

MANAGEMENT OF A HEALTHY SCHOOL CANTEEN

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Like any business, a canteen requires good management to be efficient and successful. Effective canteen management requires that:

- the schools goals and objectives are reflected in the role of the school canteen
- an agreed arrangement to manage the canteen is clearly documented
- staff are adequately trained and comply with relevant legal requirements regarding Food Safety and preparation, and occupational health and safety standards
- staff carry out efficient stock management, accounting and financial procedures and are supported in these processes.

Evidence shows that, with good management and sound marketing practices, a canteen can be financially viable and provide healthy food.

The Role of a Healthy School Canteen

As part of the school environment, a canteen is in a unique position to make a positive contribution to students' health and welfare.

The functions of school canteens are to:

- provide a service to the school community
- provide a variety of nutritious and attractively presented food and drinks at a reasonable cost
- reinforce classroom learning.

Parents who get involved in the work of a canteen can:

- contribute to goal setting and to policies that incorporate healthy eating
- participate in the development or the evaluation of the healthy eating policy
- have input into student health and wellbeing
- be an integral member of the canteen's success through volunteering time each term.

The canteen provides a rewarding opportunity for parents to be involved in their child's school. A canteen can become an essential source of nutrition education that supports what students learn in the classroom and supports a whole school approach to healthy eating such as; the school produce garden.

A Guide to Running an Effective Healthy School Canteen

The following flowchart (Diagram 4) provides a step by step guide on how to run an effective school canteen or review your current school canteen by involving the most appropriate people in the school community. To use this flow chart, firstly determine how far along the flowchart path you are to running an effective healthy school canteen. For example, you may already have a committee established and have had the school canteen running for a couple of years and just want to review its progress. If this is the case you can start at point 5 of the flow chart. If you are considering establishing a canteen, start at point 1.

The Canteen Accreditation Program is a school food service improvement program which offers a model of best practice for food service management. The program also recognises the school's dedication to the health and well being of the school community. Becoming accredited provides reassurance to the wider school community that the food service aims to provide a high quality and safe food service for students and staff.

Diagram 4: How to Establish or Review your School Canteen

getting started

1. Form a Healthy Eating Committee
2. Gather information
3. Talk to school community
4. Promote your canteen
5. Check existing policy

planning the changes

6. Develop a draft policy
7. Plan for change

making the changes

8. Introduce healthier choices
9. Make lasting changes
10. Link the canteen with the school community

evaluating the changes

11. Get feedback
12. Review the canteen
13. Communicate success

Acknowledgement: 'Go for Your Life' Healthy Canteen Kit. Victorian Department of Education. 2006.

getting started

1. Form a Healthy Eating Committee or Working Party

The school community could establish a healthy eating committee or use an existing food focused committee, e.g., Move Well Eat Well, to work towards a draft policy. This group could include representatives from:

- school teaching / administration staff
- canteen staff and volunteers
- the parents association
- student council / representatives.

A carefully selected committee can:

- ensure efficiencies in the way the canteen operates
- provide an opportunity to hear about the needs of the school community
- share the work load involved in organising the canteen and planning menus
- assist in coordinating the canteen with other programs such as Move Well Eat Well and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program.

Duties

The committee should aim to develop good communication with teachers, the Principal and the canteen manager. Teamwork will bring the best results.

Duties may include:

- developing a healthy eating or canteen policy
- training and supporting paid and voluntary workers
- promoting the canteen – by keeping people up-to-date with the latest canteen developments, and by raising the profile of the canteen
- making decisions on what foods to sell, at what price

- establishing a profit margin and budget control statement
- developing new food ideas and activities to link with classroom activities
- ensuring a stock-take is carried out
- presenting regular financial statements
- ensuring that the canteen premises, staff and volunteers are meeting the requirement of the Food Safety legislation.

Running Successful Meetings

The canteen committee needs to meet in a timeframe that suits its members. There are numerous templates to assist in the running of meetings available on the TSCA website.

www.tascanteenassn.org.au

Before a meeting:

- encourage feedback and input from the school community by displaying meeting agenda and previous minutes. This also ensures everyone knows when a meeting is scheduled.

During a meeting:

- keep to agenda items only
- clearly explain each item
- limit the time on each item
- encourage participation
- write minutes.

Minutes are a summary of all decisions made during the meeting. They can be written directly into a book or typed up and circulated. Keep a copy of the minutes in a safe place.

2. Gather Information

The *School Canteen Handbook (2014)* is a great starting point to gather information. The list in the Additional Information Section provides some excellent related websites and resources.

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This is a great opportunity to collect information on your school. Finding out what your school community has and/or wants is very important.

At the end of this Section on page 47, there is a *School Canteen Checklist* which will assist you to gather information and determine what is needed to provide a healthy, safe canteen. A parent and student survey could also be useful. For examples of survey questions go to the TSCA website, www.tascanteenassn.org.au

3. Talk to the School Community

There are numerous ways of collecting information and engaging support. Below are some examples:

- Run a school canteen survey. Students can help design the survey and collect results.
- Arrange discussions for parents, teachers and students in a variety of settings.
- Use regular newsletters to invite comments.



- Try to build agreement about canteen management and menus.
- Canvas views about what the canteen is, or should be, selling.
- Ensure that any discussion about the preferred range and types of food is guided by accurate nutrition information, as detailed in the Food and Nutrition Section of this resource.

