

Healthy Eating Policy

Rationale

A healthy lifestyle is vital to good health at all stages of life but especially in childhood. It is during childhood, particularly in the primary school years, that children develop lifestyle habits that can last a lifetime. It is also at this stage that major growth and development occurs, to which nutrition and a well-balanced diet is fundamental.

Concern has mounted recently in Australia over the poor food choices and eating habits of children and adolescents. Research statistics widely reported in the media have raised alarm over the growing obesity problem of the Australian population and in particular children and young people. At the same time there is growing evidence of the influence of the media and stereotypes on our young people, resulting in the increasing prevalence of eating disorders amongst our young people. Black Forest Primary School endeavours to provide an environment that will have a positive impact on nutritional health and promote a healthy lifestyle in our students, staff and parents.

Health risks of overweight and obese children include:

- Increased risk of heart disease,
- Diabetes,
- Ill health and early death.

Becoming underweight resulting in:

- Reduced immunity,
- Increased susceptibility to disease,
- Impaired physical and mental development and
- Reduced productivity.

Learning and behaviour risks of overweight and obese children include:

- Lower self-esteem,
- Anxiety and depression,
- Social discrimination,
- Higher level of physical discomfort (eg heat intolerance, heat rashes, breathlessness on exertion & aches and pains),
- Deterioration of general health.

At Black Forest Primary School we will promote:

- Positive attitudes towards healthy food choices,
- Lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of obesity, tooth decay and other related diseases,
- Personal responsibility for decision making about healthy eating.

Objectives

Black Forest Primary School is guided by the DECD Eatwell SA Healthy Eating Guidelines which recommends daily availability of healthy foods which are low in fat, salt and sugar, high in fibre and with limitations on the quantity and frequency of less healthy options. These are known as "Everyday Foods" as opposed to "Sometimes Foods".

Therefore:

- Children are encouraged and given an opportunity to eat fruit and vegetables during each school day,
- Children are encouraged to have a water bottle accessible allowing them to drink water throughout the day,
- Parents will be encouraged to provide 'Litter Free' food,
- Healthy treats provided at school comply with DECD Healthy Eating Guidelines with the intention of eliminating extrinsic food rewards (ie. no lollies as rewards),
- Our school is a 'Nut Aware' school and therefore nut products are discouraged at our school (Parents are requested not to send food to school containing nuts. At Acquaintance Nights, early in the school year, parents are reminded of this, especially if there are class members with a known allergy to nuts or any other food products),
- Students receive explicit teaching about healthy food and nutrition as part of the Health curriculum,
- Parents are encouraged to provide healthy food and cool foods wherever possible (ie. Ice packs),

- All food cooked at school as part of class programmes will comply with 'DECD Healthy Eating Guidelines'. (ie. 'Sometimes' food only 2 x per term),
- All food at class parties will reflect a balance of 'Everyday' and 'Sometimes' foods,
- All food consumed on camps and on excursions will comply with the 'DECD Healthy Eating Guidelines', reflecting a balance of 'Everyday' and 'Sometimes' foods,
- The Canteen menu complies with 'DECD Healthy Eating Guidelines',
- Supervised lunch eating time is provided for 10 minutes daily in a social environment,
- Staff model positive food choices and do not have soft drinks and lollies in class,
- The school will adhere to the Food Safety Acts,
- Children's medical needs are supported,
- Regular support is provided to families through education about healthy food choices,
- The community will be involved in promoting good nutrition,
- Any outside sponsorship/ organisation will comply with DECD Healthy Eating Guidelines,
- Black Forest Primary will be a breastfeeding friendly environment.

Therefore at Black Forest Primary School:

- Soft drinks are not to be consumed by students during school hours,
- Consumption of lollies by students is discouraged,
- Foods high in fat, salt and sugar are discouraged,
- Foods low in sugar, salt, fat, unprocessed and minimally processed foods are encouraged (eg fresh fruit and vegetables, whole grain bread, cheese, yoghurt, etc).

When enrolling a child, parents will be:

- Informed of the Healthy Eating Policy via the Parent Handbook,
- Encouraged to send their child to school with fresh fruit and vegetables and a bottle of water each day,
- Encouraged not to send their child with chips, sweet biscuits and other "sometimes foods" on a daily basis and not to send food containing nuts to school.

Other relevant policies include:

1. Canteen Policy
2. Allergies and Nut Awareness Policy
3. DECD Healthy Eating Guidelines available at www.decd.sa.gov.au/eatwellsa

REVIEW: This policy was reviewed August, 2014. Next review 2016

