



# Caulfield South Primary School

## Healthy Eating and Oral Health Policy

Last updated: December 2022

### 1. Rationale

The Caulfield South Primary School (CSPS) community believes that schools should be healthy places. We aim to provide an environment for students, staff, families and visitors that promotes healthy and environmentally sustainable behaviours and attitudes, in an equitable way.

We acknowledge the importance of healthy eating and oral health as a major contributor to good health and overall wellbeing. This policy confirms our commitment to:

- creating a supportive environment for healthy eating and good oral health for students, staff, families and visitors;
- promoting the importance of a healthy and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, which includes drinking water, eating healthy and environmentally sustainable foods and drinks, and maintaining oral health;
- encouraging students to make healthy and environmentally sustainable food and drink choices;
- developing community links and partnerships that promote healthy and environmentally sustainable eating and good oral health.

The development and implementation of this policy forms part of CSPS' participation in the Victorian Government's [Healthy Schools Achievement Program](#) and [Vic Kids Eat Well](#) initiative.

### 2. Scope

This policy covers all situations where food and drinks are supplied and/or consumed in the school environment including:

- foods provided from home
- lunch orders
- school activities, such as special events and celebrations
- fundraising events
- classroom rewards
- school excursions
- school camps
- food and drinks used in curriculum activities, in the Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) program, and other relevant activities from external providers.

### 3. Health promoting school

The World Health Organization (WHO)<sup>1</sup> defines a ‘health promoting school’ as one that constantly strengthens its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working.

As a health promoting school, CSPS:

- Fosters health and wellbeing with all the measures at its disposal;
- Engages staff, students, families and the broader community in efforts to make the school a healthy place;
- Strives to provide a healthy environment, health and wellbeing education, and relevant projects and programs designed to promote health and wellbeing of the community;
- Seeks to improve and maintain the health and wellbeing of staff, students and families; and works with the community to help them understand how the community contributes to, or undermines, health and wellbeing.

### 4. Whole school engagement

It is recognised that every member of the CSPS community can have an impact on students’ health and can contribute to creating an environment that promotes healthy eating and good oral health. All members of our school community, including staff, students, families and volunteers, are supported to meet this policy.

### 5. Importance of healthy eating and oral health

#### *Healthy eating*

- Healthy eating and good nutrition have a major influence on the health and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Healthy eating and drinking practices are associated with improved learning and concentration, better mood and behaviour, healthy growth and development, and lifelong health and wellbeing.<sup>2</sup>
- Poor dietary habits are major contributors to poor health in Australia, and are widely recognised as a public health crisis.<sup>3</sup>
- Acknowledging the social and cultural role of food, and the wide range of attitudes to it, is important within the school environment.

#### *Oral health*

- 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.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/health-topics/health-promoting-schools>

<sup>2</sup> <https://heas.health.vic.gov.au/schools/classroom/food-mood-and-learning>

<sup>3</sup> AIHW 2021. Australian Burden of Disease Study (2018); <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30700377/>

<sup>4</sup> Rogers JG, 2011, Evidence-based oral health promotion resource. Prevention and Population Health Branch, Government of Victoria, Department of Health, Melbourne.

## **6. Procedures and responsibilities**

### **6.1 Leadership and commitment**

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

### **6.2 Healthy culture**

- Diversity, equity and cultural practices are considered when implementing this policy.
- Staff and visitors recognise the important role they can play in modelling healthy eating and oral health practices.

### **6.3 Student teaching and learning**

- Healthy eating and oral health messages are embedded in the curriculum. The curriculum guides students to develop food literacy knowledge. It also equips them with skills to enable them to make healthy and environmentally sustainable 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.
- In line with Victorian Government policy, discretionary food and drinks (refer to appendix) are not used or promoted as part of curriculum-related activities or other activities offered by the school (including OSHC and activities provided by external service providers), except as part of nutrition education or where it has been expressly approved by the Principal.

### **6.4 Healthy physical environment**

- Water (preferably tap water) is accessible for drinking at all times. The school ensures that a supply of fresh, clean and cool drinking water is available at the school at all times. Staff ensure that students have access to their bottle of fresh water as required across the school day.
- Staff, volunteers and visitors are provided with a suitable space for breastfeeding and storing breastmilk.
- Vending machines selling food or drinks are not installed in the school.
- The school (and school events) do not accept sponsorship or advertising from companies selling or promoting discretionary foods (refer to appendix) and / or related brands.

## 6.5 Healthy practices

### 6.5.1 School lunches and snacks

- Students are provided with inviting spaces and dedicated, sufficient time to eat, at age-appropriate times throughout the school day. The school consistently allows and actively promotes children sitting and eating their food with their peers, and encourages them to consume their food before they go out for playtimes. This dedicated eating time consists of a minimum of 15 minutes for the children's main meal, and a minimum of 10 minutes for snacks. Staff are supported to implement strategies which foster a positive eating-time environment.
- CSPS actively promotes the concept of 'Nude Food' and encourages all students to bring a healthy lunchbox free of packaging to school for lunch and snacks.
- Students are encouraged to eat a piece of fruit and/or vegetables as part of fruit snack time each school morning.
- The school works closely with relevant external providers (including through use of the [Healthy Eating Advisory Service \(HEAS\) FoodChecker tool](#)) to align the lunch order service with relevant Victorian Government policies (including the [School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy](#)) and the whole-school approach to healthy eating and oral health.