4. Promote Your Canteen

Members of the school community should be aware of the role of the canteen in encouraging healthy food choices. Increasing their awareness of this can be done in a variety of ways by using appropriate resources and people from the wider school community. This may include guest speakers such as sports stars and other role models, dental therapists and other health professionals. Linking in with existing programs and promotions on health, nutrition and physical activity such as Move Well Eat Well, Go for 2 & 5 or Healthy Bones Week, further increases the community's awareness.

5. Check Existing Policies

Find out what school policies exist to cover health and healthy eating education.

- How are these policies implemented in the classroom?
- Do canteen operations complement classroom teaching and learning?

Ensure that any discussion about the preferred range and types of food is guided by accurate nutrition information.

planning the changes

6. Develop a Draft Policy

A Healthy Eating/Canteen Policy statement will provide direction for the development of the canteen and for the work of canteen staff. This could be modeled on Form 1 located in the Forms and Templates Section starting at page 95 of this Handbook.

A Healthy Eating/Canteen Policy ensures long term commitment to healthy eating at the school.

7. Plan for Change

The draft policy statement could be widely circulated for further comment and discussion. This may lead to amendments or additions to the policy before it is ready to be assessed by the *Canteen Accreditation Program* team. Many approaches can be taken to change to a healthier canteen. The types of changes would depend on how many days per week the canteen is open, the canteen's food preparation facilities, and the school's policy on a whole school approach to health and wellbeing.

An example of planning for change can be found on page 51. A template for implementing for change can be found on page 52.

Changes that canteens may take include:

- making healthy changes gradually
- gaining input from the students, staff and the wider school community and communicating to them about why the changes are necessary
- marketing and promoting the positive aspects of the menu changes
- advertising and promoting these changes well in advance
- not drawing attention to the removal of certain foods
- remaining positive about the need for healthy changes.

making the changes

8. Introducing Healthier Choices

Healthier choices are easier to introduce:

- after school holiday breaks, reopen the canteen with a new menu. This approach works best if it has the support of the wider school community, and if the canteen strongly communicates, promotes and markets the links between what the canteen sells and classroom learning. Initially, you may need a larger outlay of resources to make a large change.
- by trialling new, healthy foods using theme days or food specials. If they are popular, they can then be added to the regular menu.
- by removing RED items from the menu
- by aiming to restrict the times that AMBER and RED foods are sold and sell them only in small quantities. This will encourage children to purchase healthy options first. Refer to Section C for details on RED and AMBER food and drinks, starting at page 69.
- when planning a new menu, consider the amount, variety and range of foods.

Children need a variety of different foods across all five food groups. Ensure that several choices from all the food groups are offered. Refer to Food and Nutrition Section page 13.

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Limit the menu to a small range of foods, but provide variety by having a daily or weekly special such as a hot canteen prepared dish. This can:

- reduce the cost of goods by reducing the range of products required
- save time on preparation and the help needed
- allow more time to prepare fresh food, trial new healthy options and run promotions.

When planning a menu:

- choose low fat and wholegrain options
- limit the use of high fat ingredients
- use low fat cooking methods such as oven baking
- read labels, especially looking at the saturated fat, sugar, sodium (salt) and fibre content and check that recipes are healthy and suitable
- ensure good quality fruit and vegetables are included daily
- choose meals that are easy and safe to prepare, using inexpensive ingredients that need little packaging
- make sure that the healthy options are at the top of the menu board
- be aware of food allergies that can trigger anaphylaxis in children – your school will have a list of children who are allergic to foods and they will have a policy on food allergy.

For more ideas on how to market your school canteen refer to page 37 in this section.

9. Make Lasting Changes

A Healthy Eating/Canteen Policy is the key to maintaining the success of healthy food provision in schools. The policy will support the changes being made in the school canteen, and will make it clear that the healthy school canteen program is a long term commitment.

10. Link the Canteen with the School Community

Link healthy eating with other parts of the school's business such as: the curriculum and its teaching and learning programs; the school organisation, its ethos, its environment, and its community links and partnerships. This will not only ensure that the changes to the canteen are successful and sustainable, but that they will be more effective in promoting a whole school approach to healthy eating.

evaluating the changes

11. Get Feedback

Once changes have been made to the canteen, it is important to assess their success. The canteen committee should evaluate and review the Healthy Eating/Canteen Policy and plan for continuous improvement. Information should be gathered throughout the year. Do this as simply as possible. Below are some examples of what can be done.

Students can assist by:

- developing, implementing and collating surveys aimed at fellow students and parents viewpoints
- interviewing other students or writing feedback letters to the canteen staff (as part of English classes)
- preparing graphs of the sales of different foods over time, for example pre and post healthy changes (as part of mathematics classes).

Assess the success of the changes by answering questions such as:

- did sales increase, decrease or stay the same once a healthier option was introduced?
- what are the menu's best sellers?
- were there any Food Safety or stock issues throughout the year?
- did the canteen invest in any new equipment? Was this beneficial?

It is important to hold regular canteen committee meetings to check progress towards your school achieving or maintaining a *School Canteen Accreditation Award*.

12. Review Healthy Eating Policy

Each year the *Canteen Accreditation Program* will ask if your school has reviewed its Healthy Eating/Canteen Policy. The canteen committee should review the information gathered throughout the 12 month period of accreditation and decide whether changes to the policy are needed. The committee may need to change statements, set new goals or address particular issues in the updated policy or the policy may still be adequately representing the schools values.

13. Communicating Success

Communicating the success of the changes and achievements of the school canteen is a very important part of the change process. Being positive about the outcomes will help build continuing interest and commitment from the school community and ensure ongoing success.



