

# Kindred Packed Meals Guidelines for Families



Adapted from the NHS 'Better health, healthier families' website and the foundation years eat better start better guidelines.

At Kindred, we are passionate about giving every child the best possible start. If you're choosing to send your little one in with packed meals, we require that you follow the guidelines below. It is essential that they are being offered healthy and nutritious food, to reduce choking risks, and to help prevent allergic reactions for children who may have airborne food allergies. Packed meals provided by parents will need to include breakfast, lunch and tea and enough snacks throughout the day to include a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack.

## Breakfast

To include a portion of white or wholemeal starchy food such as:

- ✓ Toast, bread, crumpets, or bagels
- ✓ Low-sugar breakfast cereals (look for those labelled green or amber for sugar content)

You must include a portion of fruit or vegetables to help kickstart their day with a healthy boost. You will need to provide enough for a second helping of this meal.

### You must avoid:

- Cereals high in sugar (often labelled red), such as chocolate-flavoured or sugar-coated options.

## Lunch (two-courses)

To include:

- ✓ A main meal and a simple dessert
- ✓ A portion of starchy food (such as pasta, rice, bread, or potatoes)
- ✓ At least one portion of vegetables and/or fruit
- ✓ A source of protein such as beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat or meat alternatives

Vary the types of starchy foods and protein sources across the week, using both white and wholegrain options. We recommend cheese being included as the main protein once a week.

You are encouraged to include at least one lunch a week with a plant-based protein, such as lentils or chickpeas.

You will need to provide enough for a second helping of this meal.

### You must avoid:

- Crisps (rice cakes or crackers/breadsticks are a great swap!)

## Tea (two-courses)

Just like lunch, tea needs to have:

- ✓ A portion of starchy food (wholegrain and white options)
- ✓ A portion of vegetables and/or fruit
- ✓ A protein source such as eggs, fish, pulses, meat or meat alternatives

You must include a tea option with a vegetarian or plant-based protein once a week, and try to include oily fish (like salmon or sardines) once every three weeks.

For dessert, please keep it simple—fruit or dairy-based options like yoghurt are ideal.

You will need to provide enough for a second helping of this meal.

### You must avoid:

- Cakes, biscuits and other sweet items.

## Snacks

For snack time, mid morning, mid afternoon and throughout the day (should they become hungry between served mealtimes), we recommend including a simple starchy food like:

- ✓ Breadsticks, crackers or rice cakes

Offer at least three different types of starchy foods across the week to add variety. Some snacks should also include vegetables or fruit—we love seeing colourful snack boxes full of new tastes to try!

### You must avoid:

- Dried fruit as a snack (due to high sugar content and how it sticks to teeth)
- Sweet foods such as cakes, biscuits or confectionery
- Flavoured drinks—only fresh tap water or plain milk should be included

**Please note:** If any items included in the packed meals fall outside of these guidelines, we won't be able to serve them, as this would be against Kindred's policy of providing nutritious, well-balanced food. We appreciate your understanding and support in helping us maintain our commitment to healthy eating.



# TOP TIPS



## Keep them fuller for longer

Base the main meal item on foods like bread, rice, pasta and potatoes. Choose wholegrain where you can.

## Evergreen

Try adding salad like lettuce, tomatoes and cucumber to sandwiches and wraps— it all counts towards your child's 5-a-day!

## Always add veg

Cherry tomatoes, or sticks of carrot, cucumber, celery and peppers all count towards their 5-a-day. Adding a small pot of reduced-fat hummus or other dips may help with getting kids to eat vegetables.

## Cut back on fat

Pick lower-fat fillings — like lean meats (including chicken or turkey), fish (such as tuna or salmon), lower-fat spread, reduced-fat cream cheese and reduced-fat hard cheese.

## Mix your slices

If your child does not like wholegrain, try making a sandwich from 1 slice of white bread and 1 slice of brown bread.

## Add bite-sized fruit

Try chopped apple, satsuma segments, strawberries, or melon slices to make it easier for them to eat. A squeeze of lemon juice stops it going brown.

## Cut down on crisps

If your child really likes their crisps try reducing the number of times you include them in their lunchbox, and swap for plain rice cakes instead.

## Variety is the spice of life!

Be adventurous and get creative to mix up what goes in their meal boxes. Keeping them guessing will keep them interested and more open to trying new things.

## Switch the sweets

Swap cakes, chocolate, cereal bars and biscuits for malt loaf, fruited teacakes, fruit breads or fruit (even tinned — in juice not syrup).

For more advice on what to put in your little ones' lunchboxes, scan the QR code to visit the NHS Eatwell guide. The guide shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.



# SAFETY & PROCEDURE

## General Guidelines

- Please pack all food in a cool box/with an ice pack, as we do not have fridge space available.
- Please note that we are unable to heat or reheat any food.
- We follow a strict allergy and anti-choking policy to ensure every child's safety. Please speak to your Nursery Manager to find out our most up-to-date and current policies.
- We are a strictly nut-free setting—please do not include nuts or nut-based products in your child's packed lunch.
- Please provide a detailed breakdown inside the packed meals to show any allergens. This is to protect the other children in the setting from possible allergens. Food items that are in packets will have their own allergen information and no additional information will need to be provided.
- All packed meals must be clearly labelled with the following information:
  - The child's full name **AND** allergen information

## Food Safety and Choking Hazards

- Please do not include sausages, grapes, blueberries (or any other small round berries) as these pose a choking risk.
- If you're including hard fruits, please make sure the skin is removed. Children aged 12 months to 2 years will be closely supervised and monitored when eating hard fruits. For children under 12 months, please only provide soft fruits.
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- If including raw carrots, please shred finely or cut into thin strips.
- If supplying fish, please ensure it is filleted with all bones removed.
- Honey and citrus fruits must not be given to children under 12 months.

## Portioning and Nutrition

- You must provide enough food for your child to have second helpings if they wish and ensure that there is enough food available throughout each day or session of attendance.
- Healthy dessert options must be provided for each meal. If a child refuses their main course, they will still be offered the healthy dessert option.

## Dietary Requirements and Respect

- Cultural and religious dietary requirements will be respected. For children on special diets, families will provide as much information as possible and ensure that packed meals meet the child's requirements.
- Where possible, we will encourage families to provide their child/ren with meals that correspond with our menus.

## Feeding Practices and Feedback

- Withholding food will not be used as a form of punishment or bribery in our settings.
- If a child shows distress and does not want to eat, they will have their food removed without fuss. Families will be called to inform them that their child has missed a meal and will be advised to provide an alternative option.
- Our team members will provide families with feedback daily to confirm what the child has eaten from their packed meals and what hasn't been eaten.

## Drinks

- Milk will be supplied and served by the Nursery during both morning and afternoon snack times.
- Fresh drinking water is available for children to access throughout the day and at mealtimes.
- For children under 6 months old, cooled boiled water will be offered.