



HEALTHY EATING POLICY

Rationale

Abbotsford Primary School values Respect, Inclusiveness, High expectations and Success. Healthy eating has a long-lasting and positive impact on a child's growth, development and health. Foods eaten by children at school contributes greatly to their daily nutrient intake. These foods considerably influence their eating habits, growth patterns, energy, concentration levels and ability to learn. The Department of Education and Training actively promotes healthy eating. With people increasingly eating food not prepared at home, and a high portion of Victorian adults and children overweight or obese and not meeting healthy dietary guidelines, it is important to provide easy access to healthier food and drink options in settings such as schools.

Purpose

A 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 healthy lifestyle are actively chosen. This culture should permeate the entire environment and can have an impact on choices made by students about food consumption when they are not at school.

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.

Abbotsford Primary School will provide a healthy eating framework for children while at school to help families make healthy choices for the food and drink their children consume while at school. Healthy eating will continue to be taught throughout the school as part of the "Health and Physical Education" component of the Victorian Curriculum.

This Healthy Eating Policy should be read in conjunction with the *Abbotsford Primary Anaphylaxis policy*.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide guidelines for staff and families with respect to:

- Encouraging an enjoyment of healthy eating and drinking habits within our school and wider community;
- Reinforcing healthy eating practices across the school curriculum;
- Ensuring that all aspects of food and nutrition in the school promote the health and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors to our school;
- Equipping students with the appropriate knowledge and skills to enable them to assist their child to adopt healthy eating practices;
- Encouraging the whole school community to be responsible for their own health, this in turn, promotes a positive attitude to healthy eating practices;
- Improving student health and wellbeing; this should translate to improved educational outcomes for all students at Abbotsford Primary School.

Implementation

- The principal will ensure that a supply of drinkable water is available at the school at all times
- The school promotes and encourages the drinking of water and the importance of healthy eating with articles in the newsletter.
- The school encourages parents / carers to provide water as the drink of choice in lunch boxes
- At least once per year the whole school will focus upon a theme of healthy foods.
- Classrooms will provide information on the colour guide to healthy eating, utilising the information poster. (Appendix A).
- Food and drink are not to be used as an incentive or reward at any time.
- Parents/Guardians must be informed in writing of what food items their child is required to bring from home for class parties.
- Staff members will be encouraged to model healthy eating habits whilst in the classroom.

Guidelines

A. Healthy lunch boxes

The Department of Health and Human Services provides a range of ideas and practical tips to inspire families to create healthy school lunchboxes.

The message is simple:

For a healthy lunchbox pick & mix, something from each group 1 - 6!

Pick and mix one tasty option from each of the food groups below to create a healthy lunchbox every day:

1. **Fruit** (e.g. fresh, frozen, pureed and canned in natural juice)
2. **Vegetables, legumes and beans**
Offer different types and colours
3. **Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives** (e.g. soy, rice, oat and almond based products with at least 100mg of calcium per 100mL/g)
Reduced fat options are best.
4. **Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans**
5. **Grain (cereal) foods** (e.g. breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley)
Wholegrain and/or high fibre varieties are best.
6. **Plain water** (e.g. tap, spring, mineral, soda and sparkling)
Offer water as the drink of choice.

B. Lunch order service

Abbotsford Primary School will comply with the School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy, Victorian Government, as listed below.

Everyday category (green)

Everyday foods and drinks should be included as the main choices available and be made available every day. As a general guide, **Everyday** items should ideally represent more than 50 per cent of the menu.

Typical foods found in this category are whole foods such as fresh fruit, wholegrain breads and cereals, lean cuts of meat, legumes, canteen made soups, and reduced fat dairy products.

Select Carefully category (amber)

Select Carefully foods and drinks should not dominate the menu. These items are often processed and therefore should be offered in smaller serving sizes. As a general guide, **Select Carefully** items should ideally represent less than 50 per cent of your menu items. They can be made 'greener' by partnering with Everyday foods.

Typical foods found in this category include commercially prepared pastas, noodles, soups, meat products, cakes, dairy desserts, and fruit juice.

Occasionally category (red)

Foods and drinks in the **Occasionally** category should not be on the regular canteen menu or be regularly available in other areas of the school such as vending machines, foods used in curriculum activities and school events such as celebrations and sports days. Foods and drinks that are categorised **Occasionally**, are typically high in kilojoules, high in saturated fat, and high in salt.

Schools should limit the availability of these foods and drinks within the school to no more than two occasions per term.

Confectionery and **high sugar content soft drinks** should not be supplied through school food services at any time, under the *School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy*. This includes energy drinks and flavoured mineral waters with high sugar content.

C. Birthdays:

Celebrating birthdays is an important event for many children, and birthdays are celebrated differently in different cultural groups. At Abbotsford Primary School, students' birthdays are celebrated by an acknowledgment by the class and teacher. It is not expected that children share celebratory food with their class. In line with our healthy eating and anaphylaxis policies, families who do choose to bring food to school to celebrate their child's birthday will be asked to bring only cut up fruit. Other items such as cakes, drinks, or lolly bags (items in red and amber categories) are not to be brought to school for distribution to students. If those items are brought to school, they will be returned home with the student.

Related Policies:

Abbotsford Primary School Anaphylaxis Policy, 2016.

Links:

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/>

Evaluation:

This policy was ratified by the Abbotsford Primary School Council in September 2017. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle.