

SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS NEWSLETTER



Term 4, 2025 - Issue 96

PLEASE CIRCULATE TO:

School Food Service Managers & Volunteers,
School Staff, MWEW Coordinators,
Kitchen/Garden Coordinators, Principals,
SEO's, School Council/School Association

FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER - KIRSTY GRIERSON



As we come to the end of another big year, School Food Matters would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the schools we've had the privilege of working with. Your commitment to student wellbeing, food literacy and creating positive food experiences every day continues to inspire us.

By exploring food education activities, or collaborating on innovative ideas, your work makes a real difference in the lives of young Tasmanians and your own school communities, whether it was implementing the School Lunch Program, delivering food through your school canteen, or participating in the Foodies Program.

We look forward to building on this year's momentum in 2026, strengthening partnerships and continuing to champion nutritious, inclusive and sustainable school food environments. Thank you all for the time and dedication you bring to support these programs.

FUN FACTS:
THE AVERAGE CHERRY TREE HAS 7,000
CHERRIES.
THAT'S RIGHT. A SINGLE TREE CAN YIELD
ENOUGH CHERRIES TO MAKE 28 PIES.



Comments?

If you would like to comment on a School Food Matters issue, please let us know. It helps us improve our support to you if we hear about the successes and the gripes!

CONTACT US



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SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS TEAM



Kirsty Grierson
Executive Officer



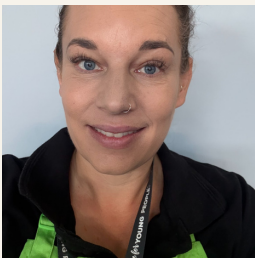
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Kitchen Supervisor



Janae Cave
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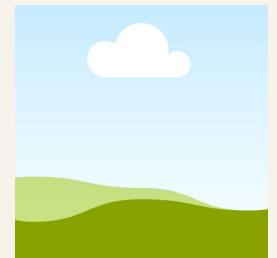
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Program Coordinator



Stephanie Lightman
Program Coordinator



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Program Coordinator



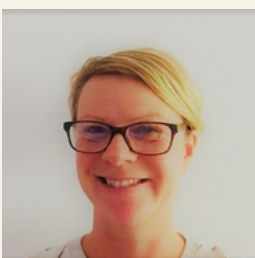
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David Adams
Kitchen Supervisor

SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS STAFF



Bouphakaisone Banmanivong
Kitchen Supervisor



Cassie Wilson
Kitchen Assistant



SMARTFOOD ACHIEVEMENTS

By Sophie Damen - Program Coordinator South

This year has been a busy time at School Food Matters, with the Lunch Program expanding, we are seeing and hearing inspiring stories as the school food landscape changes. The Smartfood award program also continues to transform canteens across Tasmania. 80% of schools with a food service are participating in the accreditation program. This achievement demonstrates the commitment of school communities providing nutritious, safe and appealing food options for students. What makes the Smartfood Program particularly effective is the comprehensive support provided to canteen managers, school staff and volunteers. In a time when many canteens face challenges like rising costs of food, staff shortages, changes in food products, running costs of a canteen space.

As the Smartfood Program continues, in 2026 we will be doing an evaluation through our partners at the Department of Health. Stake holders across the state are reflecting on the programs achievements and considering opportunities for reflection. This review presents an exciting opportunity to build on the programs strong foundation and ensure it continues to meet the evolving needs of school communities.

If you are a participating school you may be contacted. We are really looking forward to this time of reflection and consolidation with the Smartfood program.



SMARTFOOD ACHIEVEMENTS

By Jen Lea - Program Coordinator South

We have seen a fabulous increase this year in the amount of schools accredited with a Platinum award, particularly with our School Lunch Program schools. There are a number of schools with school run canteen services who are doing a wonderful job in maintaining Platinum Level.

