



# Healthy Eating Policy

## RATIONALE

Healthy eating and good nutrition has a major influence on the health and wellbeing of children and young people, and a direct impact on their growth and development. Acknowledging the social and cultural role of food, and the wide range of attitudes to it, is important within the school environment.

It is recognised that every member of Knox Park Primary School has an impact on students' health and can contribute to creating an environment that promotes healthy eating.

School canteens and other food services are an essential part of the education environment and play an important role in communicating healthy eating messages to young children, students, staff, and the wider community. Foods eaten during a child's early years and at school contribute significantly to a child's daily nutrient intake and also have a considerable influence on the development of their lifelong eating habits, growth patterns and energy levels.

While Knox Park Primary School does not have a canteen, we do have 'Special Lunch days', and special events where food is catered for, for students, staff, parents, and in some cases, guests.

### Definitions

**Healthy eating:** Eating a wide variety of foods from the five food groups each day. Healthy eating also means eating in a way that is socially and culturally appropriate, having regular meals and snacks and eating food to satisfy hunger, appetite and energy needs.

**Nutrition:** Everyone needs food to provide the right balance of vitamins, minerals and nutrients (like protein, carbohydrate and fats) to feel energised and to help them grow and stay healthy. The meals we eat and the drinks we drink satisfy hunger and thirst throughout the day, as well as fuel the body. Preparing and sharing meals with friends, family or community is a significant way to build relationships and is an important part of our culture.

**'Occasional' foods and drink:** Also referred to as 'extra foods' or 'discretionary foods' (sometimes called junk food), these are foods like potato chips, chocolate, cakes, lollies, soft drinks and some takeaway food, like hamburgers and hotdogs. These foods are usually low in nutrients and high in salt, sugar or fat.

**'Select carefully' foods and drink:** Include foods like commercially prepared pastas, noodles and soups, meat products and fruit juice.

**'Everyday' foods and drink:** Include whole foods such as fresh fruit, wholegrain breads and cereals, lean cuts of meat, legumes, canteen made soups, reduced fat dairy products and water.

## AIM

This policy confirms our commitment to:

- Encourage students to make healthy food and drink choices.
- Promote the importance of a healthy lifestyle, which includes drinking water and eating healthy food.
- Create a supportive environment for healthy eating for students, staff, families and external visitors.

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## IMPLEMENTATION

### Healthy physical environment

- The Parents' Association works towards having the Special Lunches and Friday Treats' menus assessed by the Healthy Together Healthy Eating Advisory Service as compliant with the *School Canteen and other School Food Services Policy*.
- The Parents' Association works towards increasing the availability of 'everyday' foods and limits 'occasional' and 'select carefully' food and drinks.
- Food provided at camps, school excursions and sports days are in line with the *School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy*.
- Families are encouraged to provide healthy lunchboxes. Healthy food options are encouraged for staff at meetings, professional learning events and in the staff room.
- Safe drinking water is available at all times, and only water bottles filled with water are to be accessed during class. Sweet drinks are not permitted during class time.
- The school seeks to ensure any sponsorship, advertisements or marketing of food and drinks is consistent with the school's healthy eating policy. The school encourages those organising fundraising activities to reflect the healthy eating policy and promote healthy lifestyle messages

### Healthy social environment

- Food and drink, food vouchers and sweets are not used as an incentive or reward.
- Students are given adequate time to eat their food in suitable and inviting eating spaces, which encourage the social interaction of students.
- To support positive role modelling, staff and families are encouraged to bring food and drinks which are in line with the school's healthy eating policy.
- Staff and families are encouraged to foster a healthy body image and enjoyment of eating.
- The school respects and celebrates the cultural diversity of its community through recognising and valuing cultural and traditional beliefs about food.

### Learning and skills

- Healthy eating is incorporated into the curriculum
- Students have the opportunity to engage in regular food-related activities, such as planning and shopping for meals, growing, cooking and eating foods, which are culturally appropriate and varied.
- Staff are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote healthy eating across the curriculum.

### Engaging children, young people, staff and families

- Students are consulted about healthy eating initiatives via Student Representative Council
- Families and staff are, on a regular basis, provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to promote and support healthy eating at school and at home.
- Families are encouraged to be involved in healthy eating initiatives at school.
- Families and students from culturally diverse backgrounds are engaged to ensure cultural values and expectations about food and eating are respected.

### Community partnerships

- The school will work with local health professionals, services, businesses or agencies, where possible, to support staff, students and families to promote healthy eating.

### Resources/References:

- DEECD School Canteen and other School Food Services Policy  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/pages/canteenpolicy.aspx>.

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# Healthy Eating Policy

- National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Dietary Guidelines, 2013  
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n55>.

## EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

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