





# Let students take the lead at lunch



Learning to eat a variety of food takes time and practice.


Everyone is different in how they approach food. Some people may like a new food right away. Others may need many exposures before they are even willing to try it.




Being given foods or dishes for the first time can be exciting to some, but scary or uncomfortable to others.

## Set basic expectations around table manners, but allow students to decide how they participate beyond this.


When students decide how much they participate in a meal, they can explore new foods at their own pace. This helps everyone to relax!




Students could:

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- Sit politely but not try any of the food
  - Eat a small amount of one part of the meal
  - Finish everything on their plate
  - Ask for another serve.


All of these levels of participation are okay. There is not one that is any 'better' or 'worse'.



## At mealtimes:

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- Expect all students to sit politely at the table and practise table manners.
  - Allow students to decide how much they will participate in the meal.
  - Remember that once you've offered the food, it's a student's job to choose how much, in what order and whether they will eat.

It often takes many exposures to learn to like a new food. Children who are pressured into trying a new food are less likely to go back to it. You don't need to taste or eat a food for it to be a positive learning experience.



### For more information

[www.schoolfoodmatters.org.au/professional-learning-resources/professional-learning/topic-2-keeping-mealtimes-enjoyable/](http://www.schoolfoodmatters.org.au/professional-learning-resources/professional-learning/topic-2-keeping-mealtimes-enjoyable/)