New and Newly accredited Platinum Award Schools

Bagdad Primary, Gagebrook Primary, Moonah Primary, Rokeby Primary, Springfield Gardens Primary, Swansea Primary, Clarendon Vale Primary, Triabunna District School, Huonville Primary, and St Marys College



Congratulations to Mt Carmel College in their canteen transformation:

Mount Carmel College has done a fantastic job at making changes to their canteen menu over time and they have recently achieved a SILVER accreditation. The time frame was a deliberate consideration, giving the school community time to adjust and provide feedback on the trial of new recipes and foods, placing importance on the student voice. Their menu has evolved over a 9 month period and now has the majority of the meals are cooked from scratch using fresh ingredients.

Their canteen manager, Mahesh, has been busy creating some tasty meals as well as utilising SFM recipes such as bolognaise and butter chicken, which are loved by the students. The school uses fresh seasonal produce from their school kitchen garden that is set to expand. Growing and cooking vegetables and herbs from the school garden is a great way for children to taste a paddock to plate experience and gain an understanding of where food comes from. The whole school approach to healthy eating is demonstrated through the school canteens commitment to providing nutritious and delicious food for their school community.



Canteen Manager Mahesh in the canteen and photos of the school garden



SkillIT is School Food Matters' online learning platform, covering Allergies, Food Waste, Food Seasonality and Oral Health.



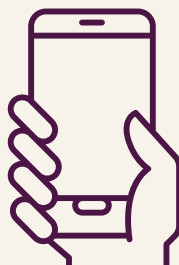
We're inviting Canteen and School Lunch Program staff to help us trial our new SkillIT training modules!

Join the trial and help us shape the future of SkillIT. By completing the modules and sharing your feedback, you'll earn a \$50 voucher for each module you finish.

If you complete all 4 modules you could earn \$200 in vouchers



The trial runs for two weeks from 12th January 2026, during the school holidays. Modules are self-paced and can be completed in your own time, usually in 30 minutes to a few hours. You can complete the training on your phone, computer or an iPad (we can supply one if needed).



Spots are limited - to express your interest, please email penny@schoolfoodmatters.org.au



Kate Carlin, School Lunch Program Manager



School Lunch Program Soars to New Heights in 2025

What a year it's been for the School Lunch Program! Term 1 saw 15 new schools join us from across Tasmania, full of energy and enthusiasm for the program. We began 2025 serving around 12,000 meals a week to students, with schools participating anywhere from one to five days per week.



As we head into the final stretch of Term 4, we're now delivering approximately 14,000 meals weekly. Loaves and Fishes Tasmania procure all the ingredients and prepares some meals centrally, while our 64 Kitchen Supervisors, working in schools, cook/reheat and serve meals to students. Students have access to plant-based (vegetarian) options, and we're able to cater for most allergies and intolerances too.

Looking ahead to 2026, we're thrilled to announce another 15 schools will be joining the program, bringing our total to 60 schools. With this expansion, we're expecting to serve around 20,000 meals per week in Term 1, reaching students as far away as King Island, Flinders Island, and Cape Barren Island. We'll also be employing around 20 additional Kitchen Supervisors to help make it all happen.

The feedback we're receiving is wonderful. Teachers, parents, and students are telling us how much the program means to them. It's bringing school communities together around the table. Parents are noticing their children are more adventurous eaters at home, with taste buds expanded by the variety of meals they're trying at school. Students love the food and the chance to relax and chat with friends and teachers over lunch. Schools are even reporting better attendance on program days and calmer, more engaged students in the afternoon.

Tasmania is leading the way – no other state in Australia offers a program quite like ours. It's a privilege to work alongside schools and with the support of the Tasmanian State Government to set this standard in our country.



