

Guidance to parents on 'Packed Lunches'

We aim to ensure all aspects of food and nutrition at The Saplings Preschool promote the health and wellbeing of the children.

Parents are advised to include a small, named ice pack if food is likely to spoil. Children are not allowed to swap or share their food from lunch boxes.

In addition, the preschool requests parents **not** to include the following:

- Sweets
- Food containing nuts (some children in preschool have an allergy reaction to any contact with nuts.)
- Fizzy/sugary drinks

Eating Environment

The preschool will provide a safe, calm and healthy eating environment for children having a packed lunch at preschool. We do this by:

- Ensuring all children wash their hands before their meal
- Encouraging children to eat all or try to eat most of the food provided in their lunch box.
- Making sure children have the time to eat their lunch and do not rush, whilst, recognising that children also need time to play.
- Asking children to take leftovers from lunchboxes home to enable parents to see what their child has eaten.
- Providing fresh water for every child

Packed Lunches

We would like lunch boxes to reflect a healthy balanced meal. There are currently no government *regulations* regarding the contents of children's packed lunches. However the British Nutrition Foundation produced a set of *guidelines* recommending what should be included in lunch boxes to provide them with a healthy meal. We are asked by OFSTED to provide parents with appropriate food content for lunch boxes.

The recommended contents of a healthy lunch box are:

- A good portion of starchy food e.g. wholegrain roll, thick slice of wholemeal bread, pitta pocket, plain cracker, pasta or rice salad.
- Plenty of fruit and vegetables e.g. an apple, satsuma, handful of cherry tomatoes or carrot sticks, mini can of fruit chunks (decanted into a plastic container), small box of raisins
- A portion of milk or dairy food e.g. individual cheese portion, pot of yogurt.
- A small portion of lean meat, fish or alternative e.g. 2 slices of ham, quorn, cheese, tuna, egg or hummus.
- A drink e.g. small carton of fruit juice, no added sugar fruit squash. Water is provided.
- One small packet of crisps, a fruit scone or portion of malt loaf, a small cake or biscuit may also be included (please avoid chocolate as much as possible).