




HEALTHY EATING – SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES POLICY

Policy & Guidance

- A school culture in which students actively choose nutritious foods and a healthy lifestyle supports learning and health outcomes for children and young people, addressing the rise in obesity and other preventable diet-related conditions.
- To support healthy eating culture in schools, the Department has a  [School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy \(pdf - 578.58kb\)](#) (the policy) in place to set out principles which promote healthy eating, and address food selection and food categories in developing a healthy school food service.
- The policy applies to all Victorian government schools including primary, secondary, special and language schools.
- 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 and 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/carers, 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.
- 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.

Purpose

- To ensure school food services at Footscray North Primary School provide foods and drinks which contribute to a supportive, healthy school environment.

Definitions

Confectionery can be defined as a small snack, chocolate or lolly — often sized for individual consumption — of minimal nutritional value and with sugar as a main ingredient. Common names for confectionery include lollies, candy or sweets. Confectionery comes in a variety of shapes, textures from jelly-like, soft and chewy to hard and brittle.

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.

The school will limit the availability of these foods. They will 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.

Schools 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.

Implementation

- The school will adopt DET's mandatory policy for food service.
- **The following will 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.
- The school will:
 - 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.
 - work with their community to implement this policy as part of a whole-school approach to promoting healthy eating
 - develop a whole-of-school food services policy to establish a healthy eating platform for the school community.
- As part of the Health and Physical Education curriculum, the school will promote healthy eating.
- Parents/carers will be discouraged from supplying sugary drinks in school lunches.
- This policy applies to school events such as celebrations, the fete and sports activities.
- For further information, the school will refer to:
 - [Rationale for the Introduction of the School Confectionery Guidelines \(PDF\)](#) for a review of the literature undertaken to inform the development of the Guidelines
 - [Implementing the School Confectionery Guidelines \(PDF\)](#) for guidance including tips and answers to frequently asked questions

Note: The Go for your life Healthy Canteens campaign to which the Guidelines refer is no longer active. Healthy Eating Advisory Service

The [Healthy Eating Advisory Service](#):

- offers free information and resources, menu assessment, and training on how to supply and promote healthy foods and drinks in-line with the Department's Healthy Eating policy and
- provides a range of services and resources including:
 - [Food and drink ideas](#) — for ingredient swaps and cooking tips
 - [FoodChecker](#) — a free online menu, product and recipe assessment tool
 - [Training for schools](#) — a free 1-hour self-paced training module
 - [Recipes for Everyday](#) — Select Carefully category foods
- a range of fact sheets including:
 - a school community survey — with sample questions to invite students, staff, volunteers and families to provide their feedback and ideas relating to the school food service(s)
 - strategies to support a whole-school approach to healthy eating — practical actions that school leaders, staff, food services, students, families and community groups can perform to support a whole-school approach to healthy eating
 - newsletter insert ideas — a range of topics and selected resources for schools to use when drafting newsletter inserts
 - healthy school celebrations — a range of food and non-food ideas to celebrate classroom birthday parties and other special events in fun and healthy ways
 - healthy fundraising ideas — a range of food and non-food ideas to raise funds for the school, while encouraging and supporting a healthy lifestyle
- To support a whole-school-approach to healthy eating the school will:
 - work with parents/carers, teachers and students to promote healthy eating practices
 - apply a healthy eating approach to all food and drink services provided to the school community by the school
 - ensure healthy food choices are made available to the school community by their 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. (refer to [Guidance tab](#) for details on these food categories)
- never supply:
- high sugar content drinks such as energy drinks and flavoured mineral waters with high sugar content
- confectionery such as chocolate, lollies, yoghurt compound and coatings, fudge and chewing gum (refer to [Resources](#) for the School Confectionary Guidelines)
- ensure curriculum programs promote a healthy eating approach

Special dietary requirements

Some students may require special diets for medical reasons. The school food service will try to meet these needs as far as possible so that all children can enjoy eating a healthy lunch from the canteen. Any special

needs for children with disabilities such as modified texture diets or wheelchair access to the canteen should also be considered.

The Principal, child's teacher and parents/carers should provide advice of any special dietary needs to canteen staff.

Anaphylactic (severe) food allergy

Contact with certain foods (such as peanuts, cow's milk, egg, wheat, soy bean, tree nuts, fish and shellfish can be fatal for people with allergies to these foods. The Department has guidelines for schools to support students with anaphylaxis, refer to: [Anaphylaxis](#).

Canteen staff need to be aware of students with such allergies and be familiar with the school's management strategies for these students.

Role of School Council

Many schools have contractual arrangements in relation to their canteens and while these arrangements need to be honoured, the School Council will discuss with licencees ways in which the canteen can be compliant with Departmental policy.

(If a school has a specific relationship with a retail shop, for example a local milk bar, they need to consider how the policy can be applied.)

- The school will refer to [Finance Manual Section 12 Trading Operations](#) for further detail on the role of School Council in engaging a third party to operate school canteens.

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change (latest DET update mid-June 2020).

School Council Approval No Longer Required

The Principal may choose to table this policy with School Council for noting

References

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/canteen-healthy-eating>