



NUTRITION POLICY

FEBRUARY 2017

1. **PURPOSE**

The school's policies, programs, activities and initiatives will be consistent with the Fresh Tastes @ School-NSW Healthy School Canteen and the Live Life Well @School programs. In pursuit of these aims, the staff of St Patrick's will:

- i. Develop an awareness in students of healthy eating practices.
- ii. Develop strategies and programs that support healthy eating.
- iii. Encourage students to be responsible for their own health.
- iv. Communicate to students and their parents/carers clear, consistent messages about the importance of healthy eating and lifestyle choices.
- v. Establish and maintain community links that will support the implementation of this nutrition policy.

2. **POLICY STATEMENT**

The staff of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School recognises the importance of healthy eating to the growth and development of young children, and is committed to supporting the healthy food and drink choices of children in their care. Furthermore, the school recognises the importance of supporting families in providing healthy food and drink for their children. The school therefore plays an important role in promoting good nutrition and healthy lifestyles. This policy incorporates a whole school approach to teaching, modelling and promoting good nutrition, providing consistent messages to support students in decisions on healthy eating.

3. **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all staff members of St Patrick's.

4. **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- i. Research states that childhood obesity is a pressing issue for many countries, including Australia. Schools need to influence and promote healthy food choices for children. Schools need to educate children in order to prevent childhood obesity and the incidences of diet-related diseases in children. In Australia, 1 in 4 children are either overweight or obese (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2017), and rates of overweight and obesity are continuing to rise in Australia. If the prevalence of obesity increases in line with current trends, there will be 6.9 million obese Australians by 2025. (Kelly Crawford, June 2012, Healthy Kids Association).
- ii. The complications of childhood obesity go far beyond physical appearance. Childhood obesity brings an increased likelihood of:
 - a. Psychosocial difficulties such as depression and decreased socialisation. Overweight or obese children tend to be bullied at school, which can contribute to low self-esteem and lack of confidence.
 - b. Hyperlipidemia (increased fat in the blood) which can lead to cardiovascular disease.
 - c. Hypertension (high blood pressure).
 - d. Hyperinsulinemia (increased level of insulin in the blood) which can lead to Type 2 diabetes.
 - e. Fatty liver disease, in which a build-up of fat in the liver replaces healthy cells.
 - f. Respiratory problems such as asthma and sleep apnoea.

5. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- i. **Staff**
 - a. Teach PD/H/PE lessons that place an emphasis on healthy living, including nutritious food choices.

- b. Provide classroom rewards that are non-food based and that promote healthy choices. They may include physical activity such as free time on the playground, Gotchas, stickers, pencils, erasers, etc.
- c. Provide the opportunity for Crunch'n'Sip at 10.00am each day (fresh fruit and vegetables).
- d. Encourage students to drink water regularly throughout the day and to have access to their own water bottles during class.
- e. Model healthy eating and lifestyle behaviours by introducing healthy food and drink options when catering for school events such as meetings, class parties, fundraisers, etc.
- f. Encourage parents / carers to supply healthy lunches and snacks for their children to bring to school.

ii. **Principal**

- a. Provide parents and carers with healthy food information, healthy lunch box ideas, recipes and nutrition messages through the school newsletter.
- b. Allow up to two "red food" days per term.
- c. Ensure that the canteen is equipped with appropriate facilities to promote, prepare and serve healthy food options.
- d. Enlist the services of parishioners, parents and the broader community to promote, prepare and serve healthy items in the canteen.
- e. Oversee the maintenance of the school's vegetable gardens.
- f. Oversee the use of the produce of the school's vegetable gardens for purposes that aim to promote healthy eating, e.g. class cooking lessons; canteen ingredients.
- g. Ensure that fundraisers take into account the content of the school's Health program to ensure that our rhetoric is consistent with our actions.
- h. Support students who, for financial or other reasons, do not receive adequate nutrition. Such support will include provision of breakfast, Crunch'n'Sip items and lunch.
- i. Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are given the opportunity to participate in all school programs and activities related to good nutrition.

6. **BUDGET**

The school will make provision each year in its annual budget for professional development opportunities for the staff, parents and grandparents in regard to this area.

7. **NEXT REVIEW DATE**

This policy will be reviewed in 2020 in consultation with relevant staff.

8. **DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this policy, nutrition will be defined as the process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth." Furthermore, nutrition is related to:

- i. Utilization of food to grow, repair and maintain our bodies.
- ii. Getting the right amount of nutrients from healthy foods in the right combinations.
- iii. Making smart choices about the foods you eat.
- iv. Proper nutrition for developing and maintaining good health.

9. **LEGISLATIVE / PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES**

- i. New South Wales Personal Development, Health and Physical Education K-6 syllabus.
- ii. Fresh Tastes @ School NSW Healthy School Canteen strategy.