

QUICK GUIDE TO... HEALTHY BREAKFASTS AND SCHOOL FOOD STANDARDS



Building
stronger
families



Delivering the National School Breakfast Programme

A healthy breakfast is low in fat, sugar and salt, and packs in additional vitamins and minerals for good health now, and for lifelong benefits.

Healthy breakfasts are important for children, and for the school, but there is an additional reason to check your provision – the government expects schools to comply with new School Food Standards (introduced in 2015) and these apply across the whole

school day, including breakfast.

At the NSBP we want to make life as easy as possible for you. We have therefore distilled the standards into easy to follow steps, specially adapted for breakfast leaders.

The no-fuss core basics

- ① **Free, fresh drinking water** should always be available at breakfast every day.
- ② **Fruit** (and/or vegetables) should also be available at breakfast every day. See below for more on this.
- ③ The NSBP provides **healthy cereals and bagels** as the core fuel for learning; just add lower fat milk and low fat/low sugar spreads in controlled portions (see below).

The NSBP offering

Cereals and porridge



- ✓ All cereals provided by NSBP are well within School Food Standards as low in sugar (they contain less than 15g sugar per 100g). If you supply additional cereals, they should not be chocolate or sugar coated and must contain less than 22.5g of sugar per 100g.
- ✗ Sugar shouldn't be added to cereals or porridge. There shouldn't be any free sugar accessible in the breakfast area.
- ✓ Porridge toppings should be healthy. It's very important that children are weaned off the idea that everything should taste sweet.

Although a teaspoon of low sugar jam or honey on porridge is OK (although honey is not recommended every day), it's better to avoid - if you want to offer a sweetener, how about a bit of sliced banana or other fruit?

Bagels

If you use any spreads or toppings on bagels:

- ✓ **Limit the portion size to a teaspoon** (no more than 10 g). This is enough for a thin scrape across the bagel.
- ✓ **If children are doing the spreading, make teaspoons available** so they can see how much to use, and offer adult guidance on the right portion size.
- ✓ Choose **low fat and low sugar spreads** where possible.
- ⚠ **Honey is allowed**, but because it's high in natural sugar, **just offer it 1–2 days per week**.
- ⚠ **Lemon curd/golden syrup are allowed** (1–2 days per week) but **we don't recommend them** as they are high in refined sugar (and in fat for lemon curd).
- ✗ Chocolate-based spreads (eg Nutella) are not allowed under School Food Standards as they are classed as confectionary, like chocolate coated cereals.



Additional food items provided by the school

Many schools offer just the core NSBP foods (and related additions). However, here are some points to bear in mind if you are adding in more food choices, whether it's every day or weekly specials:

- ✗ **No savoury crackers, breakfast biscuits or cereal bars** are permitted in breakfast clubs. Cereal bars are high in sugar and are classed as confectionary.
- ⚠ **Yoghurt should be low sugar**. Take care as many 'fruit yoghurts' are too high in sugar. Why not offer low fat natural (plain) yoghurt or plain lower fat fromage frais with real fruit to sweeten?
- ⚠ **Dried fruit** can be added to cereals or porridge, but **check the brand has no added sugar**.
- ⚠ If you're offering toast and bread, try and **offer a mix of white and wholemeal**, and **remember the spread rules above**.
- ✓ Always look for **low sugar/low salt/low fat varieties** of items, eg baked beans.
- ✓ It makes sense for breakfast and lunch to be planned together if at all possible.
- ⚠ Some additional items you might offer **can only be served 1–2 days per week across the whole school day (i.e. including lunch)** so if you want to offer these, you need to check with the school kitchen.
- ⚠ **Items to limit include:** Pancakes, waffles, crumpets, hash browns and other starchy foods cooked in oil or fat, sausages and other processed meats. The NSBP also recommends not offering bacon more than 1–2 times per week due to high salt content.

* less than 22.5g of sugar per 100g

Additional drinks

If you wish to offer additional drinks, please note:

- ✓ Water, lower fat milk and a small portion of diluted 100% fresh juice are the main drinks of choice for breakfast.
- ✓ Plain soya, rice or oat drinks enriched with calcium are fine as milk alternatives.
- ✗ Squash (including 'no added sugar') and cordials are not allowed.

- ⚠ 'Combination' drinks of fruit juice and milk/ yoghurt are allowed but there are restrictions.
Please ask for advice or see schoolfoodplan.com
- ⚠ Tea, coffee or hot chocolate can be served, but we don't recommend coffee for primary age children.

- ⚠ Hot chocolate needs to be a lower sugar brand.
- ⚠ Please note lower fat milk must be provided to all children at least once during the school day. Breakfast counts, but it does still need to be offered at another time if not all children access breakfast.



Fruity favourites

School Food Standards say that some form of fruit (and/or vegetables) should be on offer in breakfast clubs every day. The NSBP is looking at possible ways we can support schools with this, but in the meantime, here are some ideas for breakfast fruit options.

- **Cost effective ideas.**
Many schools choose to gather up fruit from the KS1 free fruit provision and bring it into breakfast. If you have no infants, there may be a way of ordering a little extra lunchtime fruit and directing some to breakfast at low cost. A local retailer may be willing to provide a low cost or even free fruit contribution.
- **Creative serving.** A traditional fruit bowl is great, but offering fruit pieces can improve uptake and avoid waste. Sliced banana works on cereal, porridge or bagels. A few berries work well with cereal or as finger food. Sliced up apples or pears often disappear quickly, as do satsuma slices. Kiwis can be eaten with a teaspoon out of their skin, like a boiled egg. If you have the staff capacity, fruit kebabs are fun, and little bowls of mixed fruit salad always go down well.
- **Dried and tinned (in fruit juice) count as fruit.** Dried fruit is a simple topping for cereal or porridge. Check the dried fruit has no added sugar or salt, and we recommend you only offer it with other food, to protect children's teeth. Tinned fruit (such as peach slices or apricots) should be the 'in juice' not 'in syrup' variety.