtimes:**

We regularly give out stickers to children with healthy lunch boxes and reward children with a note for making healthy choices which will be passed to their class teacher at the end of lunchtime. These rewards will be based on including a piece of fresh fruit or vegetable in their packed lunch box. At the end of the term reward notes will be put into a raffle and if their name is selected then they may receive a prize of sporting equipment.

Whilst we would like our strategies to promote healthy choices to be positive ones we also need to address the issue of identifying lunchboxes that do not meet the healthy lunchbox criteria. Lunchtime staff will be monitoring lunchbox content and will be informing class teachers where they feel the content of a lunchbox is not suitably balanced on a regular basis.

Parents will then be informed and asked to consider the content of their child's packed lunch and offered support, if necessary, from Mrs Hitchens around helping children to develop healthier eating habits and about providing affordable healthy lunches.

We would greatly appreciate your support in helping the children at Park Street to make healthy food choices. We realise that it takes time to change eating habits and as well as the strategies mentioned above we will be involving the whole school community; running competitions, food tasting sessions, class healthy eating lessons and healthy lifestyle assemblies. We also have an informative display in the school reception area with information about healthy eating, affordable packed lunches and our school incentive system.

Thank you for your continued support.