A Healthy Eating / Canteen Policy ensures long term commitment to healthy eating at the school.

Ensuring a Viable Canteen Operation

School canteens exist to:

- primarily provide a food service to students and the general school community
- provide nutritious foods at the lowest unit cost
- support the school food and nutrition learning program
- implement a life skills program.

School canteens should not run at a loss unless this is factored into the school's operations policy. Canteen Managers and school Principals need to recognise the difference between low profits; a loss that results from inefficiencies and a loss that results from deliberate pricing policies.

An efficient canteen can return a small profit as it should aim to receive a gross profit of around 25% of sales to cover employment costs and ingredient costs, where applicable.

Funds raised from the operations of a school canteen can be a significant source of revenue for some schools but this should not be at the detriment of serving healthy food and drink options. Consequently, it is important that nutritious food items are attractive to students and are offered at an affordable and practical price – meeting the needs of the students as well as covering costs of labour and ingredients. Foods made from fresh, seasonal ingredients are often less expensive than highly processed ready to eat foods and therefore allow a greater mark-up. However, some canteen made foods can take longer to prepare. To manage this, offer a smaller menu.

The time worked by paid employees should be reviewed regularly with regard to the ability of the canteen's operational profits to meet wage costs, particularly when wage increases occur. A review of the costing of the menu will be necessary at this time.

Adequate reserves should be maintained to meet future costs, such as; equipment replacements, training, maintenance, staff replacements and long-service leave.

The TSCA can provide assistance in operating your school canteen efficiently. Contact the TSCA on 03 62238023.

Options for Canteen Management

School canteens may operate under a variety of management structures, depending on a school's characteristics and particular needs. However, most canteens in schools are run under the direction of the Principal with the Canteen Manager employed earning a wage (refers to Government, Catholic and Independent schools). Often schools request that the operation of the canteen covers the cost of employing the Canteen Manager, so that at least a cost neutral situation operates.

The major options available to schools for canteen operation are outlined below. Every school that operates a canteen is required to adopt one of the options or seek permission to vary the school canteen operation.

Option A:

The canteen is run by the school or an Incorporated Body (such as the School Association or a Parents and Friends Committee).

Option B:

The canteen is operated by a private enterprise under the terms of a Management Agreement.

It is recommended that for both options, your school becomes a member of the Tasmanian School Canteen Association and has its canteen accredited through the Tasmanian School Canteen Accreditation Program. The cost of this membership is minimal.

Managing the Canteen

Option A:

The canteen is operated by the school or Incorporated Body (such as the School Association or Parents and Friends Committee).

Employees and volunteers

The Principal may employ staff specifically to undertake canteen duties, delegate canteen duties to existing school staff members, or to voluntary assistants.

Where a school decides to employ staff specifically to undertake canteen duties it should follow the same procedures prescribed for all school employees. Appropriate rates and salary scales for Government School Canteen Managers are available on the Department of Education website. For Catholic and Independent schools refer to their specific websites or contact their Central Office. For contact details refer to page 117.

Where a canteen is run by an Incorporated Body, they are totally responsible for the operation of the canteen and its policies. The Incorporated Body and the Principal must sign an appropriate management agreement and keep it in a secure place.

The Incorporated Body is totally responsible for the employment, remuneration, provision for all leave, superannuation, taxation and dismissal of staff in accordance with the *Restaurant Keepers Award, P058*, of the *Industrial Relations Act, 1984*.

Volunteers may be used to support the canteen. Volunteers will need to:

- undergo a *Good Character Check*
- be recorded as such by the Principal in an official log book maintained by the school

- be reimbursed for actual non-salary costs incurred in the course of their duty and supply proof of these costs
- be covered by appropriate worker's compensation and public liability insurance and sign the volunteer's book in schools
- complete Food Safety training every 2-3 years.

Volunteers should not receive any payment in cash (honoraria) or in-kind at any time.

Canteen Finances

The Canteen Manager, School Executive Officer (SEO) and/or Association are responsible for the overall financial management of the canteen. The school can assist in the budgeting and keeping of up-to-date financial records. A bank account that is completely separate from other school accounts managed by the school should be opened to support the canteen. This bank account must be held in the school's name. Receipts and expenditure records should be

excluded from the financial reports that are sent to the Tasmanian Education Department. For Catholic and Independent Schools check what financial requirements are necessary from your Central Office.

Arrangements have to be made for an independent audit of annual accounts of the canteen by an eligible person. The Department of Education's internal audit section does not conduct an audit of these accounts. For Catholic and Independent schools check what procedure is required for auditing of the canteen operation.





If the canteen is to be a success, promoting and marketing the canteen's healthy foods is essential.

Insurance

Canteen Managers employed by the school should be covered by an appropriate Workers Compensation Policy.

If the Canteen Manager is employed by the School Association then it must ensure that its operations are covered by appropriate insurance and that it is an Incorporated Body. Insurance will include Workers Compensation cover for employees and insurance for product liability, public liability and equipment.

Volunteers must sign the volunteers' book in schools, in order to be covered by appropriate Workers Compensation and Public Liability Insurance as per school requirement.

Option B:

The canteen is operated by private enterprise under the terms of a management agreement either within the school's existing canteen setup or as a separate body.

In this case it is recommended that:

- Government schools, seek advice from the Coordinator of the Department of Education Procurement Services. For Catholic and Independent schools refer to the appropriate area of your Central Office for advice.
- Schools use a public process to appoint an operator.
- Schools reserve the right to have input into the menu to ensure that only nutritious foods are made available to students and staff.
- Schools utilise the TSCA Canteen Management Agreement. A Canteen Management Agreement is required in the case of a canteen operating as a private enterprise. This agreement should be kept in a secure place and signed by all parties. A draft agreement can be found at the end of this section on page 46.

Good management practices will be needed to ensure that the school's Healthy Eating/Canteen Policy and Canteen Procedures are carried out and any areas of possible concern can be monitored effectively. This can be done by:

- marketing your canteen effectively
- developing a good volunteer base
- having an appropriate number of suppliers and a range of goods
- utilising the school's purchasing power
- having an adequate pricing arrangement
- maintaining trading statements
- having and maintaining appropriate canteen equipment
- adhering to Food Safety requirements
- having sound packaging, recycling and composting practices

To establish and monitor the above issues refer to the TSCA website for templates or the Forms and Templates section of this handbook.

How to Market your Canteen

If the canteen is to be a success, promoting and marketing the canteen's healthy foods is essential.

Use simple promotion and marketing strategies to:

- get children excited about changes to the menu and increase the numbers of students purchasing healthy food choices
- keep canteen sales and income sustainable.

The different aspects of marketing healthy food choices in school canteens can be described by the 4 Ps:

- Product
- Place
- Price
- Promotion

The 4 P's are explained on the following pages.

Product

'Product' means not only the foods that are sold in the canteen, but also the image of the canteen as a whole – the service, the canteen environment, how foods are promoted, and how well connected the canteen is to the school community. Following are some suggestions to help you:

- Create a positive image for the canteen to give it a higher profile in the school community. For example, give the canteen a catchy name, such as the 'Snack Shack', 'Gobble and Grow', the 'Kool Kids Kafe'. This gives the canteen an identity or a 'brand' which can be used for advertising and marketing. The name can be printed on lunch bags and staff aprons and be linked to canteen specials. The name can be developed into a mural as part of the art curriculum.
- Food companies place great importance on naming products, as it is an important component of overall marketing strategy. Likewise, giving names to various canteen items – whether they are new items or new versions of previous existing items – can stimulate sales.
- Food names should be relevant to your consumers: the children e.g. in the run up to the school's athletic carnival, food names could have a sporting flavour like 'Meatball Bolt' – four meatballs in a tomato pasta sauce, in a whole meal roll topped with low fat cheese.
- Carefully choose your fresh fruit and vegetables. If possible, use a small local greengrocer as they usually provide the best advice on quality and price their items according to seasonal availability. They may also be able to deliver regularly to ensure freshness.
- Use standardised recipes and serve consistent sizes. Refer to the TSCA website for approved recipe ideas.
www.tascanteenassn.org.au
- Pin up recipes and serving guidelines in an obvious place to assist staff and volunteers in preparing and serving foods

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Place

'Place' refers to the canteen environment and the way food and drink are arranged in the canteen. The canteen should be an attractive, appealing place that everyone enjoys visiting. When planning the layout and appearance of the canteen, consider whether or not it is easily accessible, spacious, clean and attractive. Following are some suggestions:

- Placing some tables and chairs, and plants near the canteen creates a nice eating atmosphere. Some schools have created an outdoor eating area with chairs and tables under umbrellas or a sail. Utilise any spare ground near the canteen for a small herb or vegetable garden, or use pots. This not only provides a pleasant area for eating but also provides quick and easy access to fresh herbs when preparing foods.
- Why not involve the Arts Department in creating a 'nice place to be'? Students could design and paint murals on the walls and colourful menu boards. A clear, well placed menu will make it easier for students to select foods.
- Place healthy choices at the students' eye level. For example, have fresh fruit within arm's reach and position several rows of bottled water at eye level. Try placing some salad tubs, fruit salad or yoghurt in the drinks refrigerator as well, to encourage last minute purchases.
- Make sure there is a well-stocked display of pre-prepared healthy foods, for example salad tubs and rolls and wraps, to encourage impulse purchases of the healthy kind.
- Rotate the position of products regularly to generate interest. Try stocking foods in multiple places to encourage optimal sales.

- Consider selling at both the canteen and via pre-orders. Pre-ordering may make it easier for canteen staff as it will enable them to prepare and plan efficiently for stock. Promote the option of pre-ordering to students, as a way of getting priority service at lunch time.
- Provide a catering service for morning and afternoon teas for staff meetings and other external meetings and events that may be held at the school. For example, a morning tea at \$4.00 per head, depending on ingredients.
- Consider extending a catering service for other school events, for example, professional development days, school sports days and school excursions and camps.
- Consider the canteen operating hours. Could these hours be easily extended? Could a breakfast service be added before school? Some canteens develop a whole breakfast menu, but it could be as simple as offering a small selection of appropriate foods already on the canteen menu.



Price

The right product at the right price is important. Children will often look for something to fill them up at the cheapest price. They will also consider how much change they will have for 'extras'. When introducing a new food, base your price decisions not only on what is likely to be appealing but also on what you can realistically charge. If the price appears to be high, consider some variations which may bring the price back to a reasonable level. Following are some suggestions:

- Ensure that the canteen offers a selection of low cost, filling, nutritious items such as raisin toast, fruit jaffles with apple filling, dinner rolls or small corn cobs
- Price food simply, for example \$1.50 instead of \$1.45, so that it is easier for students to pay and easier for the canteen staff to give change.
- Before trialling a new product, compare the price of your product with the price in local shops.
- Make healthier options affordable and preferably cheaper than unhealthy options.
- Offer reduced prices on slow-selling items, or include these items in a meal deal which is priced for value.
- Use competitive prices as the focus point for advertising, for example, stocking 50c snack packs.
- Advertise the canteen's products as representing good value for money.
- Design a 'What you can buy for this' poster for the canteen, listing healthy items available for 10c, 20c, 50c, etc. Use pictures of the money and food items particularly when dealing with young students.

Promotion

Promoting your products is one of the most important factors in encouraging healthy choices at the canteen.

Planning promotional activities is interesting, exciting work. Schools find that volunteers come 'out of the woodwork' once parents realise that their involvement in the canteen can be so rewarding.

Below are some examples that may assist you to promote the school canteen and its menu.

- Advertise new items, specials, etc. in your school's regular newsletter. Some schools have a regular 'canteen spot' for this purpose. It can also be used to thank volunteers for their valuable contributions or to offer handy hints about nutrition.
- For younger children, a separate notice can be sent home advising parents of menu changes or special promotions. Some schools distribute these notices in lunch-order bags.
- A large noticeboard, with items and prices clearly shown, is an excellent way to ensure that children know what is available.
- If you have daily specials, advertise them in a prominent place. Specials can be written up the day before to act as a reminder to children who are intending to buy lunch the following day.
- The saying 'out of sight out of mind' is particularly relevant to the sale of foods in canteens. If your canteen has a product which does not sell as well as you would like, ask yourself the following questions:
 - is the food displayed attractively on the front counter or is it hard for the children to see?
 - is it packaged so that children can see what is inside (e.g. in plastic wrap or see-through containers)?

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- show off the colour of sandwich fillings by slicing sandwiches in half or into fingers, placing one on top of the other and wrapping them in plastic wrap.
- consider trying some of the techniques used by supermarkets, such as arranging certain products so that they are easily noticed. While most canteens do not have a lot of room for displays, you can still:
 - place items you want to promote near popular lines
 - attractively display a sample of your items in plastic trays with clear plastic lids
 - make maximum use of displays at the children's eye level
 - keep new product lines to the front of warming cabinets or other display areas
 - make use of attractive baskets or glass 'cookie' jars e.g. for fruit muffins.
- Consult with various paper and plastic suppliers about their range of bags, cups and trays, etc. Buying in bulk often results in considerably cheaper prices. However, be careful not to tie up money by holding too much stock. If you are a small school, consider getting together with other local schools and placing the one order. The stock can then be split to meet the needs of each school. Or why not try the 'nude food' approach?
- Even when an order system is used for most items, it is still a good idea to display any new items. When children are buying their drinks, for example, they may be tempted to try the new items next time they have money for the canteen, instead of buying the usual choice.
- Free samples can stimulate sales at the canteen, just as they can in a supermarket. Many children will not part with their money for a food they have never tasted.
- Bite-size pieces of frozen fruits can be used to introduce frozen fruit to the menu.

- Having regular 'specials' on different days of the week can help provide variety without having to offer half a dozen main items each day. It also helps to maintain children's interest. For example, in addition to a limited selection of regular items, the daily specials board might read:

Monday	Hot cheese, parsley and corn rolls
Tuesday	Hot bean and salsa wraps
Wednesday	Tropical chicken burgers with pineapple, cheese, lettuce
Thursday	Chicken salad focaccia
Friday	Jacket potatoes with beans, cheese and yoghurt

'Special Days'

Special Days can add variety to the canteen menu, especially for canteens which open on only two or three days a week or have problems finding volunteer help. Parents who cannot help on a regular basis may be willing to help at a one-off 'hamburger day' or 'jacket potato day' or 'soup day'.

- Several schools have also found these special canteen days to be excellent links to healthy fundraising.
- Foods such as chicken burgers, pizzas, meals in a cup (e.g. fried rice, spaghetti bolognese), fruit salad and popcorn may be suitable for special days.
- Featuring particular fruits on a Special's day, is an excellent way to promote fruit sales. Try organising them when a fruit is at the peak of its season, as this is when it will be of top quality, in plentiful supply and therefore well priced. Grape, watermelon, pear and peach days have been successful in schools.

Special day suggestions!

- sporting events; such as the Olympic Games, the Commonwealth Games, a school swimming carnival, an athletics carnival

- special events in your school to promote healthy eating, eg. Harmony Breakfast

- muffin mornings (morning tea)

- jabble day

- 'veggiemania' day – vegetable pizza, savoury muffins

- 'sand and sea' day – crumbed fish and wedges, tuna salad

- 'hot chocolate' day (bring-a-mug day).

- 'Multi-cultural' days are another good opportunity to add variety to the menu, as well as being an educational tool for learning about the food of other countries and embracing the multicultural members of the school community.
- Theme Days, such as: Heart Week, Nutrition Week, Healthy Bones Week and Health Week are great themes to tap into.

The Tasmanian School Canteen Association's website has information on the dates of these annual events. Also, refer to the Move Well Eat Well website for information. There are numerous resources that come with these promotions that you can use e.g. posters, stickers and children's activity books. These can be accessed through the TSCA website or other non-government health organisation websites such as the Heart Foundation. For website addresses refer to the Additional Information Section on page 117 of the Handbook.

When promoting healthy foods in the canteen, it is important to involve students and teachers. Encourage the Principal and the teachers to be involved with the canteen as much as possible. This helps to reinforce the image of the canteen as a healthy place and helps to support a whole school approach to healthy eating.

Volunteers

There are many reasons why people volunteer to help in the canteen. These may include:

- contributing to, and being part of, the school community
- giving something to the school
- learning about food and nutrition
- increasing knowledge and skills in the areas of cooking and food preparation, food hygiene and safety, nutrition, customer service and cash handling
- making new friends and enjoying opportunities to socialise with other family members at the school.

Coordinating the Volunteer Program

The school Canteen Manager plays a vital role in the coordination and management of the canteen's volunteers. Volunteers can be parents, grandparents, people from the wider community and students.

Some schools allow their students to volunteer at the canteen. It is very important that students comply with the Environmental Health requirements at all times. Some schools organise for the students to gain Food Safety training as part of the *Canteen Accreditation Program* and submit this as one of the school's examples of classroom learning.

MANAGEMENT

It is important for the Canteen Manager to have realistic expectations of volunteers by:

- allowing volunteers time to adjust to their role, gain confidence and improve their skills
- being prepared to do most of the work until the new person understands the tasks
- being a good role model
- communicating clearly.

Coordinating a volunteer program involves:

- recruiting volunteers
- retaining volunteers
- maintaining and recognising volunteer involvement

Recruiting volunteers

This can involve

- identifying how many volunteers you will need to make a regular commitment and how many you will need to provide casual assistance. It's a good idea to plan for the year where possible, but definitely prior to each term. It's important to keep in mind special days or events when additional volunteer assistance will be required.
- assuming that volunteers will come and go. Develop a list of interested volunteers who will fill casual positions and prevent an unexpected shortage of assistance.
- planning rosters so that volunteers know how much time is required and the length of commitment expected.
- developing a job description for the volunteer positions so that volunteers know what is expected of them. This should include a list of specific tasks to be completed; and skills and training required.
- offering a range of tasks or jobs for volunteers to choose from. For example, a volunteer may not feel comfortable dealing with students but is happy to be involved with food preparation or washing up.

- advertising regularly and widely to keep the school community informed and aware of volunteer opportunities. Avenues for advertising include: the weekly school newsletter, school website, and school orientation information for new parents. Hint: some workplaces, such as the State Public Service, allow a certain number of hours per year for their staff to partake in volunteering opportunities. Promote the school canteen as a viable volunteering opportunity.

Retaining volunteers

This can involve:

- providing a positive and rewarding work environment so that they feel comfortable and appreciated. It is important that volunteers are welcomed and introduced to canteen and school staff on their first day, given a tour and have policy and procedures explained.
- providing new volunteers with a *Volunteer's Canteen Information Kit* (email or hard copy) which should contain:
 - an introductory letter (including contact information for the canteen)
 - the roster
 - the canteen policy
 - the canteen menu
 - food hygiene information.
- providing volunteers with information about:
 - the layout of the canteen (label drawers and cupboards with contents; have recipe binders on the wall or at easy access points)
 - time based schedules, such as, when to place items in the oven
 - how to operate machinery and equipment (have instruction books near work benches for easy reference)
 - food hygiene requirements (have food hygiene reminders at appropriate locations)



Avenues for advertising include: the weekly school newsletter, school website, and school orientation information for new parents.

- emergency drills and evacuation procedures
- how to handle difficult students
- how to handle compliments and complaints
- procedures to follow if they are ill when rostered on
- where the roster is located
- where to locate contact numbers, including emergency contacts
- school times, including lunch and recess.

Maintaining and recognising volunteer involvement

This can involve:

- ensuring that volunteers have adequate breaks.
- providing volunteers with a variety of tasks.
- providing the opportunity for volunteers to develop additional skills to increase their job satisfaction and prevent boredom.
- running a 'Bring a Friend' day.
- celebrating the role of volunteers by providing recognition of their volunteering work – go out for dinner or have a sit down lunch, organise for students to create a simple morning tea or lunch for canteen volunteers

The TSCA has a *Volunteers Canteen Information Kit* that can be downloaded from their website www.tascanteenassn.org.au

The Number of Suppliers and the Range of Goods

The purchase of foods is a significant canteen expense. It is critical that this process be organised and efficient. Therefore, it is important to:

- buy foods at the best price
- buy appropriate quantities
- ensure food is safe to eat and of high quality
- buy local and seasonal foods where possible
- have a small menu without limiting the variety of fruits and vegetables
- increase variety by having frequent 'special days'
- restrict the number of suppliers and the range of supplies – this will return higher gross profits than stocking a wider range of goods
- develop a rapport with a limited number of suppliers – this helps to gain discounts and call-back facilities when shortages occur
- have appropriate storage facilities such as, pantry, freezer, etc.

Purchasing

Bulk purchasing

Canteen operations are generally of a small or individual nature and it has been shown that cost and service benefits can be obtained through close liaison between canteen management and local suppliers. The cost advantages of purchasing bulk goods may be outweighed by the extra service and distribution costs, and the increased risk of spoilage of bulk-stock holdings, in an individual canteen.

MANAGEMENT

Private purchasing

Staff or volunteers must not be permitted to make private purchases of goods from suppliers by using the canteen facilities or the canteen account. Private arrangements may be made with suppliers, if they are either cash transactions or paid through personal banking accounts.

Hint: never select food or drink products that fail to reflect nutrition standards as detailed in the canteen policy, even if the supplier can offer a lucrative deal, such as bargain prices or equipment rewards.

Pricing Arrangements

A fair price for hand-made items such as sandwiches, rolls and 'open' sandwiches, etc., should take into account the cost of the ingredients, the cost of paid labour, and if possible, a mark-up of approximately 25%. See the TSCA website at

www.tascanteenassn.org.au for an example of pricing items for canteen sales.

Manufactured items (e.g. yoghurt, pasta dishes, milk drinks, fruit juices etc.) provide a proportion of canteen sales and canteens should charge the recommended price for these items. The mark-up on these items ranges from 20 to 40%.

Trading Statements

Trading statements give a clear indication of turnover, as well as gross and net profits. This helps ensure proper control of canteen operations. Visit the TSCA website, **www.tascanteenassn.org.au** for a template on a trading statement.

A canteen trading statement should be prepared at least twice a year i.e. at the end of the financial year and the end of the calendar year, so that canteen profitability can be effectively monitored. Regular statements keep Canteen Managers aware of any variation in canteen operation. Appropriate action can then take place, if needed.

Canteen Equipment

When planning what equipment to buy, consider the following issues:

- what you want to do with it
- how often it will be used
- how much does it cost
- how easy it is to maintain.

The right equipment is important. What you have in your canteen influences what you can prepare, cook and serve. The list at the end of this section, page 53 of suitable equipment for your canteen will assist in planning for your canteen needs.

The purchase of additional equipment and repairs to equipment in school canteens, is in most cases, funded from profits. In the half-yearly trading statements, some provision should be made for the purchase or replacement of equipment.

The possibility of hiring equipment should not be overlooked. A properly recorded inventory of all equipment should be compiled that clearly indicates ownership.

Food Safety Requirements

Tasmanian Food Safety legislation considers your school canteen as a food business. This means that your budget will have to include the costs incurred in complying with this legislation. This is a small fee paid to the Local Council.

Compliance with these standards is compulsory. This is because it is important to always ensure the safety of the children at your school.

Liaise closely with your Local Council's Environmental Health Officer to ensure that your canteen complies. Plan for improvement strategies that are within the constraints of your school's budget. Food safety is discussed in detail in Section B: The Importance of Food Safety, page 61 and is a crucial element of the *Canteen Accreditation Program*.

Packaging, Recycling and Composting

If your school has a recycling program, like a compost system or a worm farm, then link waste products and the recycling of scraps from the canteen to this program. Have a separate bin to collect paper based waste, compostable goods, appropriate scraps for the worm farm and other "ordinary waste". Use a different coloured bin to collect each type of waste.

A fair price for hand-made items such as sandwiches, rolls and 'open' sandwiches, etc., should take into account the cost of the ingredients, the cost of paid labour plus, if possible, a mark-up of approximately 25%.



CANTEEN MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

Between the Principal and a Private Operator/ Parents and Friends Inc. / School Association Inc.

(here after known as the operator)

Name of School _____

Name of Operator _____

The Period of Agreement is for _____

Cancellation of the Agreement would require 30 days written notice on behalf of either party.

Food supplied should be in accordance with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013* (NH&MRC) and the food suggestions in *The School Canteen Handbook (2014)*.

The canteen and the school should endeavour to meet at least the BRONZE level of the Tasmanian School Canteen Association's *Canteen Accreditation Program*.

The Principal, in consultation with the canteen committee, will have the right to veto foods which don't meet the food categorisation in accordance with the *School Canteen Handbook (2014)* or the requirements of the *Move Well Eat Well Program*.

The Principal reserves the right to vary the Canteen Accredited menu when special circumstances exist. These occasions should not exceed two (2) days per year.

The Principal retains the right to use the canteen from time to time for such events as fund raisers, by making prior arrangements with the operator.

Cost of individual items should not exceed recommended retail prices.

The operator is responsible for maintenance, repair and / or replacement of school equipment used in the canteen. Replacement is at depreciated value of equipment.

The operator is responsible for appropriate insurance including public liability and workers compensation. Such policies should be produced at the request of the Principal.

An annual fee, as set by the Principal, will be paid by the operator, to the school.

For the period _____ to _____ the fee is \$ _____

This will be paid quarterly / half yearly / yearly with payment(s) due on _____

The operator (if School Association or P & F) will pay to the school at agreed intervals its net profit, less provision for reserves, for expenditure by the school in accordance with the priorities established in the school charter and school plans.

The Principal will provide the following equipment / services (list below):

Signed Principal _____

Date _____

Signed Operator _____

Date _____

SCHOOL CANTEEN CHECKLIST

The following checklist will assist you in determining your school's status on providing a healthy, safe, school canteen service that sells delicious food.

