

# Welcome to Richmond Pre-schools Lunch Club !

## What You Need To Know About Lunch Club



<p>Please provide your child's lunch in a Lunch Box/Container</p>	<p>A named container, preferably insulated and with a cool pack inside.</p> <p>Food can remain unrefrigerated for up to 4 hours and a cool pack ensures the food will be safe for eating, as we do not have the facilities to refrigerate lunches.</p> <p>Please read our notes further down on what is permitted for lunch.</p>
<p>An extra drink (optional)</p>	<p>You can send your child in with an extra drink, but this is optional as we provide water and milk at lunch time.</p> <p>Please note any drink bought from home to use during the session does not go through to lunch.</p>
<p>Where do the Lunch boxes go ?</p>	<p>Part of the arrival routine is to place all lunch boxes in the lunch trolley situated in the garden, just before you come into the building.</p>
<p>Getting used to a packed lunch</p>	<p>Please try to ensure that your child is familiar with using their lunch box and has practiced how to open, unwrap and eat what's in there (including starting with the most filling starchy based part e.g. bread/pasta and not the yoghurt!).</p> <p>They will also learn (through practice at Lunch club) to put everything back in and return their box to the lunch trolley.</p>
<p>Nut and Egg free setting</p>	<p>We are a nut and egg free setting, so please do not bring in any products containing nuts or eggs - see below for more information.</p>
<p>Choking risks</p>	<p>Due to the risk of choking we ask that any items that could get lodged in the wind pipe, such as cherry tomatoes, olives, sausages, grapes, babybel cheeses etc are cut in quarters lengthwise.</p> <p>All lunch club staff hold a full Paediatric First Aid certificate and are on hand to encourage and help the children (to open packets etc), but if possible decant items into pots or bags that the children can manage themselves, all these little achievements give children a sense of pride and being independent boosts self esteem.</p>

## The Time and the Place

<p>From September 2020 our lunch club will be from 11:45am to 12:50pm.</p>	<p>Please bear in mind this isn't a lot of time and it will also include taking the register, washing hands, sitting down, unpacking and repacking lunch bits (where possible we return all packaging, peelings and leftovers so you can monitor the food eaten).</p>
<p>How much food?</p>	<p>It's an exciting time eating with friends, including quite a bit of general chit chat going on, so a few gentle reminders to eat are sometimes needed! So, think about how much food you are putting in, as you know best how long your child will take to eat it. Also, it's worth remembering that we provide a snack opportunity during the pre-school morning session, so if your child has had some cheese, crackers and fruit for snack, they may not be overly hungry (plus they had breakfast at home too). We check how much a child has had of their lunch and give encouragement to eat, but will never force them.</p>
<p>Where is Lunch club?</p>	<p>Lunch is usually in Nemo room and the children and staff sit together at child sized tables in small groups. Part of Lunch club is talking about hygiene, healthy eating and how to look after ourselves. There is usually a story read beforehand and activities available for after lunch has finished.</p> <p>On sunny days we eat picnic style outside under the shade on blankets. We will reapply sun cream to your child, but you can help us by applying an all-day cream before they come to pre-school and trying your best to send them in clothes that cover their vulnerable areas such as shoulders and arms and by sending in a hat. We also provide hats as they are a requirement to go into the garden on sunny days.</p>

## Healthy Lunch Boxes



<p>Food at Preschool</p>	<p>Packed lunches can contribute to almost 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of a child's weekly food intake and therefore, it is important that they are balanced and nutritious.</p> <p>In November 2017 the Government produced a guidance document of menus and useful nutritional information for early years settings to help them to meet the Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirements for food and drink.</p> <p>At pre-school we adhere to this document with regards to what we provide for healthy snacks and we want to ensure all foods bought into pre-school (i.e. Lunchboxes) continue to offer healthy food for the children in our care.</p> <p>'Action for children' have also put together a practical 'Eat Better - Start Better' guide (2017) for Foundation year settings (pre-schools, nurseries etc) on the nutritional requirements of children in their care. You can search 'Eat Better Start Better Foundation Years', to access it. The guide contains a lot of really good information on portion size, food groups and ideas on how easy it can be to make good food choices for children (don't print it though it's 86 pages!).</p>
<p>Things to include in a Healthy Lunch</p>	<p>It's all about the portion size. When 'a portion' is mentioned below it refers to a CHILD'S PALM portion (not an adult).</p> <p>1-2 (no more than 2) portions of starchy foods (a third of the lunch box)</p> <p>1 portion of fruit</p> <p>1 portion of vegetables</p> <p>1 portion of dairy</p> <p>1 portion of protein</p>

