

# PACKED LUNCHES

## A Guide for Parents/Carers

Packed lunches are becoming more popular and it is important that they are prepared and stored properly to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria, which can cause food poisoning.

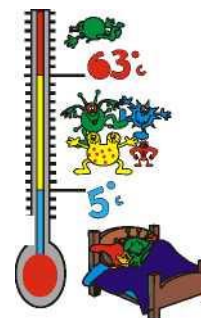
### PREPARING THE LUNCH BOX

- Wash and dry your hands before you start
- Clean and disinfect/sanitise work surfaces before and after food Preparation.
- Check that all food to be used is within the 'Use by' or 'best before' date
- Prepare sandwiches in the morning. If you do make them in advance keep them in the fridge
- Wash all salad ingredients under cold running water, including bags of ready prepared salad
- Keep raw meat and cooked/ready to eat foods separate during storage and preparation.
- Check the temperature of your fridge, we recommend that it is kept at or below 5°C.

### STORAGE

Packed lunches are often prepared many hours in advance and, often have to be left in school bags in warm classrooms or cloakrooms, which create ideal conditions for food poisoning bacteria to grow. It is essential to keep the pack lunches cool at all times to prevent food poisoning.

If the lunch box is not going to be stored in a fridge whilst at school, consider using an insulated cool bag along with an ice pack. If this isn't possible, freeze a carton of drink or yogurt tube the night before & put it into the lunch box the following morning, this will act as an ice pack. Do not freeze fizzy drinks as these may explode. Cold air sinks therefore you should place the ice pack on top of the food.



**REMEMBER: Bacteria are found everywhere and cannot be seen by the naked eye, if they are allowed to multiply into large numbers it could make your child ill.**

INFORMATION ON FOOD SAFETY CONTACT:

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