Low cost packed lunch menu for parents and carers of primary aged children
Three week menu cycle compliant with the final food-based and nutrient-based standards

Week 1	Main course	Dessert	Drink	Price Guide	Time in advance	Time night before / on morning	Recipes included in menu cycle
Monday	Tuna mayonnaise sandwich Cucumber chunks (2.5cm)	Carrot and apricot cake Grapes (handful) Fruit	Flavoured milk drink (200ml)*	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒	Carrot and Apricot Cakes (individual) Rice salad with turkey Seeded flapjack Chocolate bran flake slice Carrot and pumpkin seed salad Pasta salad with Chicken and vegetables
Tuesday	Rice salad with turkey Red pepper strips (1/4 pepper)	fromage frais 1 Apple Seeded flapjack	Water	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒🕒	
Wednesday	Meatballs (2) and mixed salad in a wholemeal pitta Celery sticks (1 trimmed stick)	1 Pear Chocolate bran	Flavoured milk drink (200ml)*	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒	**Equipment needed** Insulated lunch box Freezer pads
Thursday	Pasta salad with chicken and vegetables 3 cherry tomatoes or 1 large tomato	flake slice 1 Banana Low fat rice	Water	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒🕒	
Friday	3 x pizza fingers (purchased) Carrot and pumpkin seed salad	pudding pot 2 dried plums (prunes)	Water	**£**		🕒	

* **Flavoured milk drinks should contain at least 90% low fat milk, and less than 5% added sugar or honey**

Week 2	Main course	Dessert	Drink	Price Guide	Time in advance	Time night before / on morning	Recipes included in menu cycle
Monday	Sliced beef and mixed salad in a roll 3 cherry tomatoes or 1 large tomato	Crème caramel 1 Kiwi fruit	Water	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒	Couscous salad with lamb and apricots Banana cake Potato and egg salad Seeded flapjack Smoked mackerel spread
Tuesday	Couscous salad with diced lamb and apricots Celery sticks (1 trimmed stick)	Low fat fruit yogurt 1 Banana	Flavoured milk drink (200ml)*	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒🕒	
Wednesday	Cheddar and coleslaw In a wholemeal pitta Carrot sticks (1/2 peeled carrot)	Banana cake Slice of fresh pineapple	Water	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒	**Equipment needed** Insulated lunch box Freezer pads
Thursday	Smoked mackerel sandwich Cucumber chunks (2.5cm)	Seeded flapjack 1 Apple Uniced	Flavoured milk drink (200ml)*	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒	
Friday	Potato and egg salad Yellow pepper strips (1/4 pepper)	fruit cake (purchased) 2 Clementines	Water	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒🕒	

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Week 3	Main course	Dessert	Drink	Price Guide	Time in advance	Time night before / on morning	Recipes included in menu cycle
Monday	Pork sausage in a bread roll Coleslaw (purchased)	Fresh fruit salad (kiwi, orange and grapes)	Flavoured milk drink (200ml)*	**£**		🕒🕒	Spanish omelette Pasta salad with pork and peas Chilli chicken and red kidney bean wrap
Tuesday	Spanish Omelette Carrot and pumpkin seed salad	Blueberry muffin (purchased) 1 Banana	Water	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒	
Wednesday	Pasta salad with pork and peas Celery sticks (1 trimmed stick)	Strawberry trifle (purchased) 1 Tangerine	Water	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒🕒	**Equipment needed** Insulated lunch box Freezer pads
Thursday	Beef and beetroot sandwich 3 cherry tomatoes	Low fat fruit yogurt (purchased) 1 Apple	Water	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒	
Friday	Chilli chicken and red kidney bean tortilla wrap Mixed green leaves	Cheddar stick Raisins (14g box)	Flavoured milk drink (200ml)*	**£**	🕒🕒🕒	🕒	

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Low cost packed lunch menu

Three week menu cycle compliant with the final food-based and nutrient-based standards

Time Guide:

Time estimates in advance include time to cook meat and bake desserts
Time estimates for the night before/morning include time to prepare salads and sandwiches

 **A little time (15 minutes or less)**  **More time (16 to 30 minutes)**  **A lot of time (31 minutes or more)**

Price Guide:

