

Aims

Busy Otters Preschool aims to adhere to national guidelines on healthy eating. As stated below, our suggestions for a healthy lunchbox are guidelines not rules. At preschool, we will continue to teach and discuss aspects of a healthy lifestyle, of which healthy eating is only one. We hope you will feel able to support our efforts to help our children to make healthy choices.

Food and drink in packed lunches

The preschool will provide a place and adequate time for children to eat a packed lunch and will ensure that fresh drinking water is readily available at all times. We do not have the space to place all packed lunches in the fridge, so you are kindly requested to send packed lunches with mini ice-packs to keep food fresh.

The following are intended as guidelines, not rules.

However, we feel as a preschool, that consideration of these guidelines will support the whole of the preschool community in developing healthy eating habits.

Packed lunches should include:

- At least one portion of fruit each day e.g. small apple or orange (ready peeled if possible), banana, dried fruit, grapes (**cut in half longways**), strawberries, melon cubes, blueberries.
- At least one portion of vegetables each day e.g. **carrot sticks, cucumber sticks, cherry tomatoes (cut in half)**, sticks of pepper, pot of sweetcorn.
- Foods to be cut in strips, and not round disks, to prevent choking.
- One portion of protein food e.g. chicken, ham, tuna, salmon, turkey, lentils, kidney beans.
- One portion of starchy food (carbohydrates) e.g. a small bread roll, one sandwich thin, a bagel, a small pitta, a mini wrap, crackers, oatcakes, a small scone, hot cross bun, pasta salad.
- One portion of dairy food e.g. cheese cubes, cheese spread triangle, yoghurt, pot of custard, fromage frais.
- A drink – ideally water, diluted juice, milk, or sugar free squash. No fizzy drinks please.

Suitable 'treats' might include malt loaf, flapjack, homemade jam tarts, occasional chocolate biscuits.

Please do not include everyday:

- Crisps (a good alternative might be breadsticks, or crackers)

- Processed foods such as cheese-strings, cheese spread dippers, pepperoni, sausage rolls.
- Highly sugary snacks like fruit winders, fruit strings. Dried raisins/banana chips/mango chips might be suitable alternatives, although these too are quite high in sugar.
- Lots of cakes/chocolate biscuits.

Please also remember **no nuts or foods containing nuts** are to be brought in to preschool (e.g. peanut butter and Nutella). Any foods containing chocolate spreads cannot be given to your child as it is impossible for us to determine whether it is a nut containing chocolate spread or not. **No seeds are allowed, this includes seeded bread.** This is because we have children and staff with life threatening allergies. Unfortunately, if these foods are put in your child's lunch box we will not be able to let your child eat it. Please check all labels carefully.

We are **unable to heat/reheat food**, so please make sure your child will eat the food that you send as it is.

Please do not send too much food. Only send what you expect your child to eat. We will send home any uneaten food, so that you can see what they have eaten.

Signed.....Chantelle West.....(on behalf of the Committee)

SignedCarol Clarke.....(Manager)

Date.....15/01/2024.....

To be reviewed annually