



## ASCOT VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL HEALTHY EATING POLICY

Originally Passed by SC Dec 2009. "Healthy Foods Policy"  
Reviewed & Passed by SC November 17 2014

### **Rationale:**

With people increasingly eating food not prepared at home, and a high proportion of Victorian adults and children overweight or obese and not meeting the healthy dietary guidelines, it is important to provide easy access to healthier food and drink options in settings such as early childhood services and schools.

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

### **Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service**

The Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service provides free, tailored healthy eating and nutrition advice and support to assist early childhood services, primary and secondary schools in developing healthy eating environments.

The service has been developed to support anyone responsible for the provision of food and drinks in these settings to provide and promote healthier food and drink options, while also assisting early childhood services and schools to meet and implement related policies and guidelines such as:

- the National Quality Framework's healthy eating standard, supported by the:
  - Get Up & Grow: Nutrition and Physical Activity for Early Childhood resources
  - Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers
- the School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy
- the Healthy Eating and Oral Health benchmark of the Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program

### **A whole school approach – what are our aims?**

The school's food services and curriculum programs on healthy eating should be complementary. Positive peer pressure within the education setting can create a culture in which nutritious foods and a healthy lifestyle are actively chosen. This culture should permeate the entire school environment and can have an impact on choices made by students about food consumption when they are not at school. A

positive attitude towards a school canteen that supports healthy eating should be promoted and endorsed. This is facilitated through a whole-school approach to nutrition.

The World Health Organization encourages schools to take a health promoting schools approach to support healthy eating. The Health Promoting Schools framework provides a useful model for schools to promote and protect the health of students. The framework highlights the importance of the relationships between:

- curriculum, teaching and learning
- school organisation, ethos and environment
- community links and partnerships

### **What is a healthy food service?**

- A health 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 the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*
  - 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

Special Lunch Days are considered a food service.

### **Implementation:**

- The strategies employed in support of this policy apply to events directly under the responsibility of the school principal; these include use of food and drink as part of the canteen (special lunch days) , classroom education, rewards, sporting events and other school sponsored events. This policy does not apply to 'birthday food' or other foods brought from home
- Categories of food - (see page 6 of the Healthy Canteen Kit) can assist in selecting foods and drinks for school canteens and other food-related school activities. The planner divides foods and drinks into three categories:
  - Everyday category (Green foods)
  - Select Carefully category (Amber foods)
  - Occasional category (Red foods)
- Meals provided through school initiatives will refer to these three categories when planning and will not sacrifice healthy foods for the sake of profits
- The school will involve itself in local strategies designed to raise an awareness of, or to promote healthy foods eg: local fruit growing or local dairy industry promotions
- Healthy foods and drinks will be available to all students at activities such as sporting events.
- The principal will ensure that a supply of drinkable water is available at the school at all times
- At least once per year the whole school will focus upon a theme of healthy foods.
- The school encourages Parents / Carers to provide water as the drink of choice in lunch boxes
- Staff members will be encouraged to model healthy eating habits whilst in the classroom
- Students will have access to their own water bottles during class lessons and have permission to eat healthy foods during class time unless it is deemed by the classroom teacher to be inappropriate to do so
- Fund raising activities will not focus on the promotion of unhealthy foods that do not complement our healthy foods philosophy

- Staff are to inform the principal of students who appear to be provided with inadequate lunches

**References:**

- 1) DEECD 'Healthy Eating' -  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/pages/healthyeatingadvisory.aspx>
- 2) DEECD "Healthy Canteen Kit" -  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/management/gfypolicy.pdf>

**Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed in 2017 as part of the school's three-year review cycle.