

Why do we need a healthy packed lunch?

Stick me on your fridge

A healthy packed lunch will give children the **energy** and **nutrition** they need to get the most from their school day – helping them to **stay healthy, feel good and be ready and able to learn**. Just like school meals, packed lunches should be made up of foods from the main food groups in the **Eatwell Guide** www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide and portions should be appropriate for a child's age and size. This will ensure every child has a healthy and nutritionally-balanced lunch.

What should I include in my healthy packed lunch?

Please try to include **ONE** of each of the following in your lunch each day:



STARCHY CARBOHYDRATE

- ✓ bread, wrap, pitta, bagel, rolls, baguette
 - ✓ rice or couscous
 - ✓ pasta
 - ✓ noodles
 - ✓ potatoes
- Wholemeal/wholegrain options contain more fibre and keep you fuller for longer

Gives you energy for the day ahead!



DAIRY FOOD (or non-dairy alternative)

- ✓ cheese – hard, soft, spread
- ✓ yoghurt or fromage frais
- ✓ milk
- ✓ custard

Choose low fat, low sugar options where possible

Good for healthy bones and teeth!



FRUIT (fresh, frozen, tinned or dried)

- ✓ apple
- ✓ banana
- ✓ satsuma
- ✓ pear
- ✓ plum
- ✓ mango
- ✓ melon
- ✓ small box of raisins
- ✓ cherry tomatoes (chopped)
- ✓ handful of grapes (halved)
- ✓ fruit salad or kebab

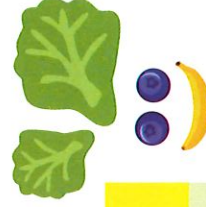
Fruit and vegetables give you vitamins, minerals and fibre to stay healthy. Part of your '5 a day'

How much? A portion is one child-sized handful.

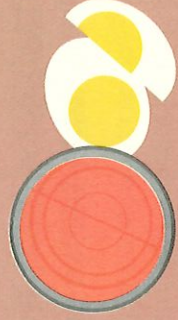


VEGETABLES OR SALAD

- ✓ chopped vegetable sticks (e.g. carrot, cucumber, pepper)
- ✓ salad in sandwiches
- ✓ vegetable soup



Helps your body to grow and develop



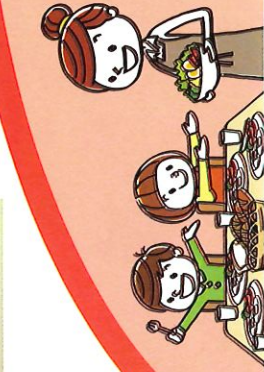
PROTEIN

- ✓ meat e.g. sliced lean ham, chicken or beef in a sandwich
- ✓ fish – try to include oily fish such as salmon or sardines at least once every 3 weeks (tuna doesn't count – sorry!)
- ✓ eggs
- ✓ lentils, beans, chickpeas



DRINKS – plain tap water is the best option, especially for teeth. Please send your child to school with their own named, clean water bottle each day.

Drinking enough each day helps keep your body working well and your skin looking healthy!



Me-sized meals

Young children don't need as much food as teenagers and adults. When they eat more than they need, the excess energy is stored as fat in their bodies.



What about snacks for break time?

The best options for breaktime snacks are:

- ✓ Portion of fresh fruit (no dried fruit as snacks please as the sugar can stick in teeth).
- ✓ Vegetable sticks

Other ideas for healthy snacks could be rice cakes, bread sticks, bag of plain popcorn but please check your school's policy on snacks and allergies to see what is allowed in your school.

What should I NOT bring to school?

Please do **NOT** include the following items:

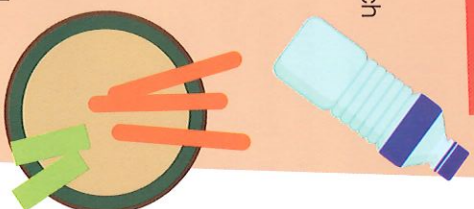
- ✗ Sweets and chocolate bars – these foods are high in sugar and calories, low in goodness, and are harmful for teeth.
- ✗ Squash or fizzy drinks – water is best for teeth.
- ✗ Other items e.g. nuts, sesame, fish – please check your school's allergy policy.



Thank you!

5 top tips for your packed lunch

- Freezer packs can keep food cool. Freeze a (reusable) bottle of water which will be ready to drink by lunchtime.
- Get your child to help pack their lunch box – they are more likely to enjoy it.
- Children love to dip – cut up pitta bread or use veg sticks to have with a pot of yoghurt dip e.g. tzatziki.
- Use pastry cutters to cut funny-shaped sandwiches.
- Protect your fruit by putting it in a small plastic container e.g. apple/banana guard.



Get more vegetables in your lunches!

Here are some GREAT ideas for upping the veg (and fibre!) content in your lunchboxes healthyschoolsnorthyorks.org/healthy-food



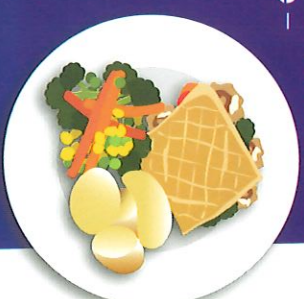
Be safe!

- Please cut up food into small sizes for young children. Cut grapes and cherry tomatoes in half (lengthways if oblong).
- Be aware of allergies – please check your school's allergies guidance.

School dinners are best!

Making packed lunches can be time consuming and expensive – why not try school dinners?

School meals provide your child with a nutritionally-balanced variety of foods. **Every** infant child (aged 5-7) is entitled to a **FREE** school lunch.



Also, **FREE school meals** for all age groups are provided to families who receive qualifying incomes such as income support and universal credit. **Ask your school office** how to order yours. More information is available from **your school's website** or the **North Yorkshire County Council website** www.northyorks.gov.uk/school-meals www.northyorks.gov.uk/free-school-meals

Here are some websites with more information to help your family to stay healthy, happy and well:

healthyschoolsnorthyorks.org/healthy-food

nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/childrens-weight

And some information on saving money, local food banks, financial support and eating well on a budget:

healthyschoolsnorthyorks.org/costsaving



Healthy Schools
North Yorkshire



North Yorkshire
County Council

Leaflet developed by Public Health, North Yorkshire County Council and the North Yorkshire Healthy Schools Programme.