School Food Matters

How to run a breakfast club tasting session



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Introduction

What is this guide?

Breakfast can be a great opportunity to ensure children get the vital nutrition they need for their day. Children love familiarity and it can be easy to serve them the same things each term.

A tasting session can be a fun and interactive way to add new foods to your breakfast club menu.

Getting the children involved is a great way to engage with them. Having variety within menus will help with attendance and keep them coming back for more.

What are the benefits of a tasting session?

- Inspiring confidence that children will like healthier options.
- Adding variety to the breakfast club food offering.
- Preventing food waste by experimenting with new options before they are added to the menu.
- Encouraging children to try new foods in a fun and low-pressure environment.

Quotes from previous tasting sessions at a Tower Hamlets school

“This is fun. I love doing this!”

“This is something really new and I am amazed. Students are liking it and engaged!”

“Can this happen all the time now?”

Example tasting sessions

Here are some examples of tasting sessions you can do at your breakfast club.

Fruity Fridays

1. Introduce new fruits to children at breakfast time.
2. Choose a range of new fruits for them to try e.g. blueberries, bananas, pineapple, grapes, peaches, oranges, kiwi, pears. Think about what is in season at the time of the sessions.
3. Set up a separate table and display the fruit on plates, making sure the fruit is in small, taster portions.
4. Greet children and let them know about the additional arrangements alongside their regular menu.
5. Encourage them to try the different fruits and give their feedback by answering the following questions:
    - what is your favourite fruit?
    - how do you think eating fruit benefits your health?
    - which fruit would you like to see more of at breakfast club?
6. You could also suggest children choose some of the fruit and mix it with yoghurt and low-sugar granola or try adding it to their regular breakfast offering.

Tasty toast toppings

Switch up the usual margarine spread by setting up a tasting session of different toast toppings:

- cream cheese and cucumber
- reduced-salt Marmite
- avocado
- baked beans (no-added-sugar, low salt)
- low or reduced-sugar jam

Porridge pots

In preparation for colder months try a porridge tasting session. Try out different fruit toppings and flavour combinations, such as:

- blueberry and coconut
- apple and cinnamon
- strawberry and banana

See page 7 for porridge recipes.

Top tips for your tasting session

- Get ideas and feedback from children on what they would like to try - ask us for example feedback forms or use sticky notes.
- Nominate a few children to help you prepare the session to encourage their involvement.
- Award children with certificates like the one overleaf or stamp a loyalty-style card for those who try something new.
- Your regular breakfast club menu should still be served; the tasting session is an addition and not a replacement.
- Presentation of foods is key! Orange segments can be much more appetising than a whole fruit.
- Ensure a calm and low-pressure environment. Do not force children to try anything they do not want to and reassure them they don’t have to like or finish foods being offered.
- Limit peer influence: if someone doesn't like something, encourage them to say “it's not my favourite”, rather than “eww”, to limit the impact on others.


Certificate
of completion
proudly presented to
for being a breakfast club champion
Nourish

Perfect porridge

Porridge is a warming breakfast, naturally low in sugar and bursting with fibre!

Makes: 5 portions of each variety • Preparation time: 10-15 minutes

Ingredients

Blueberry and coconut:

- 150g porridge oats
- 400g tin light coconut milk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract (optional)
- Few handfuls fresh or frozen blueberries
- 2 tbsp honey
- Pinch of salt

Apple and cinnamon:

- 150g porridge oats
- 650ml oat milk
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 large apple (or a few smaller ones)
- Pinch of salt

Equipment

- Microwave and large bowl OR hob and large saucepan
- Weighing scales
- Tin opener
- Grater
- Measuring jug
- Mixing spoon
- Teaspoon and tablespoon

Top tips

- Serve both variations with fresh fruit on top like bananas or more berries.
- Add more cinnamon for extra warmth.
- In summer months, try making Overnight oats (page 19) using the same flavours.

Method

Blueberry and coconut:

1. Measure the oats, coconut milk, vanilla and a pinch of salt into a saucepan if you are cooking on the hob, or a microwaveable bowl. Fill the empty coconut milk tin with water and add this as well.
2. If using the hob, simmer on a low heat for 5 minutes. Keep stirring until you get a thick creamy porridge.
3. If using a microwave, cook on high for 90 seconds, remove and stir. Pop back into the microwave and heat for another 30 seconds, repeat and keep stirring until you get the perfect consistency.
4. Slightly mush the blueberries in a bowl, then add the berries with the honey to the creamy porridge.

Apple and cinnamon:

1. Measure the oats, oat milk, cinnamon and a pinch of salt into a saucepan if you are cooking on the hob, or a microwaveable bowl.
2. Core and grate the apple(s). Add to the mixture, give it a mix.
3. If using the hob, repeat step 2 in previous recipe.
4. If using a microwave, repeat step 3

Fruity yoghurt cups

Yoghurt is a great source of calcium which contributes to healthy bones and teeth. The low-sugar granola adds just the right amount of sweetness. We suggest using frozen fruit in this recipe, as it is just as nutritious as fresh fruit!

Makes: 1 cup • Preparation time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp frozen fruit (30g)
- 4 tbsp plain yoghurt (60g)
- 1 tbsp low-sugar granola (15g)

Equipment

- 1 cup or cereal bowl
- Fork
- Tablespoon

Method

1. Allow the frozen fruit to defrost for 15-20 minutes and then mash into a rough puree with the back of a fork.
2. In each cup or bowl, add one heaped tablespoonful of the fruity mixture. Now, layer two tablespoons of yoghurt on top.
3. Repeat the layering once more: one more tablespoon of fruit and two more tablespoons of yoghurt.
4. Finally, top off with the tablespoonful of granola.

Top tips

- To save time, instead of layering the yoghurt and fruit, spoon all the fruit into the cup or bowl and simply top with all the yoghurt.
- Substitute tinned fruit in natural juices, if frozen fruit is not to the taste of the children or young people at your club.
- Experiment with different fruits such as banana, mango, berries etc.

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Now that you have started your Nourish journey, see what else we can help you with

The school food standards: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/school-food-standards-practical-guide

Allergies: www.allergyuk.org

Even more recipes: https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/

Mindful eating: https://www.tasteeducation.com/school-or-organisation/

Food hygiene and safety: https://www.food.gov.uk/food-safety

Any questions?

Get in touch with us: enquiries@schoolfoodmatters.org