£ A little cost (£1.50 or less) ££ Similar cost to a school meal (£1.51 to £2.00) £££ Costing more than a school meal (£2.01 or more)

Please refer to individual purchased products for allergen information, and ensure all products stored according to manufacturer's instructions

Nutrient content of low cost 3 week packed lunch menu cycle

Nutrient content equates to an average lunch within the 3 week cycle

	Energy kcal	Fat g	Saturated fat g	Carbo-hydrate g	NMES g	Fibre g	Protein g	Iron mg	Calcium mg	Vitamin A ug	Folate ug	Vitamin C mg	Sodium * mg	Zinc mg
Nutrient content of average lunch	519	16.3	5.4	71.5	12.2	6.4	23.1	3.2	317	268	64	34.7	480	2.8
Nutrient-based standards for primary school lunches	530 +/- 5%	20.6 max	6.5 max	70.6 min	15.5 max	4.2 min	7.5 Min	3.0 min	193 min	175 min	53 min	10.5 min	499 max	2.5 min
Standard met?	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9

*** Sodium levels assume home cooked meat**

Couscous Salad with Lamb and Apricots

INGREDIENTS	Weights g (household units)
Couscous, raw	110g
Boiling water	225ml
Apricots, dried, chopped	50g (6 whole dried apricots)
Lamb, roasted, lean, diced	80g
Lemon juice	5g (1 teaspoon)
Olive oil	10g (1 tablespoon)
Mint, fresh, chopped	1g
Parsley, fresh, chopped	3g (3 sprigs)
Ground black pepper	2g (1 teaspoon)

Method

1.	Cook the couscous according to directions by adding boiling water.
2.	Add the rest of the ingredients and toss with a fork to separate the granules.
3.	Add black pepper to taste.
4.	Cover and refrigerate.

Notes
2 servings – 245g servings

Pasta Salad with Chicken and Vegetables

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Cooked pasta shapes	240g (100g dried pasta)
Chicken, cooked, lean, diced or sliced	100g
Sweetcorn	40g
Peppers, red, diced	40g (¼ pepper)
Peas, boiled	40g
Yogurt, plain, low fat	80g
Ground black pepper	2g (1 teaspoon)

Method

1.	Mix all ingredients together
2.	Pack into airtight container and refrigerate until required

Notes
2 servings – 270 g servings

Spanish Omelette (Individual)

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Sweet potatoes, peeled and diced	300g
Oil, vegetable	10g (1 dessert spoon)
Onion, small, finely sliced	200g (1 medium or 2 small)
Chestnut mushrooms, sliced	125g
Spinach, fresh	100g
Eggs, medium (6)	300g
Milk, semi-skimmed	90g
Flour, plain	40g (2 level tablespoons)
Cheddar cheese, grated	50g

Method

	Set the oven to 180°C; 350°F; Gas mark 4
1.	Grease a six well muffin tin.
2.	Boil the sweet potato for about 10 minutes or until just cooked.
3.	Meanwhile fry the finely sliced onion and mushrooms in the oil in a non-stick pan.
4.	When the onions are transparent add the spinach, cover and cook until the spinach is wilted.
5.	Mix the eggs and milk and flour in a large bowl until well mixed. Add the sweet potatoes and the vegetables.
6.	Spoon evenly into the tin and cover with the cheese. Bake until firm and an inserted skewer comes out clean.
7.	Cool and refrigerate.

Notes

6 servings – 160g servings

Egg and Potato Salad

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Eggs, medium (2)	100g (2 eggs)
New potatoes, boiled in skins	200g (5 potatoes)
Sweetcorn, frozen, boiled	40g
Peas, boiled	40g
Spring onions	10g (1 spring onion)
Ground black pepper	2g (1 teaspoon)
Yoghurt, plain, low fat	50g
Peppers, yellow	20g (1/8th pepper)

Method

1.	Boil the eggs for 8 minutes. Plunge into cold water and peel when cool. Cut each egg into 8 wedges.
2.	Dice the boiled potatoes into a medium sized bowl. Add the cooked sweetcorn, peas, spring onions, and black pepper.
3.	Gently stir in the yogurt until the potatoes are coated.
4.	Add the eggs and diced yellow peppers before giving it a final stir.
5.	Cover and refrigerate.
	Optional: add chopped fresh herbs, such as parsley or coriander.

