

# School meals - the new healthy 'family service'

By Margaret Hutchinson

THE new kitchen and dining hall at Preston Primary School have provided Sandra and her kitchen staff the opportunity to introduce a new system of school meals, which is known as 'family' service.

The children sit at round tables of eight with their friends from other classes, an adult and a Year 6 monitor, who serves the meal to the younger children on their table. Plates and bowls have replaced the old plastic trays.

The children have a daily choice of a hot meal or salad bar meal, followed by a pudding or fresh fruit option. The food is always cooked from fresh on site, even the bread is baked in the new state of the art kitchen.

The children are encouraged to try everything including all the vegetables. No baked beans, spaghetti hoops or other products high in salt and sugar are served. The cooking is salt free and there are no salt cellars on the tables.

Sandra is also planning to have taster sessions with the children to give them the opportunity to try foods and dishes with which they are less familiar, and the results will be used when planning the next menus. An open evening is also planned for later in the year to give parents the opportunity to taste some of the dishes served to their children.

The aim of the service is to provide the children with a good quality well balanced meal, and provide at least three of the five portions of fruit and vegetables required daily. A further portion of fruit is served in each classroom. So the children only require one more portion of fruit or vegetable per day from their meals at home.

The family service system also applies to those children preferring to bring in packed lunches, they too sit with children from other classes supported by a Year 6 monitor.

The kitchen also provides the same meal daily to the children who attend Preston Children's Centre Lunch Club.



**NEW KITCHEN:** Sandra Brown and her team serving up meals

## Sample menus



**SALAD BAR:** Children can help themselves to daily options

### Monday

Lasagne, garlic bread, cauliflower, broccoli and peas  
Vanilla sponge and custard

### Tuesday

Chicken casserole, dumplings, carrots and cabbage  
Rice pudding and peaches

### Wednesday

Roast gammon, potato wedges and mixed vegetables  
Ice cream and fruit salad

### Thursday

Beef mince pie, duchess potatoes, broccoli and sweetcorn  
Apple crumble and custard

### Friday

Fish, chips and peas  
Fresh fruit salad

### Salad bar - daily

Choice of cooked meat, cheese, tuna or flan.  
Selection of salad, jacket potatoes and fresh fruit

## Preston Children's Centre

By Nicola Wilson

THE centre, which is based at Preston Primary

School, has been operating for eleven years and is owned and run by Mrs Andrea Broughton. The centre provides a breakfast club, a playgroup, after school club and holiday club as well as a lunch club.

"It has really taken off" says Andrea. "The playgroup is open to everybody and children come from neighbouring areas. We're also open when there are teacher training days and provide a crèche for parent's evenings at school. The centre is a home from home for the kids. They can curl up on the sofa and

watch a DVD if they just want to relax. We don't want to make them do things they don't want to do. The parents pay the bills but it is the children

who are our customers."

The lunch club facility is for children aged eighteen months to four years. This provision enables children to socialise and interact with their peers whilst enjoying a healthy school meal. Children are encouraged to develop their independence and confidence in making healthy choices whilst promoting a healthy lifestyle. This facility encourages and supports children from an early age assisting a smooth transition into Nursery and Reception Class.



**PLAY AREA:** A 'home from home'