Here are some tips from our Oral Health Improvement team to help prepare your child for school.

Packed Lunch Ready

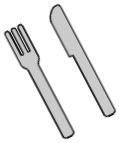
- Practise having lunch at around the same time as school lunchtime to get your child into that routine
- If you plan on doing packed lunches, have regular 'lunchbox' days at home so that your child can practice opening the lunchbox, water bottle and any food wrapping.

- When your child first starts school, let them help you to pack the lunchbox so that they know what to expect at lunchtime.
- Teach your child to recognise their own belongings, such as their school bag, lunchbox or water bottle.

- A healthy lunch is important to help your child's concentration at school and provide them with energy and key nutrients for healthy growth. For lunchbox ideas, go to *www.nhs.uk/change4life-beta/healthier-lunchboxes*.

School Dinner Preparation

- If your child is planning on having school dinner, obtain sample menus from the school. Try making some of these dishes at home so that your child can recognise them at school.



- Practise using a fork and knife with your child at home to improve their cutlery skills – this may help your child to eat better when they have school dinners.

Vitamin D Reminder

- Vitamin D is important for strong bones and teeth. In children, a lack of vitamin D can lead to rickets. A daily vitamin D supplement is advised to prevent deficiency. For more information, see www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/

Toothy Tips..

- Brush twice a day for two minutes, especially before bed. Make sure you do not eat or drink anything after, unless it is water. Develop a bedtime routine which finishes with brushing teeth, story and then bed.

- Ensure you use a toothpaste with the correct amount of fluoride;
  0-3 – at least 1000ppm (parts per million)
  3-6 – more thank 1000ppm
  7 + - at least 1350ppm

- Spit don't rinse! If you rinse your mouth with water or mouthwash after brushing, you will wash the fluoride away. Just spit out the foam – job done!

- Remember to take your child for regular dental check-ups – your dentist will advise you on how often to visit.