**Nutrition Policy**

**Background:**

In March 2006 the WA Government commissioned a review of the nutritional value of food sold in school canteens. The review included a survey of school canteens and a number of consultative forums. The recommendations from the review have been used to inform the development of a new policy and set of standards for food in schools since 2007. The policy and standards cover the food sold in school canteens as well as all areas where the Principal is directly responsible for the supply of food and drinks - for example, classroom rewards, class parties and excursions.

**From the Education Department:**

Children should eat a wide range of foods so that they have the energy for learning and growing. A 'traffic light' system is in place to help all public schools plan menus full of healthy, nutritious and affordable food and drinks.

The new standards require that foods in the:
- **GREEN** category is encouraged. Schools should aim to fill their menus with these healthy food
- **AMBER** foods should be selected carefully and eaten in moderation. **RED** food and drinks are off the menu and will not be available in public schools.

Schools and their canteen or food service are now well placed to support healthy eating and in fact have a vital role to play in helping to reduce the worldwide epidemic of childhood obesity.

Nutrition and physical activity messages are being taught in the classroom to promote healthy lifestyles. The standards for healthy food and drink choices in public schools are consistent with these curriculum messages and apply to canteens and food services, class treats and cooking activities, school camps and excursions.

Parents are encouraged to use the GREEN AMBER RED system at home too.

Schools have a vital role to play in helping to reduce this worldwide epidemic of childhood obesity. They should reinforce nutrition messages being taught in the classroom by modelling healthy food and drink choices in their canteens, for class treats and on school camps and excursions.

**What are the benefits of healthy eating?**

Good foods give children and adolescents all the nutrients they need to:
- Grow and develop.
- Concentrate and learn well at school.
- Stay healthy throughout childhood and in adult life.
What's missing in the diets of many children across Australia?

• Fruits and vegetables - Many children eat very small amounts of these foods.
• A healthy breakfast - Skipping breakfast often leads to snacking on sugary and fatty foods later in the day and leads to poor concentration.
• Dairy products - Many children are not getting two to three serves of milk, cheese or yoghurt to meet their daily calcium needs.
• Drinking enough water - Water is the best thirst quencher.

Como Primary School

At Como Primary School we follow the ‘traffic light system’ of categorising food and encourage green food choices as much as possible. Sound nutritional practices are promoted:

☐ Nutrition is a key part of classroom health education. Teachers promote the healthy food traffic light system and provide the skills for making healthy choices. Teachers also educate students on understanding the media in advertising foods.
☐ Our school canteen supports classroom nutrition lessons by promoting nutritious food. This is achieved by accessing professional support in selecting appropriate foods. That is, The School Canteen Association, Healthways, City of South Perth and networking with other schools in the district.
☐ Christmas candy canes and birthday lollies/lolly bags are not permitted.
☐ A review of the canteen menu is made regularly by the canteen committee.
☐ Students are not to be given food as a reward in classrooms.
☐ Como Primary is not a nut free school as we want to mirror the ‘real world’ where students who have allergies need to manage their food choices and be self-aware of their condition and consequences.
☐ Water bottles are encouraged in the classroom but must contain only water. Students should be respectful of teachers and others when drinking from their bottles in class time.
☐ Teachers should be judicious in their approach to giving non-nutritious foods and drinks out in class. On occasion some curriculum areas such as maths, science and the humanities may require the tasting of amber and red foods but this is to be kept to a minimum.
☐ Non-nutritious foods are acceptable for special events such as school fairs, the annual Easter egg hunt and end of term parties however lollies are not to be included.
☐ Teachers may notify parents if there are concerns regarding the nutritional value of student lunches.
☐ Visiting agencies and guest speakers are not to use non-nutritional foods as rewards.
☐ The school will hold special events to promote healthy eating. Eg The Healthy Breakfast during Walk to School Week.
☐ Parents will be provided up to date advice and tips to assist in providing healthy lunches for their children, through the school newsletter.
☐ When celebrating a child’s birthday parents who wish to send a cake to school and you certainly don’t need to send anything if you don’t want to) are asked to supply only small cup-cakes or muffins. Anything more than this will be sent home.
**Food categories explained:**

Under the traffic light system, food and drink sold within WA Health services will be classified into categories based on their nutritional value, energy density and levels of saturated fat, added sugar, salt and fibre.

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### Green Foods and Drinks

Foods and drinks classified as Green are the healthiest choices. They are excellent sources of important nutrients needed for health and wellbeing, and low in saturated fat, added sugar and salt, and are lower in energy density.

Can be eaten every day or at every meal.

**Examples include:** Plain or whole grain breads and cereals, vegetables and salads, fruit, low fat milks and dairy products, lean meats, fish and poultry, eggs, and nuts and legumes.

**Fill the menu** - at least 50% of all items displayed and offered

**Should be:**
- available from all key food outlets as much of the day as possible
- actively promoted at point of sale as healthier options
- prominently displayed compared to Amber foods
- attractively presented, tasty and competitively priced

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### Amber Foods and Drinks

Foods and drinks classified as Amber are mainly processed foods. They have some nutritional value but contain moderate levels of saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt and can, in large serve sizes, contribute to excess energy intake.

Should be carefully selected and eaten in moderation.

**Examples include:** Full fat milk and dairy products, some breakfast and cereal bars, some un-iced, plain, lower fat cakes and muffins, some processed meats (e.g. ham, pastrami), poly- or mono-unsaturated spreads, breakfast cereals with no added sugar or fat.

**Choose carefully** - approximately 30% of all items displayed or offered

**Should:**
- not dominate the menu at the expense of healthier Green items
- be provided in small serve sizes
- not be actively promoted, especially through signage or ‘deals’
- where possible, comprise the healthiest alternatives available from within the category

All labels need to be checked against the Red-Amber nutrient criteria.
### Red Foods and Drinks

| Foods and drinks classified as Red are energy dense and nutrient poor foods and drinks that are high in saturated fat, sugar and/or salt. They can contribute to excess energy intake if consumed in large amounts or on a frequent basis. |
| Red foods also include deep fried foods, confectionary and chocolate (energy size limit), crisps, corn chips and similar salty snacks (energy size limit), sugar sweetened soft drinks, energy and sports drinks (energy size limit). |
| Should only be eaten occasionally. |
| Examples include: Fried foods, savoury commercial products such as pies and sausage rolls, snack bars, sweet biscuits, cakes and sweet pastries, small size confectionary and packets of crisps, some sweetened drinks and processed meats such as salamis. |

| Limit / remove - no more than 20% of all items displayed or offered |
| Should: |
| - not be promoted or advertised in any way |
| - not be displayed prominently |
| - stocked in the smallest available portion size |

All labels need to be checked against the Red-Amber.