

Healthy Eating In Schools

You have probably heard that the government has introduced new, higher standards for school meals from September. School meals need to change because of worries that many children eat too much food with lots of fat, salt and sugar. This can lead to serious health problems now and later in their lives. Sweet fizzy drinks can also cause tooth decay and make children put on too much weight.

Bilbrook Middle School now offers healthier choices at lunchtime. The new standards mean more fresh food, including fruit and vegetables, and less deep fried food and manufactured meat products. Sweets, chocolates and crisps are not allowed. We are working hard (with our caterers) to meet these new standards.

We hope that your children will give these new, healthier school meals a try. If you do send a packed lunch, please think carefully about what goes into it.

We know that a large number of schools are making healthy eating a priority, with many now achieving or working towards healthy schools status. In our school, healthy eating plays an important role in our work with the children and as parents your support can make the world of difference in helping your child to be excited and interested in the new menus on offer. We ask you to be even more proactive by talking to your children about healthy eating at other times of the day as well as at lunch so that school and parents are working together towards building a healthy future for them.

(SS maybe a link to tips for a packed lunch)

Healthy lunchbox ideas for parents

Packed lunches don't have to be boring. With a little thought and imagination they can be fun, healthy and tasty too. Just include something from the four main food groups, pop in a drink and away you go!

Start with the basics—bread, cereals and potatoes.

Try different types of bread, e.g. sliced bread, bread rolls, pitta breads, chapatti, baguettes, crackers...the list is endless! If you chose to use a spread on sandwiches try using low fat varieties.

Go for a variety of breads too—wholemeal, granary, high fibre white, brown or white.

Why not make lunch with rice, pasta or potatoes instead of sandwiches? Try pasta salad.

Add tasty fillings—meat, fish and alternatives.

Try to include lean meat, chicken, fish, eggs, nuts, beans or pulses in your lunch box.

Why not have fillings such as chicken/lamb tikka or keema in chapatti or pitta bread, with some salad?

Other tasty fillings include:

Egg mayonnaise with cucumber

Tuna with sweet corn

Kebab sandwiches

Low fat cheese with tomatoes

Fruit and vegetables

It is important to aim for five portions of fruit and vegetables in a day. However, instead of throwing in the same old apple or banana try exotic alternatives such as:

Kiwi

Strawberries

Carrot sticks

Small packet of mixed dried fruits

Cherry tomatoes

Tinned fruit in natural fruit juice. These can be placed in a small plastic container or can be bought in small tins with a ring pull

Dairy delights

Try to include some dairy products in your lunchbox. They're important to keep your teeth healthy and your bones strong:

Low fat yoghurt—plain or flavoured fruit

Low fat fromage frais

Small pot of rice pudding

Milkshake

Added extras

Fancy a 'treat' in your lunch box? There's nothing wrong with this. Just try and make healthier choices when you can:

Reduced fat crisps, twiglets or pretzels
Fruit cake, currant bun, scone or slice of carrot cake
Plain popcorn
Plain biscuit e.g. digestives

Pop in a drink

Choose from:
Water
Plain or flavoured milk
Pure fruit juice in small cartons or in a small bottle

Remember to keep your lunch cool

Use a cool bag and pop in an ice-pack or freeze a carton of juice and place in with food to keep cool
Keep your lunch in the fridge until morning if you make it the night before.
Don't store your lunch next to a radiator or in the sun.