	Yes	No	Action Required
General			
Is your school a member of the TSCA?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you registered with the <i>Tasmanian Canteen Accreditation Program</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does your school have a canteen committee that represents the whole school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have a canteen policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are profit objectives clearly defined?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you aiming for a MWEW Award? (primary only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, are the MWEW Coordinator and Canteen Manager involved in the Healthy Eating Committee?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Staffing			
Are there written duty statements for paid and voluntary staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are paid and volunteer staff appropriately trained to carry out their duties?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are flexible hours and a range of jobs available for volunteer staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are paid and voluntary staff valued and supported?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Menu			
Are menu items in line with the <i>Canteen Accreditation Program</i> objectives and the canteen policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does your menu offer more GREEN foods than AMBER and RED foods?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are fruit and vegetables offered daily on the menu?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have soft drinks been removed from the canteen Menu?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Has confectionary been removed from the canteen menu?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are 'everyday' drinks such as water, low fat milk the main drinks on offer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are healthy choices listed first on the menu?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the school community involved when making changes to the menu?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Yes	No	Action Required
Pricing			
Is there a pricing policy? (i.e. are prices based on cost price plus a percentage mark-up?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are prices reviewed regularly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are healthy foods kept at lower prices?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Forecasting			
Are seasonal food preferences factored into the menu?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have a health promotion events calendar?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you encourage staff to advise you of trips away from school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Purchasing			
Do you actively seek discounts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you refer to the Tasmanian School Canteen Suppliers list?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you always on the lookout for new GREEN products?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you refuse new products which do not meet the canteen's nutritional objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Food Safety			
Do you follow the Food Safety advice as set out in Table 5 page 62?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you complete your Food Safety documentation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Preparing			
Is there an efficient workflow in the canteen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you use standard portion sizes that all staff and volunteers follow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have appropriately placed recipes where necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are steps taken to avoid wastage?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the amount of food prepared consistent with demand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Yes	No	Action Required
Promotion			
Are nutritious foods displayed well?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are nutritious foods actively promoted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you make use of well-displayed noticeboards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you promote special days?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you involve the school community in promotional activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Selling			
Are all prices clearly marked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there an efficient queuing system for the children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Canteen Layout			
Is the canteen a friendly, bright, enticing, and easily accessible place?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are preparation surfaces easily maintained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the canteen layout provide adequate space for food preparation with room to move?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Recording			
Do you start each day with set change floats?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do two people check and record daily takings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are takings banked promptly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you stock-take at least twice a year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you prepare a profit and loss statement each term?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you tell how the canteen is going financially each month or at least half yearly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Security			
Do you have a cash register or lockable cash drawer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have a policy that states unauthorised children / adults are not allowed in the canteen (for security as well as safety reasons)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do all of your volunteers and staff have current Police Checks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Yes	No	Action Required
Environment			
Is the packaging of menu items minimised and/or environmentally friendly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there a system for recycling food waste from the canteen and classroom activity to the school vegie garden and/or worm farm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there a system for recycling paper waste from the canteen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fundraising			
Are healthy alternatives to traditional fundraising used?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are MWEW fundraising ideas utilised?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Canteen Links			
Do the Healthy Eating/ Canteen Policy and food sales support the classroom learning on health and wellbeing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are canteen activities, classroom activities and whole school activities connected to the MWEW program (primary school only)? www.movewelleatwell.tas.gov.au	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marketing			
Does the canteen promote a healthy eating philosophy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are healthy food items on the menu promoted and marketed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are healthy choices prominently placed in the canteen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

How did you score?

If you ticked NO to any of the questions in the checklist, improvements in that area could enhance the efficiency of your canteen. An Implementation Plan to address these gaps could be used as a whole school activity for your *School Canteen Accreditation* application. A template for an Implementation Plan can be found on page 52.

If you require any assistance to improve your canteen operations please contact the Tasmanian School Canteen Association on: (03) 6223 8023 or admin@tascanteenassn.org.au

EXAMPLE OF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Action required to improve the situation	Trial preparing and displaying a selection of ready-to-go sandwiches and wraps for sale over the counter at lunchtime.
How will this be implemented?	Decide on a selection of popular fillings to trial. Ensure extra stock is ordered if needed. Plan time to make the extra sandwiches/wraps in the morning when doing lunch order sandwiches. Alter menu to advertise sandwiches available at lunch. Advertise in school newsletter and design a flyer. Monitor sales.
Who is involved and responsible?	Canteen staff - with input from students (for example, Design a Wrap Activity). Canteen Manager. Canteen Committee media person to liaise with administration staff. Canteen staff and Canteen Manager.
Time resources and money needed	Extra sandwich ingredients. Paper for flyers.
Date for action to be implemented	Start of Term 2.
Review date	End of Term 2.
Outcomes	For example: Sales of sandwiches maintained (orders decreased, but counter sales increased).

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TEMPLATE

**Action required to
improve the situation**

**How will this be
implemented?**

**Who is involved and
responsible?**

**Time resources and
money needed**

**Date for action to be
implemented**

Review date

Outcomes

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Electrical Appliances

- Conventional Oven
- Microwave oven
- Pie Warmer
- Hot Plates
- Griller
- Sandwich toaster/ Jaffle maker
- Fry Pan
- Food processor
- Mix-master
- Blender
- Fridge
- Freezer
- Popcorn maker
- Urn

Utensils

- Saucepans
- Baking dishes
- Cooling rack
- Knives/forks/spoons/spatulas
- Can opener
- Strainer/colander
- Food covers
- Knives (bread, vegetable)
- Large Stockpot
- Mixing bowls
- Storage containers
- Grater/Vegetable peeler
- Wooden spoons
- Knife sharpener
- Kettle
- Plates/cups
- Display containers
- Colour coded chopping boards

Cleaning Equipment

- Detergent
- Tea towels
- Wiper cloths
– colour coded for task
- Soap
- Paper hand towels
- Broom
- Mop
- Dustpan
- Cleaning fluids (eg. Bleach, floor cleaner, disinfectant, sanitiser)

Other Kitchen Essentials

- Kitchen paper towels
- Plastic wrap/bags
- Aluminium foil
- Disposable cups/plates
- Permanent marker for labelling
- Baking paper
- Paper bags
- Freezer bags
- Labels
- Pens/note paper
- Disposable food preparation

