

## PACKED LUNCH GUIDELINES

### Choking hazards

Foods such as grapes, cherry tomatoes & cocktail sausages **MUST** be cut by parents in quarters lengthwise to avoid being a choking hazard.

### Portion size

An ideal packed lunch is not too big – the correct size portion for a child or adult is the size of your palm. Small amounts in little pots or in a divider type lunch container work well. A lunch box for a pre-schooler might look like this.

2 quarters of sandwich

4 grapes cut lengthwise (or equivalent.)

Small low fat yoghurt

Small Square of cheese (sliced)

Pre-schoolers have growth spurts and can be very random in their eating. The health visitor has advised that if they haven't eaten in half an hour they are probably not hungry so we will not force the issue. We will return uneaten items in their lunch box. If they are hungry later on we will re offer lunch. If they are still hungry we do have crackers and fruit we can offer and we can let you know that your child's lunch need to be bigger. We will never let a child go hungry. Children are very carefully supervised at lunch time and we monitor what they are eating and if they need any help. Boxes and containers that they can open by themselves are best.

We encourage the children to eat healthy and would ask that parents respect this when making packed lunches

The NHS guidelines are

A healthier lunchbox should:

- Be based on [starchy carbohydrates](#) (bread, potatoes, rice, pasta)
- Include fresh fruit and vegetables/salad
- Include a source of protein such as [beans and pulses](#), eggs, fish, meat, cheese (or dairy alternative)
- Include a side dish such as a low-fat and lower-sugar yoghurt (or dairy alternative), tea cake, fruit bread, plain rice/corn cakes,
- Include a drink such as water, skimmed or semi-skimmed milk,
- The [Eat well Guide](#) shows you how to have a healthy balanced diet and can help you decide what to put in your child's lunchbox.

Find healthy lunchbox ideas at [Change4Life](#).

Children often like food they can eat with their fingers. Try these ideas:

- **Chop up raw veggies** – such as carrots or peppers, and give them hummus or cottage cheese to dip the veggies in.
- **Chop up fruit** – such as apple, Satsuma segments, strawberries, blueberries, halved grapes or melon slices. Add a squeeze of lemon juice to stop them from going brown.
- **Breadsticks and wholemeal crackers** –make great finger foods. Try spreading low-fat soft cheese on them.
- **Choose malt loaf, teacakes, fruit breads or fruit** – instead of cake, chocolate, cereal bars and biscuits. Fruit can be fresh or canned (in juice, not syrup).