Notes
2 servings – 230 g servings

Pasta Salad with Pork and Peas

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Cooked pasta shapes	240g (100g dried pasta)
Pork, lean, cooked, diced	100g
Sweetcorn, frozen, boiled	80g
Peas, frozen, cooked	80g
Yogurt, plain, low fat	80g
Ground black pepper	2g (1 teaspoon)

Method

1.	Add the cold cooked pasta shapes into a bowl and add all other ingredients.
2.	Mix together so that all ingredients are evenly coated with the yogurt.
3.	Pack into airtight container and refrigerate.
	Tip: cook the vegetables from frozen together in the microwave.

Notes
2 servings – 291g servings

Chilli Chicken and Bean Tortilla Wrap

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Chicken, cold, roast, lean	50g
Chilli powder, pinch	1g
Yogurt, plain, low fat	30g
Red kidney beans, canned, drained	30g (1 heaped tablespoon)
Peppers, red, sliced finely	20g (1/8th pepper)
Lettuce, shredded	20g (4 small leaves)
Tortilla wrap (1)	50g

Method

1. Mix chilli powder into the yogurt and spoon over the diced chicken.
2. Lightly mash the red kidney beans with a fork.
3. Place the chicken mixture and kidney beans on to the tortilla, together with the peppers and a handful of shredded lettuce.
4. Wrap tightly and cut diagonally.
5. Cover and chill until required.

Optional: add sliced tomatoes, onions, cucumber and coriander as desired

Notes
1 serving – 200g serving

Rice Salad with Turkey

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Rice, white, boiled	240g (90g uncooked)
Lean turkey, cooked, diced	100g
Cucumber, diced	50g
Parsley, fresh chopped	3g(3 sprigs)
Yogurt, plain, low fat	80g (2 tablespoons)
Ground black pepper	2g (1teaspoon)

Method

1. Put the cold rice into a medium sized bowl and add the turkey and cucumber.
2. Stir in the parsley, yoghurt and pepper.
3. Cover and refrigerate.

Optional: add diced mixed peppers.

Notes
2 servings – 238g servings

Smoked Mackerel Spread

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Smoked mackerel	70g
Lemon juice	5g (1 teaspoon)
Parsley, fresh chopped	3g (3 sprigs)
Yogurt, plain, low fat	30g
Ground black pepper	2g (1 teaspoon)

Method

1.	Remove the skin from the mackerel and put the flesh into a small bowl.
2.	Remove any remaining bones.
3.	Add the lemon juice, parsley and yoghurt. Mash together to a rough paste with a fork, or use a blender.
4.	Season with black pepper.
5.	Cover and refrigerate.
	Optional: add a pinch of paprika or half a teaspoon of horseradish sauce.

Notes
2 servings – 55 g servings

Carrot and Pumpkin Seed Salad

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Carrot, raw, peeled and grated	80g (1 medium carrot)
Pumpkin seeds	10g
Lemon juice	5g (1 teaspoon)

Method

1.	Grate the carrot and pat dry. Sprinkle with a little lemon juice to prevent browning.
2.	Stir pumpkin seeds into the carrot and put into an airtight container.
3.	Refrigerate.
	Option: replace pumpkin seeds with sunflower seeds

Notes
2 servings – 45g servings

Banana Cakes (Individual)

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Fat spread (60% fat)	125g
Sugar, white	125g
Eggs, medium (2)	100g
Bananas, over ripe	110g (1 medium banana)
Flour, wholemeal	125g
Baking powder	8g (2 teaspoons)

Method

	Set oven to 190°C; 375°F; Gas mark 5
1.	In a large bowl, cream the fat spread and the sugar until light and fluffy.
2.	Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition.
3.	Mash the bananas with a fork and add to the above.
4.	Mix the flour and the baking powder and fold into the mixture.
5.	Spoon the mixture evenly into 12 cake cases in cake tins.
6.	Bake for 15 minutes or until cakes spring back when lightly touched.
7.	Cool on a wire rack. When cold store in an airtight container
	Optional: add walnuts or sultanas.

