



# NUTRITION FACT SHEET



Iron is an important mineral in our diets that helps to make red blood cells which carry oxygen around the body. Iron also helps the immune system to work as it should and helps the brain to function normally, therefore aiding academic performance.

A lack of iron in our diets can make us feel very tired and lethargic and affect our concentration, creating problems for pupils in school. Over time a lack of iron in the diet can lead to something called iron deficiency anaemia.

We should be able to get all the iron we need from a healthy diet, however many of us don't.

There are two different types of iron; haem iron and non-haem iron. Haem iron is found in animals and is more readily available to our bodies. Non-haem iron is found in plant sources and is the only form of iron that those following a vegetarian diet will consume. Therefore it is important that plenty of good sources of iron are included in a vegetarian diet.

Good sources of iron include:

- Meat and fish
- Beans and pulses
- Dried fruit, such as dried apricots
- Wholegrains, such as brown rice
- Fortified breakfast cereals
- Soy bean flour
- Most dark-green leafy vegetables, such as watercress and curly kale.

Mellors Catering Services school lunches are planned to meet the School Food Standards. These have been developed to ensure that the dietary requirements, of students are met.

This means that in Mellors dining rooms:

- Meat and poultry are provided at least three times per week as part of main meals
- Vegetarian main meals contain alternative sources of protein, including beans and pulses
- Wholegrain pasta, rice and bread are used
- A variety of vegetables are provided each week.

These are all good sources of iron.

Mellors school lunches are a great way to support your child's learning and education at school.

Give them a go and let us know if you can see the difference.