



Food Services, Healthy Eating Policy

Written by	Principal
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Rationale

School food services can have a major impact on the foods and drinks that students are exposed to and consume. Enjoyment of healthy foods and drinks has a wide range of positive benefits for student health and learning outcomes such as:

- providing important nutrients that students need to be alert and engaged in classroom
- activities for healthy physical development and performance
- supporting the development of healthy eating habits and preferences
- paving the way for good health and prevention of chronic illness.

It is important that parents, teachers and students work together to support a whole-school-approach to healthy eating and build a school culture which supports students to choose nutritious foods and drinks, and a healthy lifestyle.

A healthy school food service:

- makes it easy for students to choose healthy snacks and meals
- offers a variety of nutritious foods
- promotes foods that are consistent with Australian Dietary Guidelines
- can be an avenue for consistent and continual health education
- complements the diverse elements of the school curriculum
- involves students, parents and the wider school community
- is an integral part of the entire healthy school environment.

Aim

To ensure school food services provide foods and drinks which contribute to a supportive, healthy school environment.

Implementation

The School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy provides information and advice about:

- what is a healthy school food service
- whole-school approach to healthy eating
- what foods should be provided in a healthy school food service
- the importance of a school food service policy
- food safety
- tips on operating a viable and healthy school canteen
- the role of the school council in school canteen operations or sub leasing to a private provider

The policy divides foods and drinks into three categories:

Everyday category (Green)

Foods and drinks in the Everyday category are consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines and are most suitable for school food services.

Foods and drinks in the Everyday category are based on the basic food groups and include:

- breads and cereals, rice, pasta, noodles
- vegetables
- fruits
- dairy foods – reduced or low-fat milk, yoghurt and cheese
- lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, nuts* and legumes (dried beans and lentils)
- water.



Select Carefully category (Amber)

Foods and drinks in the Select Carefully category contain some valuable nutrients, but may also include unhealthy ingredients. They are mainly processed foods that have fat, sugar or salt added.

Schools are encouraged to limit the availability of these foods. They should not be promoted at the expense of foods and drinks from the Everyday category.

Foods and drinks in the Select Carefully category include:

- full-fat dairy foods, low-fat ice-cream
- 100 per cent fruit juices and 100 per cent fruit-juice based ices
- artificially sweetened drinks
- reduced-fat processed meats
- commercially prepared hot foods
- reduced-fat, high-fibre snack foods
- margarines, oils, spreads, sauces and gravies.

Occasionally category (Red)

Foods and drinks in the Occasionally category are not consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines and are not recommended for school food services, with the exception of government approved food items.

Schools (PFA events) should limit the availability of these foods and drinks to no more than two occasions per term.

Foods and drinks in this category include:

- deep-fried foods
- pastry-based or crumbed hot foods
- savoury snack foods – crisps, chips, biscuits
- ice-creams and ice confections – chocolate-coated and premium ice-creams, icy-poles and ice crushes
- cakes, muffins, sweet pastries, slices, biscuits and bars
- cream, butter and copha.

Should not be supplied

The following should never be supplied due to their high sugar content:

- **High sugar content soft drinks** including energy drinks and flavoured mineral waters with high sugar content.
- **Confectionery** including chocolate, lollies, yoghurt compound and coatings, fudge and chewing gum, for further information, see Departmental resources.

The School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy applies to all foods and drinks provided in the following areas:

- school canteens and contracted school food services
- external businesses and retail food outlets supplying schools (e.g. milk bars, cafes and bakeries)
- vending machines
- school curriculum activities
- rewards and incentives
- school sporting days, social events and productions
- school-based breakfast programs
- outside school hours care programs on school grounds.

The School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy does not apply to:

- foods and drinks used for the management of individual student's health conditions
- student lunches and snacks brought from home
- student birthday celebrations
- non-school-related events and activities managed by external organisations on school grounds e.g. community sport
- school camps.



For more information to assist the implementation of the policy and develop healthier food and drink options for your school community, see Department resources

Schools should:

- apply the policy to all food and drink services provided to the school community by the school
- ensure EVERYDAY food and drinks are always available as the main choices and SELECT

CAREFULLY food and drinks are selected carefully and limit the availability of OCCASIONALLY food and drinks.

- never supply high sugar content drinks and confectionery
- work with their community to implement this policy as part of a whole-school approach to promoting healthy eating

Related legislation

- Section 2.3.5 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Food Act 1984
- Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code

Evaluation

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