

Term 1, 2026 - Issue 97



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



Welcome to term 1, 2026!

As we progress well into term 1, we want to take a moment to acknowledge the incredible role each of you plays in shaping the health, wellbeing and learning of students across Tasmania. Whether you are preparing meals, supporting students, leading your school community or generously volunteering your time, your contribution creates a positive impact.

At School Food Matters we support the delivery of food programs, resources and services around the state that enable children to eat well and thrive in the classroom, and beyond. We educate and activate school communities around the why and how of healthy eating using an evidence-based, collaborative approach. We prioritise Tasmanian fresh produce and prioritise the use of local produce.

At School Food Matters, we're excited to continue working alongside you through our key programs:

The **School Lunch Program** - delivering nutritious meals to students across the state and supporting positive social eating experiences for students.

SmartFood Program - supporting schools and canteens to create healthier food environments.

Foodies - is a hands-on program connecting secondary students with career pathways in hospitality and agriculture across Tasmania. It provides practical experience, direct industry exposure and clearer understanding of training and employment options.



Each of these programs is strengthened by a school's commitment, and willingness to engage. We know that the beginning of the year can be busy and at times challenging. The School Food Matters team is here to support you with practical resources, guidance and encouragement every step of the way. We have an exciting year ahead with statewide workshop opportunities including hosting the National School Food Summit in May.

We really look forward to working closely with you to support all School Food Service Managers, Kitchen Supervisors, canteen and school staff plus the volunteers involved with your school food service. Here is to a productive and enjoyable 2026.

FUN FACTS:

PASSION FRUIT HAS THE MOST FIBRE OF ALL FRUITS, WITH AROUND 24G PER CUP. MOST OF THE FIBRE IS IN THE SEEDS.



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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schoolfoodmatters.org.au

SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS TEAM



If you'd like to get in touch, you can meet our team and find their contact details on our website below.

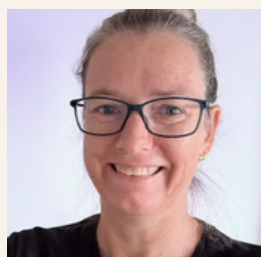
<https://www.schoolfoodmatters.org.au/about-us/staff/>



SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS NEW STAFF



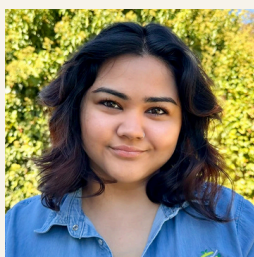
Say hello to some new members of our School Food Matters team!



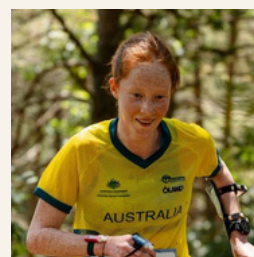
Deb Gardner
Program Coordinator



Claire Hamrock
Program Coordinator



Astha Bisht
Program Coordinator



Liana Stubbs
Project Assistant



Alicia Hansen
Event Coordinator



Helen Stonehouse
Kitchen Supervisor



Mel Yost
Kitchen Supervisor



Chris Williams
Kitchen Supervisor



SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

By Jen Lea - Program Coordinator South

We were delighted to see how well received the School Lunch Program has been in one of our new SLP schools for this year. The Foodies Truck visited Brighton Primary School recently to attend their family orientation event, to provide info about the Program and showcase some of the food.

We really enjoyed chatting to community members who were enthusiastic about the lunches. Tasters of two SLP meals, Butter chicken and Cauli Mac Cheese were served, which were a great hit!

Parents are already reporting that their children are trying foods they would not generally eat at home and they picked up some of our recipe handouts, keen to prepare them at home.



Jen and Melissa at the School Food Matters stall



Students at Brighton Primary School enjoying butter chicken in the first week of lunches



VEGETARIAN MEALS

By Danae Giardina - Dietitian



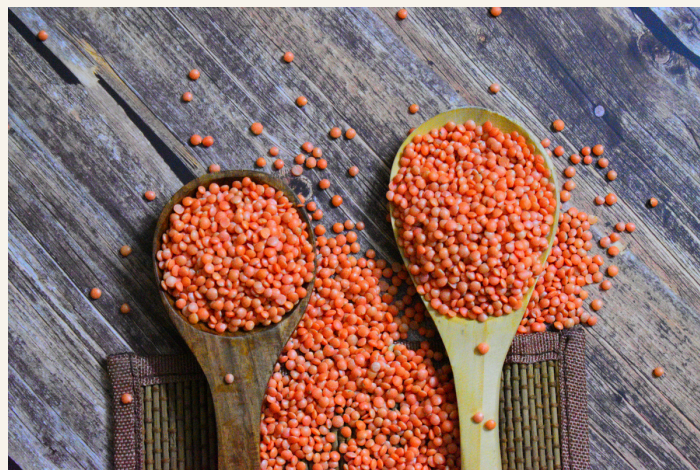
For every meal, we offer a vegetarian option for students who follow a vegetarian diet. These meals come pre-cooked from Loaves and Fishes.

