



Healthier Lunchboxes

Dear Parents / Carers,

We would like to share with you some recent advice from the government with regard to healthier lunchboxes which we would hope you will find supportive.

We, like you, take the health of the children at Whitnash Primary School seriously. It is particularly important for a school aged child to eat a well-balanced diet so as to provide them with the energy to cope with the challenges of a school day, improve concentration and to help form healthy bones. Making a lunchbox healthier and appetising to your child to your child doesn't mean that they miss out on all the things that they enjoy eating. It is about getting a good balance and good variety throughout each week.

We don't expect your children to miss out on special treats such as crisps or chocolate biscuits so why not try the following ideas:

1. Limit the number of times they are included to twice a week
2. Try adding plain popcorn, breadsticks or pretzels as a change instead of crisps
3. Add a lower fat snack such as a fruit scone, slice of malt loaf or a current bun, tea bread or wholemeal muffin instead of a chocolate biscuit.

Handy Hints

The school has thought carefully about the additional information which they hope will support you in your efforts to provide your child with a healthy lunchbox.

So.....what is a healthier lunchbox?

A Healthy lunchbox should contain a good portion of Carbohydrates:

- Bread, e.g. granary, wholegrain, soft grain, baguettes, poppy seed bread, bagels, pitta bread, wraps, chapatti. (If your child does not like wholemeal bread try making sandwiches with one slice of white and one of wholemeal or use white bread with added fibre.)
- Pasta (please avoid rice salads as we cannot guarantee the correct storage temperature).
 - Crackers, crisp breads and rice cakes.

Plenty of fruit and vegetables (as a rough guide, a child's portion of fruit and vegetables is the quantity that comfortably fits in their hand)

- A Satsuma, a pear
- Small banana or a apple
- Small box of raisins or other dried fruit, or a handful of grapes or cherry tomatoes
- A slice of melon
- A mini tub of fruit chunks (preferably in natural fruit juice and not in syrup)
- Sticks, slices or chunks of cucumber, carrots red or yellow peppers

Advice

A lunchbox is not complete without a drink, however many of the drinks that appear in children's lunchboxes are high in sugar and additives e.g. fruit shoots/sunny delight. Being well hydrated has also been linked with better concentration and learning. On average children should be drinking 5 to 6 glasses of fluid a day.

Here are some suggestions for you to try:

- Unsweetened fruit juices
- Flavoured water/low sugar squashes
- Bottled water
- Milk/flavoured milk

Listed below are alternatives for treats such as crisps, chocolate bars and sweets. You could include:

- Currant buns
- Rice cakes

- Malt loaf
- Plain popcorn
- Breadsticks
- Cheese scones
- Vegetable sticks
- Fruit portion e.g. box of raisins, cherry tomatoes, melon
- Cheese portion
- Use an insulated lunch box
- Freeze drinks or include an ice pack
- Make the lunchbox items the night before and put in the fridge
- Use ice packs to keep food cold

Rinse out the lunchbox daily and always thoroughly clean the lunchbox in soapy water at least once a week

- Bags could be washed with clothes in the washing machine on a 40 degree cycle

Healthy Eating Suggestions

Following a questionnaire regarding children's lunchboxes, the results show that the majority of parents and children are keen to eat more healthily, we are aware of time pressure, cost and convenience implications this may have. Below are two healthy suggestions which are quick and convenient:

- Wholemeal pitta bread with reduced fat cheese and salad
- Cucumber batons
- Low fat crisps
- Flavoured milk
- Raisins

NUTRITION INFORMATION	
Energy 635kcal	Protein 25.8g
Fat 11.2g	Saturate 3.3g
Carbohydrate 114.8g	Sugars 55.9g
Sodium 840mg	Salt 2.1g
Average cost of 3 at the supermarket:	£0.93

- Slice of pizza
- Cherry tomatoes
- Cereal bar
- Piece of cheese
- Fruit smoothie

NUTRITION INFORMATION	
Energy 634kcal	Protein 25.3g
Fat 20.7g	Saturates 6.8g
Carbohydrate 56.4g	Sugars 13.3g
Sodium 485mg	Salt 1.2g
Average cost of 3 at the supermarkets:	£1.30

A portion of Dairy:

- A pot of low fat fruit yoghurt or yoghurt drink, or pots or tubes of fromage frais.
- A carton of semi skimmed milk
- A small piece of cheese, or mini cheese triangles

A portion of lean Meat or Fish:

- A portion of lean meat, fish or alternative
- E.g. ham, chicken, beef, tuna, salmon, egg or hummus

A Drink:

- Water, flavoured water
- Low sugar squashes
- Unsweetened fruit juice
- Semi skimmed milk