### 6.5.2 Special events, celebrations and birthdays

- The CSPS community recognises the important role that food plays as part of celebrations and cultural activities.
- As part of CSPS special events and celebrations, efforts are made to ensure that foods available include a range of healthy food options and culturally appropriate choices that reflect the community in which the school exists, e.g. options for kosher, halal, vegan, vegetarian.
- Alcohol is not served, sold or promoted at school-related events at which CSPS children are present.
- In line with Victorian Government policies (e.g. [School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy](#)), the availability of discretionary food and drinks (refer to appendix) is limited to no more than two occasions per term.
- The school actively promotes a range of positive ways to celebrate children's birthdays in class in an equitable way. While the school does not encourage parents to do so, if parents choose to supply foods to celebrate student birthdays in class, these should be limited to one small item for each child in the class.

### 6.5.3 Other healthy practices

- Oral hygiene practices are promoted and undertaken at the school where appropriate.
- Safe food handling practices are followed, including safe procedures for food storage, handling, preparation and disposal and food safety training.
- Safety practices, such as mouth guards, are implemented for contact sports, as appropriate.
- Students are encouraged to eat a healthy breakfast prior to coming to school.

- Food, drinks or food vouchers are not used as incentives or rewards.
- A variety of food and non-food options are considered for major fundraising activities, with discretionary foods and drinks (refer to appendix) and/or related brands NOT used or promoted as part of major fundraising events (eg. chocolate drives).

### **6.6 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.

### **6.7 Support for families and community partnerships**

- Healthy eating and oral health information is provided to families and the wider community, such as information on creating healthy and nutritious meals, and about local dental services.
- Staff inform the Principal of students who appear to be provided with an inadequate quantity of food for lunch. When children come to school without lunch they have access to healthy food in a manner that is supportive and non-stigmatising. Where appropriate, the Principal investigates strategies with the family (and relevant services) to address food insecurity and support.
- Teachers with concerns about any aspect of students' lunches work sensitively and respectfully in partnership with the Principal and parents to address concerns.
- Partnerships are established with relevant organisations and health professionals to support healthy eating and oral health practices where appropriate.

## **7. Resources**

### **7.1 Relevant legislation and policy documents**

- [School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy](#)
- [National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Dietary Guidelines](#)
- [Oral Health Messages for the Australian Public](#)
- [Safe Food Handling](#)
- [Section 2.3.5 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#)
- [Food Act 1984](#)

### **7.2 Related school policies**

- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Sustainability Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing – Employees, Policy and Procedure

**Evaluation and review**

This policy was first implemented in December 2022. As a newly implemented policy, it will be reviewed within the first 12 months of implementation. Thereafter, the policy will be reviewed as part of a 3-year cycle, or more regularly in response to community feedback and/or for compliance purposes. Policy review will include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy, community needs and desires, and other local contextual factors.

Ratified by School Council	December 2022
Next scheduled review	2023

# Appendix

## Definitions

**Healthy eating and oral health:** For the purposes of this policy and for the Healthy Schools Achievement Program<sup>5</sup>, 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.<sup>6</sup> This policy also includes a focus on environmentally sustainable foods, in recognition of the important contribution of food and dietary habits to environmental sustainability.<sup>7</sup>

**Healthy diets:** In line with the recommendations of the Australian Dietary Guidelines<sup>8</sup>, healthy eating is defined as 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.

In addition, a healthy diet minimises consumption of ultra-processed foods<sup>9</sup>, and seeks to reduce consumption of sugar, sodium and fats.

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.<sup>10</sup>

**Environmental sustainable foods:** For the purposes of this policy, considerations related to environmental sustainability of foods include:

- Minimising food packaging. Where packaging is used, reusable and/or recyclable packaging is encouraged
- Minimising food waste
- Limiting ultra-processed foods
- Limiting red meat
- Focus on local and seasonal fresh produce that is grown in an environmentally sustainable way.

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au/education/schools>

<sup>6</sup> <https://eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://eatforum.org/eat-lancet-commission/>

<sup>8</sup> National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013, Australian Dietary Guidelines, <http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/articles/what-is-ultra-processed-food>

<sup>10</sup> Nutrition Australia Victorian Division, <https://www.nutritionaustralia.org/>

**Discretionary food and drinks:** Discretionary food and drinks are high in added sugar, sodium, alcohol and/or saturated fat.<sup>11</sup> They typically have very little nutritional value and are often highly processed and packaged. Examples of discretionary food and drinks include:

- chocolate, confectionery, jelly, fairy floss
- sweet biscuits, high fat/salt savoury biscuits, chips
- high sugar / high fat cakes and slices
- ice cream
- icy poles and other ice confection
- 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, 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.<sup>12</sup>

**Food literacy:** A collection of inter-related knowledge, skills and behaviours required to plan, manage, select, prepare and eat food to meet dietary needs.<sup>13</sup>

**‘Nude Food’:** Food that is not wrapped in foil, plastic or commercial packaging

**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.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013, Australian Dietary Guidelines, <http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au>

<sup>12</sup> 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>

<sup>13</sup> 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](https://blogs.deakin.edu.au/apfnc/wp-content/uploads/sites/119/2015/06/Vidgen_2014_food-literacy-Appetite.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> COAG Health Council, 2015, Healthy Mouths Healthy Lives: Australia’s National Oral Health Plan 2015-2024, <http://www.coaghealthcouncil.gov.au/Publications/Reports/ArtMID/514/ArticleID/81>