

Purpose

Leadership and staff acknowledge the importance of healthy eating and oral health behaviours, which contribute to good health and overall wellbeing. This policy confirms our commitment to:

- encouraging children and families to make healthy food and drink choices
- promoting the importance of a healthy lifestyle, which includes drinking water, eating healthy food and maintaining oral health
- creating a supportive environment for healthy eating and good oral health for staff, hub participants, children and external visitors.

As a health promoting community hub, we will promote healthy eating and oral health to children, staff and families through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment, and developing community links and partnerships.

Policy statement

Background

Healthy eating and good nutrition have a major influence on the health and wellbeing of children and young people, and a direct impact on their growth and development. Acknowledging the social and cultural role of food, and the wide range of attitudes to it, is important within the Hub environment.

Oral health is essential for the overall health and wellbeing of children and young people. Oral diseases can negatively affect individuals through pain, discomfort, and impacts on general health and quality of life. The main oral health condition experienced by children is tooth decay with one in four Victorian children aged 5–12 years having filled teeth. Tooth decay is Australia's most prevalent health problem despite being almost entirely preventable.¹

Whole Hub engagement

It is recognised that every member of **Dallas Brooks Community Primary School Hub** has an impact on health and can contribute to creating an environment that promotes healthy eating and good oral health. All members of our community, including staff, hub participants, children, families, facilitators and volunteers, will be supported to meet this policy.

Definitions

¹ Rogers JG, 2011, Evidence-based oral health promotion resource. Prevention and Population Health Branch, Government of Victoria, Department of Health, Melbourne.

Healthy eating and oral health: For the purposes of this policy and for the Healthy Schools Achievement Program, the 'Healthy Eating and Oral Health' health priority area focuses 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.²

Nutrition: The process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth.³

Discretionary/sometimes food and drink: Discretionary/sometimes food and drink is high in fat, sugar and salt or a combination of these.⁴ They typically have very little nutritional value and are often processed and packaged. Examples of discretionary food and drink 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 (e.g. 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.⁵

Oral health: A standard of health of the oral and related tissues that enables an individual to eat, speak and socialise without active disease, discomfort or embarrassment and that contributes to general wellbeing.⁶

Food literacy: A collection of inter-related knowledge, skills and behaviours required to plan, manage, select, prepare and eat food to meet (dietary) needs.⁷

Procedures and responsibilities

² Nutrition Australia Victorian Division, <https://www.nutritionaustralia.org/>

³ <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/nutrition>

⁴ National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013, Australian Dietary Guidelines, <http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au>

⁵ Commonwealth of Australia, 2009, Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood, <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources>

⁶ COAG Health Council, 2015, Healthy Mouths Healthy Lives: Australia's National Oral Health Plan 2015-2024, <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/healthy-mouths-healthy-lives-australias-national-oral-health-plan-2015-2024?language=en>

⁷ Vidgen HA, Gallegos D, 2014, Defining Food Literacy and its components, *Appetite*, 76, 50-59, Retrieved from https://blogs.deakin.edu.au/apfnc/wp-content/uploads/sites/119/2015/06/Vidgen_2014_food-literacy-Appetite.pdf

Leadership and commitment

- Staff, families, hub participants and children are involved in guiding the development and implementation of the whole Hub Healthy Eating and Oral Health Policy and are seen as key partners in promoting and supporting healthy eating and oral health initiatives in the Hub.
- Staff, families, hub participants and children are provided with information about policy requirements, with opportunities to provide feedback and input.

Healthy physical environment

- Water (preferably tap water) is accessible for drinking at all times.
- Healthy food and drinks are promoted and discretionary/sometimes food and drinks are discouraged for snacks and lunches brought into the Hub.
- Discretionary food and drinks do not appear in any Hub fundraising, sponsorship, advertising or marketing activities.
- Hub participants, children and staff are provided with inviting spaces and sufficient time to eat.
- 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 Hub where appropriate.

Hub participant and child and learning

- Healthy eating and oral health messages are embedded in activities. Activities guide children, families and hub participants 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.
- Community members 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 Hub 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.

Relevant legislation and policy documents

- [National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Dietary Guidelines](#)
- [Oral Health Messages for the Australian Public](#)
- [Department of Health – Food Handler Training](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Section 2.3.5\)](#)
- [Food Act 1984](#)
- [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#)

Related school policies

- Physical Activity and Movement
- Anaphylaxis/Food Allergies
- Water
- Food Safety
- Fundraising
- Staff Health and Wellbeing
- Health Education Approaches
- Purchasing
- [Camps and Excursions Policy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Student Health Support Plan](#)
- [Health Care Needs Policy](#)
- [List of Other School Policies](#)

Monitoring and review

This Healthy Eating and Oral Health Policy will be monitored and reviewed by the leadership staff, Hub Coordinator, and School Council at least once every three years.

Endorsed by School council:



Date: 11/09/2024

Next review date: 13/09/2027