

HEALTHY EATING AND ORAL HEALTH

(Healthy Schools Achievement Program)



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact 9216 3200.

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 students 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 students, staff, families and external visitors.

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

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students and staff at Gaayip-Yagila Primary School.

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 school 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.

Definitions

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.

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

Discretionary/Sometimes Food and Drink: Discretionary/sometimes food and drink is high in fat, sugar and salt or a combination of these. 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.

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.¹

Food Literacy: A collection of inter-related knowledge, skills and behaviours required to plan, manage, select, prepare and eat food to meet (dietary) needs.²

POLICY (Procedures and Responsibilities)

Leadership and Commitment

- Staff, families and students are involved in guiding the development and implementation of the whole school Physical Activity and Movement Policy and are seen as key partners in promoting and supporting physical activity and movement in the school.³
- Staff, families and students are provided with information about policy requirements, with opportunities to provide feedback and input.

Healthy Physical Environment

- The layout of buildings and grounds and equipment encourages physical activity and movement all day and is inclusive of all students.
- Facilities support active travel and road safety for students, staff and families.

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.

Healthy Physical Environment

- Water (preferably tap water) is always accessible for drinking.
- Healthy food and drinks are promoted.
- Students 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.

Healthy Culture

- Diversity and cultural practices are considered when implementing this policy and healthy eating and oral health practices.
- Celebrations and events include healthy food options.
- Oral hygiene practices are promoted and undertaken at the school where appropriate.

Student Teaching and Learning

- Healthy eating and oral health messages are embedded in the curriculum. The curriculum guides students 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.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction and child safety training processes
- Discussed at staff meetings as required
- Included as annual reference in the school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	July 2025
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	July 2027