Notes
12 servings – 45 g servings

Carrot and Apricot Cakes (individual)

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Fat spread (60% fat)	50g
Sugar, Demerara	150g
Flour, plain	150g (5 heaped tablespoons)
Baking powder	8g (2 teaspoons)
Flour, wholemeal	100g (5 level tablespoons)
Apricots, dried, chopped	100g (12 whole dried apricots)
Mixed spice	4g
Eggs, medium (2)	100g
Vegetable oil	100g
Carrots, raw, peeled and grated	100g

Method

	Set oven to 190°C; 375°F; Gas mark 5
1.	Cream the fat spread and Demerara sugar until light and fluffy.
2.	Sieve the plain flour and the baking powder into a large bowl. Add the wholemeal flour, dried apricots and the mixed spice, and stir to combine.
3.	Beat the eggs and the oil together. Stir into the fat spread and sugar mixture. Add the grated carrots and quickly stir into the dry ingredients.
4.	Spoon the mixture evenly into 19 cake cases in cake tins.
5.	Bake for 15 minutes or until cakes spring back when lightly touched.
6.	Cool on a wire rack. When cold store in an airtight container.
	Optional: add the grated rind of an orange.

Notes
19 servings – 40g servings

Chocolate Bran Flake Slice

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Fat spread, 60% fat	200g
Sugar, white	125g
Flour, plain	160g (8 level tablespoons)
Cocoa powder	40g
Bran flakes	100g

Method

	Set oven to 180°C, 350°F, Gas mark 4
1.	Cream the fat spread and sugar until the mixture is light and fluffy.
2.	Sieve flour and cocoa powder. Stir into creamed mixture.
3.	Fold in the Bran flakes.
4.	Press into lightly greased square baking tray, 20cm x 20cm.
5.	Bake for 25 minutes or until set.
6.	When cool cut into 16 pieces.
7.	Store in an airtight container.
	Optional: add chopped walnuts
	Please note that this slice can be quite crumbly and so children are advised to eat it over their lunch boxes.

Notes
16 servings – 37g servings

Seeded Flapjacks

INGREDIENTS	Weights / Units Metric
Fat spread, 60% fat	150g
Treacle, black	75g
Porridge oats	225g
Sugar, Demerara	50g
Cinnamon	3g (1 teaspoon)
Pumpkin and sunflower seeds	45g (3 tablespoons)

Method

	Set oven to 180°C, 350°F, or Gas mark 4
1.	Put the fat spread and treacle into a pan and heat gently. Stir to mix.
2.	Put the oats, sugar, cinnamon and seeds into a bowl.
3.	Pour the melted mixture into the dry ingredients and stir well.
4.	Press into a 10-inch (25cm) round sandwich tin.
5.	Bake for 30 minutes.
6.	Mark into 12 wedges while still warm. Break apart when cold.
7.	Store in an airtight container.
	Tip: Measure out the treacle with a metal spoon that has been standing in hot water for a few seconds. The treacle will drop off easily.

Notes
12 servings – 45 g servings

Composition of sandwiches, rolls and wraps assembled at home

Tuna mayo sandwich
Tuna and 2 teaspoons of mayonnaise mixed together and served on 2 slices of white bread (with added fibre) with a thinly spread layer of low fat polyunsaturated spread.

2 Meatballs and mixed salad in a wholemeal pitta
2 meatballs cooked as instructed, 30g salad in 1 wholemeal pitta.

Sliced beef and salad in a roll
40g roasted topside lean beef with 30g salad in a white roll with added fibre thinly spread layer of low fat polyunsaturated spread.

Cheddar and coleslaw in a wholemeal pitta
25g cheddar and 45g of coleslaw (reduced calorie dressing) in a wholemeal pitta

Beef and beetroot sandwich
40g roasted topside lean beef with 40g raw beetroot on 2 slices of white bread (with added fibre) with a thinly spread layer of low fat polyunsaturated spread.