



Healthy Eating and Oral Health Policy

• Purpose

Leadership and staff acknowledge the importance of an inclusive environment, which supports the healthy eating and oral health of all students and staff.

This policy confirms our commitment to promoting healthy eating and the oral health of students, staff and families through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment, and developing community links and partnerships.

• Background

The National Health Survey indicates that almost one quarter (24.9%) of children aged 5-17 years were overweight or obese in 2017-18 (17% overweight and 8.1% obese).

Schools can make a big difference when it comes to creating a healthy eating environment. When children and young people eat well they learn better, are more alert and are more likely to grow and develop to their full potential.

By encouraging a whole-school approach to healthy eating and oral health, students can establish and develop healthy eating habits throughout some of the most influential years of their life.

• Definitions

Healthy Eating and Oral Health: For the purpose of this policy and for the Healthy Schools Achievement Program, the 'Healthy Eating and Oral Health' health priority area focusses on supporting healthy eating, including nutrition, positive food habits and food literacy, and supporting oral health and hygiene practices.

Healthy eating: eating a wide variety of foods from the five food groups each day. These are:

- Fruit
- Vegetables and legumes/beans
- Grain(cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain
- Milk, yoghurt, cheese, and alternatives
- Lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts, and seeds and legumes/beans

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. i

Nutrition: The process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth. ii 'Discretionary' / 'sometimes' food and drink: Discretionary/ sometimes food is high in fat, sugar and salt or a combination of these. iii They typically have very little nutritional value and are often processed and packaged.

Examples of discretionary food include:

- chocolate, confectionery, jelly
- sweet biscuits, high fat/salt savoury biscuits, chips
- high sugar/high fat cakes and slices
- cream, ice cream
- deep fried foods (e.g. hot chips) and pastry-based foods (pies, sausage rolls and pasties)

- most fast food and takeaway foods
- some processed meats (e.g. sausages, frankfurts/hot dogs, salami, strasbourg, devon, some commercial chicken nuggets and fish fingers)
- soft drinks, fruit juice and fruit drinks, cordial, sports drinks, energy drinks, flavoured milk and flavoured mineral water. iv

- **Procedures and responsibilities**

Leadership and commitment

- Staff, families and students are involved in guiding the development and implementation policies and are seen as key partners in promoting and supporting healthy eating and oral health.
- Staff and families are provided with information about policy changes and requirements.

Healthy physical environment

- Tap water is accessible for drinking at all times.
- Healthy food and drinks are promoted and discretionary/sometimes food and drinks are discouraged for school snacks and lunches.
- The school seeks to ensure any fundraising, sponsorship, advertisements or marketing of food and drinks is consistent with this policy and promote healthy lifestyle messages.
- Safety practices, such as mouth guards, are implemented for contact sports.
- Students and staff are provided with inviting spaces and sufficient time to eat.
- There is suitable space for breastfeeding and storing milk.
- Safe food handling practices are followed, including safe procedures for food storage, handling, preparation and disposal and food safety training.

Healthy culture

- Diversity and cultural practices are considered when implementing this policy and healthy eating and oral health practices.
- Food, drinks or food vouchers are not used as an incentive or reward.
- Staff and visitors role model healthy eating.
- Celebrations and events include healthy food options and discourage discretionary options.
- Oral hygiene practices are promoted and undertaken at the school where appropriate.

Student teaching and learning

- Healthy eating and oral health messages are embedded in the curriculum. The curriculum guides students to develop food literacy knowledge and skills to enable them to make healthy food and drink choices and develop a healthy relationship with food.
- Staff are supported to access professional development and resources about healthy eating and oral health education.
- Students are included in the design and implementation of healthy eating and oral health initiatives.

Supported staff

- Staff are supported to consume healthy food and drinks and maintain good oral health practices at work.
- Healthy eating and oral health information and policy requirements are included in staff orientation/induction.
- When food is provided to staff for meetings, celebrations and events, healthy food options are included and discretionary options are discouraged.

Families and community partnerships

- Healthy eating and oral health information is provided to families and the wider community, such as information about local dental services and how to create healthy and nutritious meals.
- Partnerships are established with relevant organisations and health professionals to support healthy eating and oral health practices where appropriate.

Related School Policies

- Staff Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Camps and Excursions Policy
- Fundraising Policy

Relevant legislation and policies

- [DET School Canteen and other School Food Services Policy](#)
- [DET School Policy and Advisory Guide – Health Education Approaches](#)
- [Oral Health Messages for the Australian Public](#)
- [DET Safe Food Handling](#)
- [Section 2.3.5 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#)
- [Food Act 1984](#)
- [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#)

This policy was ratified by School Council on	November 2021	Review Date	2024
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i Nutrition Australia Victorian Division, www.nutritionaustralia.org

ii <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/nutrition>

iii Australian Dietary Guidelines, National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013, <http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au>

iv Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood, Commonwealth of Australia, 2009, www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhoodnutrition-resources

v Healthy Mouths Healthy Lives: Australia’s National Oral Health Plan 2015-2024. COAG Health Council 2015 <http://www.coaghealthcouncil.gov.au/Publications/Reports/ArtMID/514/ArticleID/81>

vi Vidgen HA, Gallegos, D, (2014). Defining Food Literacy and its components. *Appetite*, 76, 50-59. Retrieved from https://blogs.deakin.edu.au/apfnc/wpcontent/uploads/sites/119/2015/06/Vidgen_2014_food-literacy-Appetite.pdf