Here is a list of the recommended food groups (according to the Eatwell Guide) and some healthy examples:

<p><b>Starchy foods</b> - are a good source of energy</p> <p>1 to 2 portions for lunch - making a third of the lunch box.</p>	<p>Sliced Wholemeal bread, white/wholemeal mix (e.g 'Best of both' /50-50) or as rolls, wraps, pitta pockets. Try to source smaller children sized wraps and pittas or use half a standard size 'adult' one.</p> <p>Pasta - use in salads or side dishes</p> <p>Bagels - look for the smaller ones or half a regular.</p> <p>Potatoes - use in salads or side dishes</p> <p>Grains - couscous, polenta, bulgar wheat</p>
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<p><b>Fruit and Vegetables</b> contain essential vitamins, minerals and fibre.</p> <p>1 portion of fruit and 1 portion of vegetables for lunch</p>	<p>Fresh, Tinned, Frozen, Dried, can all be included (prepare as needed) but do not include natural fruit juices for a drink. Try to 'Eat a Rainbow' of different types and colours:</p> <p>Banana, berries/grapes, small apple, satsuma, kiwi or plum, 2-4 tablespoons (tbsp) of tinned fruit (in natural juice, not syrup), broccoli/peas/cauliflower/courgetti/green beans/sweetcorn, 1-2 small lettuce leaves, cherry tomatoes, 2-8 vegetable sticks (celery, carrot, cucumber)</p> <p>Stewed/Compote or cooked fruit can be added to natural yoghurt or served as a side dish.</p>
<p><b>Protein foods</b> provides protein and iron essential for growth.</p> <p>1 portion for lunch</p>	<p>Meat - Chicken, Turkey, Pork, Beef</p> <p>Fish (oily fish) - Tuna, Salmon, Mackerel,</p> <p>Non-meat alternatives- Hummus, Beans (e.g. kidney) or Lentils, alternatives such as 'Quorn' products.</p>
<p><b>Dairy</b> is a source of calcium, protein, fat and B vitamins</p> <p>1 portion for lunch</p>	<p>We offer semi-skimmed milk at pre-school for snack and at lunchtime. Should your child have a dairy intolerance, you can provide an alternative for us to keep in the fridge to offer them, as long as it is not nut based (eg no almond milk).</p> <p>Cheese - hard cheeses, cottage/ricotta cheese, 2-5 tbsp rice pudding, 5-7 tbsp custard, 8 tbsp (max 125g of yoghurt or fromage frais)</p> <p>With regard to shop bought yoghurts, fromage frais, rice puddings, custards etc it is important to read the nutritional information label to check the amount of sugar they contain. Low sugar options are the best and have less than 5g of sugar per 100g.</p>
<p><b><u>⚠ Things to be aware of for pre-school aged children ⚠</u></b></p>	
<p><b>Sugar</b></p>	<p>Research has shown most children eat too much 'Free' sugars (sugars that have been added e.g. cereals, biscuits, sweets) around 2-3 times the recommended daily amount (RDA).</p> <p>For a 2-3 year old the RDA is equivalent to 3 sugar cubes (13g) for 3-4 year old the RDA is equivalent to 4 cubes of sugar (15g).</p>
<p><b>Pre-packed items and processed foods</b></p>	<p>These items (e.g. lunchable packs, sausage rolls) may be convenient once in a while when there is not time or options available, but are not suitable for young children to have regularly due to the high amount of salt, sugar and fat they contain.</p>

<b>Pre-packed items and processed foods cont.</b>	Again you can check the product nutritional information per 100g and select products that have under 3g of fat per 100g, 5g of sugar per 100g and are low in salt.
	Many of these items also contain food additives including, preservatives, flavour enhancers and sometimes colourings and can fill a child up with 'empty calories'. Some pre-packed food are in adult portions and too large for children

At Richmond pre-school we take a pro-active approach to promoting healthy eating and the well-being of your child, as most families with children do now days. Many of us are increasingly aware of the importance of a well-balanced diet for everyone to stay healthy and prevent a variety of health problems.