The 60 schools that will be part of the School Lunch Program in 2026 include:

- Austins Ferry Primary School
- Bagdad Primary School
- Beaconsfield Primary School
- Bothwell District School
- Bridport Primary School
- Brighton Primary School
- Campania District School
- Campbell Town District School
- Clarendon Vale Primary School
- Collinsvale Primary School
- Cosgrove High School
- Cressy Primary School
- Dodges Ferry Primary School
- Dover District School
- Dunalley Primary School
- East Derwent Primary School
- East Devonport Primary
- Fairview Primary School
- Flinders Island District School + Cape Barren
- Gagebrook Primary School
- Glenorchy Primary School
- Goodwood Primary School
- Havenview Primary School
- Herdsmans Cove Primary School
- Hillcrest Primary School
- Huonville Primary School
- Invermay Primary School
- JRLF Senior School
- Kempton Primary School
- King Island District School
- Kingston Primary School
- Legana Primary School
- Mole Creek Primary School
- Montello Primary School
- Moonah Primary School
- Mountain Heights School
- New Norfolk High School
- Oatlands District School
- Orford Primary School
- Port Dalrymple District School
- Ravenswood Heights Primary School
- Risdon Vale Primary School
- Rokeby Primary School
- Romaine Park Primary School
- Sassafras Primary School
- Smithton High School
- Sorell School
- Springfield Gardens Primary School
- St Mary's District School
- Swansea Primary School
- Tasman District School
- Triabunna District School
- Warrane Primary School
- Waverly Primary School
- West Ulverstone Primary School
- Westerway Primary School
- Windermere Primary School
- Winnaleah District School
- Yolla District School
- Zeehan Primary School

Make the Most of What's left in the Cupboard!

As we head toward the end of the year, it's the perfect time to look at what's hiding in the back of the pantry and get creative! Those half-used bags and tins of food don't need to go to waste, they could be the start of something delicious.

Got some pasta left over? Whip up an extra pasta salad for an end of year event or a staff thank-you morning tea. Add a few vegies & herbs from the kitchen garden, some dressing, and you've got a crowd pleaser ready to go!

A surplus of apples? Don't let them go soft, stew and freeze them now for an easy ready to serve topping when Breakfast Club kicks off again in 2026. Left over rice in your dry store? What about a Rice Pudding?

Leftover rice can be transformed into a quick and delicious dessert. You can serve it as is or add a festive twist by topping it with fresh fruit. It's a healthy, comforting, and satisfying way to use up rice. It's perfect as a sweet snack for students, family, or anyone craving a nutritious dessert.

It's all about thinking ahead, reducing waste, and adding a tasty touch to your end of year celebrations.

Cinnamon Rice Pudding- Servings: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 cup uncooked rice
- 2 ½ cups unsweetened almond milk (or milk of choice)
- 2 tablespoons honey or maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg (optional)
- Pinch of salt
- Optional toppings: pomegranate seeds, raisins, or a sprinkle of coconut

Instructions:

1. Rinse the rice under cold water.
2. In a medium saucepan, combine rice, milk, salt, and half of the cinnamon.
3. Bring to a gentle boil over medium heat, then reduce heat to low.
4. Simmer uncovered, stirring occasionally, for 25–30 minutes (or until rice is tender and mixture is creamy).
5. Stir in honey and vanilla extract. Taste and adjust sweetness if needed.
6. Serve warm or chilled, sprinkled with the remaining cinnamon and optional festive toppings, such as red fruits like pomegranate or raspberries for a festive Christmas look



CHRISTMAS THEMED SNACK IDEAS

Fun and Easy Christmas Snack ideas

Try out this Christmas tree made out of sliced kiwi fruit and strawberries. Alternatively you could use cherries or raspberries for the decoration on the tree. Below are Christmas trees cut out of watermelon.



Fruit Santa Hats

Bring a little holiday cheer and colour to snack time with these cute and healthy Fruit Santa Hats perfect for classroom parties, lunchboxes, or a festive morning tea!

