

Cooking our way out of the Lockdown Blues

During the present Lockdown period, lunchtime at home for children who are used to having school meals can be challenging. Like many of us, our School cooks and staff are stuck at home and missing cooking and serving meals to your children. So.... we thought we would share a recipe or two along with some hints and tips. This will help you to recreate your own 'School Meals at Home' with the kids helping out!

This is the first of a few hints, tips and recipes to share with you. Hopefully with some helpful advice and some of our most popular recipes.

Hints, tips and recipes

Shopping tips



- If you can, plan your weekly menu in advance and get your children involved in helping with this.
- Check through your fridges, freezers and store cupboards before you start your list as you could have items to use up.
- Try and plan your shopping list from the supermarket/shop layout so you won't be tempted to pick up unnecessary items.
- Remember supermarket/shops 'own brands' are often cheaper and a similar quality as most branded goods. These normally have reduced salt and sugar content so are healthier for the children and healthier for your purse.
- Try using frozen vegetables or fresh vegetable soup packs from the supermarket for easier and quicker meal preparation. Frozen vegetables, whole or diced, are nutritionally the same as fresh vegetables.... plus, there's no waste.

Here is a simple child friendly Lentil soup recipe. This is a favourite soup with our pupils and so easy to make at home!

Lentil Soup

To make 4 portions

Allergens - **Celery** (contained in Stock Cubes)

- Lentils - 150 grams or a cup (washed and drained)
- Mixed Vegetables - 250 grams - equivalent to 1 med carrot, 1 med potato, this can be a mix of turnip, carrots, potatoes & leeks - chopped (fresh or frozen)
- Onion - 1 medium sized – Diced
- Stock - 2 cubes - Vegetable, Chicken or Ham
- Water - 1 Litre or 2 pints
- Salt and pepper - to taste



Method

1. Put all the ingredients (vegetables, lentils, stock cubes and water) in a pan.
2. Bring to the boil, cover then simmer, stirring occasionally for approx. 45 minutes until lentils and vegetables are soft.
3. Season to taste.
4. Serve chunky or purée the soup using either a stick blender or a potato masher.
5. Serve with crusty bread or a cheese scone (see recipe below) for a filling lunch.

You can make many variations to this simple lentil soup by adding items like bacon, a touch of curry powder, parsley or other spices along with lots of other vegetables.

Cheese Scones

To make 8 scones

Allergens - **Gluten/Wheat & Dairy, Mustard**, if included

- Self Raising Flour - 250g / 10 tablespoons
- Baking Powder - 1 Level teaspoon
- Mature Cheddar Cheese (grated) - 100 g / 4 tablespoons + plus 20g /1 tablespoon for topping
- Margarine - 65g / 2 desert spoons
- Milk - 125ml / 1 cup - to bind mixture together.
- Salt - a pinch
- 1/2 teaspoon dried English mustard or ready-made mustard (*optional but does bring out the cheese flavour*)



Method

1. In a bowl mix flour, salt and baking powder thoroughly.
2. Add margarine and rub into the mixture with fingertips.
3. Add the grated cheese and mustard and mix well.
4. Gradually add the milk to a make semi-firm dough.
5. Place on a floured surface, roll or pat flat to 2.5cm or ¾" depth, cut out using a cutter, upturned glass or use a knife and cut into triangles as desired.
6. Place on a non-stick or grease proof papered baking tray.
7. Sprinkle the smaller portion grated cheese over the top of each scone.
8. Place in the oven at 220°C, Fan 200°C or Gas Mark 7 for 12 minutes.
9. Allow to cool slightly. Eat and enjoy!