**Eggs and Nuts are not permitted in the setting, as most years we have children with serious allergies to these and it is therefore good practice not to allow them. Other foods may need to be added to this list, should we have children with a different food allergy.**

**Please do not include any eggs (including omelettes or hard boiled) or nuts (including chocolate nut spread) in lunch boxes - thank you.**

We appreciate how hard it can be to ensure lunches are well balanced. Below are some examples of food that are not beneficial or needed by children, therefore if possible, please try and replace with a healthier alternative:

- Fizzy/Sugary drinks in cartons, bottles or cans
- Natural fruit juices - although they count towards 5 a day, the natural sugar high content may contribute to tooth decay, the NHS recommend a daily limit of 150ml.
- Dried fruits (on their own, not in a scone etc) e.g. Raisins, Apricots - again due to the high content of natural sugars and the sticky texture means the sugars would be on the child's teeth until they returned home.
- Chocolate, sweets or confectionary
- Cereal bars/ fruit bars
- Chocolate spread or nut spread as a sandwich filler
- Crisp (instead of a whole packet, maybe put some in a pot and look for healthier baked ones)

**A Couple of Top Tips**  (Some of these have been used by parents and some we have searched for ideas - there are so many out there !)

<p>Keep it simple and child friendly.</p>	<p>Ensure all drinks can be securely resealed after opening i.e. no straw cartons or cans.</p> <p>Try and use a child sized lunch box, tubs they can open easily. If not sure on the amount of food you have put in - put the lunch out on a child sized plate to see.</p>
<p>Ideal leftovers</p>	<p>Sometimes dinner leftovers can be eaten cold the next day - especially pasta.</p>
<p>Changes in stages:</p>	<p>First time maybe peel the satsuma and put it in segments. Step up - satsuma peeled but put in whole, not in segments. Independent - can peel own satsuma!</p>
<p>Let them make lunch</p>	<p>Put crackers or a small roll in lunch box with, bits of ham, cheese, salad/cress or hummus with vegetable sticks and let them put it together or eat individually.</p>
<p>Perfect size pizza</p>	<p>Lightly toast a pitta bread, spread pasta sauce and grated cheese, bit of veg. Bake 5-10 mins, makes a lunch size healthy pizza.</p>
<p>Sandwich shapes</p>	<p>Use large biscuit cutters to make sandwich shapes (or look on ebay/amazon or similar sites who stock fun shaped sandwich cutters that fit a whole slice of bread, less waste)</p>
<p>Make slow changes</p>	<p>Try mixing things together e.g. mix favourite grated cheese with little apple, carrot or onion and put in a wholemeal roll. Marmite sandwich -add cheese and cucumber (either love it or hate it !)</p>
<p>Lead by example !</p>	<p>Having the whole family involved in what they want to eat when trying out healthier food options is only going to benefit everyone in the long run. It may take a few attempts to get it right and even making little swaps, every so often is a step in the right direction. You may even see some monetary savings, as home cooking tends to be cheaper than buying ready made !</p>

## Healthy Lunch Box Swaps

We appreciate that finding healthier alternatives can be difficult. We have listed below common foods found in children's packed lunch boxes, along with alternative ideas to provide your child with a healthy cost-effective lunch! The Change for Life NHS website also has lots of good food swap ideas - [www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes).

<b>Popular lunchbox items</b>	<b>Healthier alternative suggestions</b>
Crisps	Baked savoury snacks that are lower in fat (eg Walkers oven baked crisps) Plain rice cakes Plain popcorn (Unsalted/unsweetened non-flavoured) Seeds (packs can be found in most supermarkets or greengrocers)
Strip cheese	Cut small cubes or slices from the family block of cheese. Or include a small pot of cottage cheese in your child's lunch box (diced fruit or vegetables can also be added and this will count towards part of their daily fruit and vegetable intake.)
Shop bought e.g. Lunchables, Stackems Dunkers and Sausage rolls	Sandwiches are better replacements for these types of food. They need not be boring, there are a range of breads and wraps available. These can be filled with fillings including lean meats such as ham, turkey or chicken, fish including canned salmon, tuna, sardines, cheese such as cheddar, edam or mozzarella.
Chocolate bars, mini-rolls, cake bars, biscuits and cake.	Fruit buns, flapjacks, oatcakes, malt loaf, scones, banana cake.
Juice drinks e.g. fruit shoot, five alive, cordial squashes, energy drinks (often contain caffeine)	Water, Vegetable smoothies. Milk and milkshakes without added sugar are good alternatives.
Spreads and dressings	If using mayonnaise in a sandwich you could use a reduced fat variety..

Please note this is a working document and we welcome any feedback or ideas on how we can continue improving our lunch club and in keeping it healthy. If your child has any dietary needs, please let either their key worker, or the office, know and also of any suitable alternatives that can be given.

We hope you found the information useful and look forward to seeing your child for their lunch experience with us at Richmond Pre-school.