You'll need:

- Fresh strawberries (1 per Santa hat)
- Banana, sliced into 1cm rounds
- Mini marshmallows or a small dollop of vanilla yoghurt or cream cheese
- Toothpicks or small skewers



How to make them:

1. Wash and hull the strawberries (cut off the green tops).
2. Place a banana slice flat-side down on a plate – this is Santa's face!
3. Pop a strawberry on top (pointy end up) to make the hat.
4. Finish with a mini marshmallow or tiny spoonful of yoghurt on top for the pom-pom.
5. Secure with a toothpick if needed, and you're done!



West Ulverstone Public School Sports Carnival – Chicken Caesar Wrap

The Chicken Caesar Wrap went down a treat at West Ulverstone Primary School's sports carnival this term! The amazing kitchen supervisor, Emma and her crew of superstar volunteers made up the trays of Chicken Caesar Wraps that were easy to take outside to the students who were busy participating in the carnival -a delicious and easy handheld lunch on the go!



The wraps make a great lunch on days when schools have an event on. Students can still enjoy the School Lunch Program without sacrificing any time out on the track. Students were refueled and ready to take on their next event!





As Foodies year 1 comes to a close, we couldn't be happier with what's been achieved. Across the year we visited seven schools and worked with more than sixty students and travelled over 2500kms in the food truck.



Together we explored market gardens, state-of-the-art training facilities, a goat farm and cheesery, a regenerative cattle property, and even a former woodchip mill now transformed into a multi venue events space.



We planted zucchinis, cross-pollinated brassicas, harvested greens from a kitchen garden, and picked mushrooms grown in a 130-year-old train tunnel.

Students tested tractor simulators, gained front-of-house experience through VR headsets, and cooked from the food truck on farms, at schools, and in town centres.

Along the way we fed three whole schools, an entire school staff, and plenty of hungry locals.



FOODIES

By Peter Cooksley - Foodies Project Manager



We cooked dishes including roti and dahl to meatloaf, pan-fried buns with chilli oil, pizzas using freshly harvested local produce, and meatball subs from the SLP menu. Chefs from The Vault in Wynyard even taught a group how to cook three dishes from their menu.

Students created dishes that showcased skill, teamwork and confidence. Seeing their pride and self belief after working together in real-world cooking environments was an experience we will never forget.



We are so happy to share that a student from Tasman has secured employment at a local nursery for 2026 and a student from Triabunna has set up a paid trial shift at a venue visited during a Foodies field trip.



We're incredibly thankful to the schools, teachers, principals, students, mentors, training providers, and career advisors, farmers, and chefs who made Foodies a success this year. We can't wait to get back on the truck in 2026 to deliver even more futures in food.

Follow along on Instagram @Foodies.tas



We are thrilled to share the wonderful news that **Julie Dunbabin** has been awarded **Senior Australian of the Year for Tasmania**.

Julie's vision of all Tasmanian children receiving a nutritious, sit-down meal made from seasonal, locally sourced produce came to fruition with the implementation of the School Lunch Program.

Julie's unwavering dedication means that students are currently enjoying a hot lunch in 45 schools across the State, with the program expanding in 2026 to 60 schools where over 20,000 meals will be served each week! The team at School Food Matters continues to support schools in the operations around this amazing program as it expands.

Although Julie has now retired from her previous role she remains a true advocate for School Food Matters and the School Lunch Program as our ambassador.

Congratulations Julie, such well deserved recognition!



Julie Dunbabin pictured above and at the Tasmanian of the Year Award Ceremony



FEATURE RECIPE

Colourful, nutritious, and delicious!

Watermelon Salad

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg watermelon- cubed
- ½ red onion- thinly sliced
- ½ cup reduced fat feta cheese- crumbled
- ⅓ cup fresh mint

METHOD

1. In a large bowl, combine the watermelon, red onion slices, feta cheese, and fresh mint.
2. You can also add a drizzle of balsamic vinegar or balsamic glaze, but that is optional. The salad is good with or without it!



