

SmartFood GUIDE



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A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO EATING WELL

Section 4. Policy and procedures

This is a section of the SmartFood Guide

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You can access other sections of the Guide on the School Food Matters website:
www.schoolfoodmatters.org.au



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FOOD**
matters

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

In this section

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Policy and Procedure requirements for the SmartFood Award

To complete the Policy and Procedures section of the SmartFood Program, your school needs to submit a copy of your school food policy that details your:

- Whole school approach to food and eating which may include but is not limited to food provision, the eating experience for students, the use of food in teaching and learning opportunities, fundraising and school events.
- Food service procedures outlining the day to day operation and management of your school food service.

The school food policy must be endorsed and signed by the school principal and other relevant school community members such as the food service manager, lead teacher, school business manager or school council representative. The whole school community should be invited to provide comment on the school food policy to ensure it reflects the culture, values and practices of the community around food and eating.

Your school may already have your whole school approach to food and eating and food service procedures documented in an existing policy. If you need to create a new school food policy there are example templates that you can use in the Templates section of the SmartFood Guide:

- Template 1 – School food policy
- Template 2 – School food service procedures

For an editable version go to:

www.schoolfoodmatters.org.au/accreditation/healthy-eatingcanteen-policy/

Importance of a school food policy

A school food policy is important because it:

- ensures sustainability and a long-term commitment to a whole school approach to food and eating
- communicates consistent messages about food and eating to the whole school community
- defines the role and guides the operation and management of the food service
- supports food service staff and volunteers in the commitment to a whole school approach to healthy eating
- gives direction and support to food service staff involved in implementing changes
- sets goals for the food service, such as becoming accredited with the SmartFood Award
- provides a plan for change, if needed
- clarifies the school community expectations of the food service

- reflects the culture, values and practices of the school community.

A school food policy should be clear and concise and document a coordinated whole school approach to food and eating. A school food policy could consider including details about:

- the type of food provided by the school food service and to the broader school community through school events and activities
- how food is procured
- the role of the school in supporting students and families with food security issues
- the eating environment, including where students eat, the timing of meal breaks and how this is supervised
- how food and eating is integrated into curriculum, teaching and learning
- the expectations of school staff and volunteers as role models around food and eating
- how food is used in celebrations and social settings
- how the school communicates and provides information about food and eating to the broader school community.

The school food policy should be referred to when making decisions about food related activities at school. To ensure it remains current and relevant, it should be reviewed regularly and preferably be a standing item at staff meetings or school council meetings.

Importance of food service procedures

Well documented procedures that detail the day to day operation and management of the school food service are essential in ensuring it operates as efficiently and effectively as possible. It also ensures that the expectations of the school food service are clear and transparent to all members of the school community.

Food service procedures should cover aspects of the day to day operation and management such as:

- school food committee including membership, roles and responsibilities
- operational hours
- financial management options including pricing, stock management, accounting and reporting issues and equipment
- school food service management, including employed staff and volunteers
- staff and volunteer training requirements
- menu
- food safety and hygiene
- occupational health and safety.

A school food service is considered a food business under Tasmanian food safety legislation and therefore has a legal obligation to ensure the food provided is safe to eat. The legislative requirements governing the sale of food in Tasmania are given in the Food Act 2003, which incorporates the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code. Children are particularly vulnerable to food borne illness, so a school food service must operate at best practice to ensure the provision of safe food. For more information on food safety go to the Food Safety section of the SmartFood Guide.

