

## 5. Drink

Ideas: Milk, drinking yoghurt, smoothie, fruit juice, squash or water.

## 6. Portion size

Children only have small hands, mouths and tummies. At pre-school we encourage the children to eat up all their packed lunch. They will bring home what they don't want or can't eat so you can monitor what they have eaten. Please put in the amount of food you would expect your child to eat at lunch time. Cutting up food like sandwiches and fruit into small manageable child size pieces is a good idea because children can be put off if they have to tackle a too large portion.

## 7. Familiar food

Please put familiar foods prepared in their usual way in the packed lunch, for example, if you peel the skin off fruit or cut crusts off bread please do so for their packed lunch. Pre-school packed lunches are not a good time to introduce new foods for the first time to your child. It may be upsetting for the child if they are hungry and don't like the food they have been given.

Even if your child does not suffer from a food related allergy or intolerance, some children's reactions to certain foods can be life-threatening. Children with allergies are welcome at lunch club and for this reason we may sometimes ask that particular foods are not included in packed-lunches; most often nuts and eggs. Parents will get a letter if this happens.



Please feel free to talk to a member of staff if you would like your child to join our lunch club, or talk to Michelle, our admissions officer.



Useful websites with ideas for healthy lunch box ideas:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/healthy-lunchbox-picnic.aspx>

<http://www.netmums.com/family-food/food-for-kids/lunchbox-ideas>



### St Mary's Pre-School

### Lunch Club Guide



Mon, Thurs and Fri 12 – 12.30pm

Our lunch club gives the children the opportunity to get used to eating lunch in a large group, as they will when they start school. Staying for lunch also means that your children can stay with us for an extra half an hour or even all day if they attend a morning and an afternoon session.

At the beginning of lunch club, children are asked to wash their hands and find their

Allergies



name at the table; this promotes independence and early self-care. They settle down to eat their lunch and join in conversations with their friends and an adult, as they would at snack time.

Sandwiches and savoury items are encouraged to be eaten before sweet foods. They may bring juice or squash in a plastic bottle or carton or we will provide milk or water, as a healthy option.

We ask you to note a few points:

- Please label your child's lunch bag/box clearly.
- We have a table in the entrance area to leave lunch boxes. Please place them on the table at the start of pre-school.
- We are not able to refrigerate lunch boxes so please think about packing their lunch in a cooler bag with an ice pack if possible.
- Don't forget a spoon for yoghurt or a fork for rice and pasta!
- Give small portions if your child has a small appetite and will struggle to eat it all. For example sandwiches made from one slice of bread instead of two or a few rice crackers in a pot instead of a whole packet.

- Cereal bars are low in fat and can be a healthier alternative to chocolate biscuits.
- We put half eaten foods back in your child's lunch box (apart from yoghurts and drink cartons). This is so you can see what they have eaten. If they have eaten everything, we will throw away any empty packaging.
- Children may bring dessert items such as cakes or chocolate coated biscuits but please do not put treats like sweets or chocolate bars in your child's lunch box. We promote healthy eating at pre-school.
- If your child has lunch before the afternoon session at pre-school, please make sure you arrive at 12 noon so that your child has plenty of time to enjoy their lunch.

We hope your children will enjoy their lunch with us. Packing a lunch for little ones can be a challenge so here are some tips:

**Checklist for preparing a lunchbox – include items from the main food groups and consider what your child can manage:**

### **1. Bread, cereals or potato**

Start a packed lunch off with some starchy carbohydrate to give your child long-lasting energy.

### **2. Fruit and vegetables**

Ideas: Salad in sandwiches and rolls, cherry tomatoes, apples, pears, satsumas, small bananas, grapes, melon, kiwi, plums, nectarine, tinned fruit pieces, raisins, dried apricots, fruit salad, fruit smoothies and pure fruit juices.

### **3. Meat, fish or alternative**

Ideas: Slices of ham, chicken and turkey, quiche, pork pie, canned tuna and salmon or hummus.

### **4. Milk or dairy**

Ideas: Milk, cheddar, edam, cheese triangle, low fat soft cheese, cottage cheese, fruit yoghurt, fromage frais, drinking yoghurt, pots of rice pudding.