

Health Eating at Break Times



St Mary's School Advice

Save Our Smiles (Healthy Break Time)

Research indicates that in the West Midlands, the condition of our children's teeth is worse than in many other parts of the country. One of the main causes is our frequent eating of sugary foods and drinks.



Each time we eat or drink sugar, it is converted into acid. Teeth can generally withstand 3-4 'acid attacks' per day before tooth enamel sustains any real long-term damage.

By limiting break time to sugar-free snacks and drinks, we can reduce the number of acid attacks on our children's teeth (this does not mean banning snacks and puddings with sugar in them at lunchtime). However, sweets, chocolate and crisps are not recommended.

Sticking to healthy snacks and drinks particularly at break-times can instill good habits and also help towards avoiding other health problems such as obesity, cancer and heart disease in the future.

Did You Know?

Dried fruit has a high level of sugar in it. It counts towards "5 a day" but is not suitable as a break time snack.

Scones, bread muffins and pancakes contain some sugar and present a risk to teeth if taken frequently as a snack

Children who need to follow a special therapeutic diet are exempt.

Regularly drinking fruit juices, squashes and fizzy drinks (even sugarfree ones) can damage teeth

Most cereal bars contain a high level of sugar and should be avoided between meals.

Low fat yoghurts often contain a high level of sugar and should be avoided between meals.

Snack ideas

Make snacks attractive, colourful and varied from day to day to encourage your child to enjoy them

Fresh fruit and/or vegetables:

- “Fun-sized” portions of fresh fruit, e.g. banana, apple, pear
- Fruity colour kebab, e.g. strawberries, grapes, pineapple, kiwi
- Rainbow fruit pots with a variety of chopped fresh fruit and a little fruit juice
- Rainbow veggie pots with a variety of chopped vegetables, e.g. celery, carrots, cucumber, peppers, cherry tomatoes (with or without low fat salad dressing)
- Veggie colour kebab, e.g. cheese cubes, cucumber, peppers, cherry tomatoes
- Celery sticks with a little low fat cream cheese or low fat dip



Bread based snacks (make sure any fillings are sugar free):

- Toast or bread (ideally wheaten or wholegrain)
- Plain crackers with a thin slice of cheese, tomato or low fat cheese spread
- Plain bread sticks or rice cakes (consider dips such as salsa, natural yoghurt, natural fromage frais)
- Sandwiches, bread rolls, baguettes, pitta pockets or wraps with non sugar fillings



Drinks:

Milk and water are the best drinks to take between meals

Not good for break time! ☹️

The following list gives examples of items which are not permitted between meals at school and your child may be asked to keep them until lunchtime or to take home at the end of the day.

This lets us give a **fair and consistent message** to all of the children.

- Any type of confectionery e.g. chocolate products, sweets and sugar free chewing gum
- Processed fruit bars
- Crisps and crisp-like products e.g. tortilla chips, potato sticks, puffs, crackers, corn chips, prawn crackers, potato wafers
- Japanese rice crackers
- Pretzels
- Bombay mix
- **Nuts - OF ANY SORT ! (also a serious allergen risk)**
- Cakes, e.g. slices of cake, individual cakes (sponge cakes, Swiss roll, fruit cakes, banana cake, apple cake, carrot cake, gateaux, sponge fingers, Madeira)
- Buns, e.g. American (sweet) muffins, Chelsea buns
- Pastries, e.g. Danish pastries, Eccles cakes, Greek pastries, Bakewell tarts, jam tarts, mince pies, custard tart)
- Biscuits (all types) including digestive, rich tea, ginger nuts, flapjacks, shortbread, wafer.

Thank you for your support.