In term 1 we have trialled cooking these meals from scratch at 3 of our cook from scratch schools.

So far we have received great feedback, one student shared this feedback to the kitchen supervisor - "I don't know what you are doing to the meals this year, but they are so much better than last year! I could actually eat the Singapore noodles!! Thanks!"

Hearing students enjoying the meals reminds us why we all do the work to provide delicious nutritious meals.

Here is one of our favourite vegetarian meals - bolognese with lentils instead of mince. Lentils are a fantastic alternative to mince because they have a similar texture, similar nutrition with protein and iron, and are much cheaper in price. A can of lentils is \$1 and can be thrown into a sauce at the end of cooking.



FEATURE RECIPE

Colourful, nutritious, and delicious!

Lentil Bolognese

Serves 10

INGREDIENTS

- Canola Oil as needed
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 3 carrots, grated
- 1 celery stalk, sliced
- 3 x 400g tins brown lentils, undrained
- 1-2 tbsp fresh herbs or 1 tsp dried
- 4 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 cups tomato passata
- 2 tsp reduced salt chicken-style stock powder
- Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

1. Put a large saucepan or stock pot over medium heat and add enough oil to lightly coat the bottom of the pan.
2. Add the onion and garlic and cook for a minute or two, until the onion starts to look transparent.
3. Add the carrot and celery and cook for a couple of minutes, until they are soft and most of the liquid in the pan has evaporated.
4. Add the undrained lentils and stir to combine.
5. Add the herbs, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, passata and vegetable stock and stir to combine.
6. Bring to the boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for an hour or until sauce has reduced, stirring regularly to stop it from sticking to the bottom of the pot. Puree slightly with a stick blender before serving.
7. Cook pasta per packet instructions, drain and add to sauce mixture, stirring to combine.

**Tip: Add in extra seasonal
veggies, like grated
zucchini**

check out our website for many more great recipe ideas

WWW.SCHOOLFOODMATTERS.ORG.AU





Foodies is back for 2026. We've restocked the food truck and hit the road again, connecting more Tasmanian students with their local food communities. We kicked things off with return visits to Yolla District School in the North West and Tasman District School in Nubeena.



In Nubeena, students harvested zucchini flowers and pollinated crookneck squash, before diving into conversations around drought-hardy plants and food legislation with Joe Hartley. We snacked on sunflower shoots and red-fleshed apples, then headed to Premaydena Hill where Daniel shared his approach to vertically integrated agriculture – and some of his beef for lunch.

We wrapped it up serving corned beef hash from the Foodies truck outside Fat Beets Food Hub – a solid finish to a big couple of days.



Students from Yolla shared the kitchen with Narendra and his team from Wynyard's The Vault. Together they prepared a Vault big breakfast, a Portuguese dessert, and made flatbreads to serve with lamb skewers.

On the second day, we visited Freer Farm to learn about training opportunities, and students had a turn delivering a calf on the birthing simulator. We then spent the afternoon with Ian and the team at A Piece of Apizza, hearing about their careers in food and what they're doing now – with a side of choc chip cookies and their take on garlic bread. Our final day was all about cooking for the school. We made pasta with Napoli sauce for the junior students, and pan-fried buns with rice and a berry soda for senior students and staff.



Term 1 Kitchen Supervisor Workshops - 2026

Term 1 kicked off with four workshops during Week 2 of 2026, welcoming a total of 87 participants across the South and North/Northwest regions.

In the South, new Kitchen Supervisors attended induction at Mornington Skills Centre, followed the next day by a session at Moonah Primary School for both new and existing Supervisors. In the North/Northwest, new Kitchen Supervisors joined an induction at Legana Primary School, with a follow-up day at East Devonport for all Supervisors. It was great to have new School Business Managers join us for the induction days also.

Workshops covered a range of essential topics, including:

- The new website portal
- Food safety and managing food spoilage
- The science behind Sous Vide cooking
- Nutritional information
- An information session with Olivia While from the Department of Health

It was wonderful to hear from experienced Kitchen Supervisors, sharing their insights and advice, and to introduce new Supervisors to their roles and expectations.

