



# Packed Lunch Guidance

Choosing to send your child to school with a packed lunch is a great way to ensure they're eating a balanced and healthy diet that will keep their energy levels up ready for learning. You can plan your child's lunch using some of the guidance below. A balanced diet, built upon the four key food groups - fruit and vegetables, starchy carbohydrates, dairy/alternatives and proteins - is crucial for children's growth and development. **We are a 'nut-free' school so please avoid adding nuts to your child's lunch.**

## Proteins

Protein is vital for your child due to its role in rapid growth and development. It helps build muscles and tissues, supports a strong immune system and aids in brain development. Add protein to your child's lunch by including your protein choice in a sandwich, wrap or salad. You could include:

- **beans and pulses**
- **meat and poultry**
- **fish**
- **eggs**
- **meat alternatives**



## Fruits and Vegetables



Fruits and vegetables are fantastic sources of vitamins and minerals that keep your child's body healthy. They're also a good source of fibre, too. Try to provide two sources of these foods in your child's lunch, including items such as:

- **fresh, frozen or dried fruit such as apples, strawberries or oranges**
- **tinned fruits like pineapple or peach slices in juice (taken out of the tin)**
- **cut vegetables like cucumber, peppers and carrot**

## Dairy or dairy alternatives

Foods containing calcium (like dairy products) can help to boost your child's bone growth. You should aim for one portion of these foods, which could include:

- **milk**
- **cheese**
- **yoghurt**
- **fromage frais**
- **oat or soya milk**



## Starchy Carbohydrates

You should aim for one portion of these foods, which could include:

- **bread**
- **potatoes, sweet potatoes and other starchy root vegetables**
- **pasta and noodles**
- **rice and other grains**
- **breakfast cereals**



## Tips for a fresh and safe lunch:

Clearly label your child's lunch box with their name.



Where possible use a sealed, insulated bag with an ice pack for foods that need to be kept cool or follow the 4 hour rule (foods can be out of the fridge for up to 4 hours once during their entire storage).

Chop foods which are choking hazards (such as grapes, sausages and cherry tomatoes) into quarters lengthways.



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