Tip: Add in some cucumber for some additional crunch

check out our website for many more great recipe ideas

WWW.SCHOOLFOODMATTERS.ORG.AU

CURRENTLY ACCREDITED



Albuera St Primary School
 Andrews Creek Primary School
 Bagdad Primary School
 Clarendon Vale Primary School
 East Launceston Primary School
 Gagebrook Primary School
 Huonville Primary School
 Kingston Primary School
 Margate Primary School
 Mole Creek Primary School
 Moonah Primary School
 Richmond Primary School
 Rokeby Primary School
 Stella Maris Catholic Primary School
 Springfield Gardens Primary School
 St Mary's College Jr
 Swansea Primary
 Triabunna District School
 Warrane Primary School
 Waverly Primary School



Blackmans Bay Primary School
 Cambridge Primary School
 Exeter Primary School
 The Friends' School
 Howrah Primary School
 Mowbray Heights Primary School
 New Norfolk Primary School
 Perth Primary School
 Princes St Primary School
 Risdon Vale Primary School
 Rosebery District High School
 Rosetta Primary School
 Snug Primary School
 St Johns Catholic Primary School (on hold)
 Waimea Primary School (on hold)
 Windermere Primary School
 Wynyard High School



Austins Ferry Primary School
 Beaconsfield Primary School
 Campania District School
 Deloraine High School
 East Devonport Primary School
 East Ulverstone Primary School
 Fairview Primary School
 Goulburn St Primary School
 Herdmans Cove Primary School
 Hillcrest Primary School
 Holy Rosary Catholic School
 Huonville High School
 Jordan River Learning Federation
 Senior School
 King Island District High School
 Kingston High School
 Lauderdale Primary School
 Lenah Valley Primary School
 Montagu Bay Primary School
 Montello Primary School
 Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic PS
 Sacred Heart New Town
 Somerset Primary School
 St Mary's College Senior
 West Launceston Primary School
 Westbury Primary School
 Winnaleah District School
 Yolla District School



Bayview Secondary College
 Bridport Primary School
 Campbell Town District High School
 Clarence High School
 Deloraine Primary School
 East Derwent Primary School
 Hobart College
 Montrose Bay High School
 Oatlands District High School
 Port Dalrymple School
 Prospect High School
 Riverside High School
 Rose Bay High School
 Scottsdale Primary School
 St Josephs Catholic School
 Queenstown
 St Peter Chanel

Overdue for Reaccreditation

Bellerive Primary School
 Brighton Primary School
 Collinsvale Primary School (on hold)
 Fahan School
 Hobart High School - Ogilvie
 Hobart High school - New Town
 Huonville High School
 Lindisfarne North PS
 Lindisfarne PS (on hold)
 Montagu Bay PS (on hold)
 Mount Stuart PS
 Risdon Vale Primary School
 Romaine Park Primary School
 Scotch Oakburn College (Junior)
 Smithton High School
 Tarooma High School
 Woodbridge School

SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS STAFF

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School Lunch Program Manager -
 Kate Carlin

Program Support Officer - P Jackson

P.O. South - Jen Lea, P Jackson, Sophie
 Damen, and Nietta Lynch, Sophie Adderton

P.O. North - Sam Rathmell

P.O. North West - Rachael Smith,
 Stephanie Lightman

Finance and Administrator - Penny
 Holmes

Kitchen Specialist - Melinda Drummond

Community Dietitian - Danae Giardina

Foodies Project Manager - Peter Cooksley

Kitchen Supervisors in schools - Janae Cave
 Emma Preston, Kate Long, Sarah Randall,
 Angela Steynes, David Adams, Boupchaisone
 Banmanivong, Cassie Wilson

Department of Health

Public Health Services Team - Dietitians

Claire Galloway and Kate DePaoli

Department of Education for Children and Young People

Curriculum Services and Policy Services

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 Department of Health and the Department of Education, Children and Young People*

*We are also funded for the School Lunch Program by the Tasmanian Government by the
 Crown through the Department of Education, Children and Young People.*