Participants also enjoyed hands-on activities, including plating the new Chicken Teriyaki dish, with an emphasis on presentation and serving techniques.

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Workshops not only provide valuable learning opportunities but also serve as a great way to network with colleagues, share tips, and build skills that benefit all schools. The feedback confirms these sessions continue to be highly beneficial and enjoyable for our Kitchen Supervisors.



Workshop participants plating the new Chicken Teriyaki Bowl



NEW NORTH/NW TAS SCHOOLS OFF TO A GREAT START

By Deb Gardner and Astha Bisht - Program Coordinators



This term, we were delighted to welcome Legana Primary, Flinders Island District School, St Marys District School, Sassafras, Invermay and Cressy District High to the School Lunch Program.

All these schools have embraced the program with remarkable enthusiasm and impressive organisation. Meal services have run smoothly, supported by strong teamwork between staff and student leaders, creating a positive and inclusive atmosphere where students can relax, connect, and enjoy their meals together.

Dining spaces have been warm and inviting, and it has been wonderful to see students so engaged with trying new foods, sharing positive feedback, and even returning for seconds. A strong sense of responsibility is also evident with students helping to serve, clean, and care for the space.

It was a pleasure to spend time speaking with students, many of whom shared how much they are loving the lunches. Their positive feedback is a wonderful reflection of the program's impact.

Congratulations to all 6 schools on such an impressive start. Your efforts are clearly making a difference for your students.



Lunch being served at Legana Primary School

Students enjoying Cauli Mac & Cheese at St Marys District School



KING ISLAND DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL - SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

By Rachael Smith - Program Coordinator

On arriving at King Island airport, I was greeted by the friendly car rental company who knew all about the School Food Matters - School Lunch Program and was excited that the King Island community were part of it. It was the talk of the town!

It was a very successful start to the School Lunch Program at King Island District High School. The butter chicken and rice were enthusiastically cooked by Jenny and Abby with a small team of high school students pitching in to help in the classroom kitchen space, dedicated to teaching students how to cook.

Matt, the principal, did an outstanding job explaining routines and procedures required for a smooth service, to avoid collisions and bottlenecks in their dining space. Teachers and staff enjoyed sitting with the students allowing the school community to come together in a shared space outside of the classroom. Some of the dining tables were complete with tablecloths and older students supported the younger ones to manage the routines associated with the School Lunch Program.

King Island District High School serves 176 students split over two days; however, the program has been such a success that the school would like to serve 176 students on both days.

In my last meeting with Jenny and Abby, they told me how the EFA's enjoy coming to the dining area and sitting and chatting with the students while they enjoy the meal too. A wonderful way to bring different generations within the community together!



Ingredients being delivered from plane to truck at King Island airport





Kate Carlin, School Lunch Program Manager



2026, 60, 21,500, 88... what do you think these all represent?!

Well, it's all about this year, 2026! We have 60 schools participating in the School Lunch Program, with 21,500 meals being served to students each week this term – and 88 Kitchen Supervisors and assistants employed through the program to cook, reheat and serve delicious and nutritious lunches to students across Tasmania. What a journey it has been from very small beginnings in 2020 as a three-school pilot!

Our team at School Food Matters has grown considerably as the program has expanded across the state. We have six Program Coordinators in the South, two in the North, two in the North West and one in the West. These coordinators support schools and their staff with the implementation and ongoing smooth running of the program. Every school is different, and we work with each one to tailor the program to suit its students, physical setting and unique needs. We also have a Kitchen Specialist in the North/North West/West and one in the South, supporting Kitchen Supervisors with daily kitchen operations, food safety, food service and any questions that arise. Our dietitian oversees the menu design and nutritional standards each term, and our Nutritionist manages how we respond to and cater for students with allergies, intolerances and dietary preferences.

We also want to acknowledge the wonderful work of Loaves and Fishes Tasmania, who have partnered with us since the pilot in 2020 to ensure the procurement of local, fresh, high-quality ingredients and the production of ready-to-cook meals for Central Kitchen schools. They too have grown alongside the program – they're currently finalising a kitchen and packing room upgrade, and are about to take delivery of two much-needed vans to handle the increased volume of meals this year.

What an amazing team of people, all working together to achieve our goal of feeding Tasmanian school children a nutritious meal every day! We must also thank schools and all their staff for their ongoing support and enthusiasm – we truly look forward to continuing these partnerships. At School Food Matters, one of our values is that our enthusiasm will be catching... and I hope everyone involved in the program feels it!





The 60 schools that are a 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 Distric 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

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



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
Jordan River Learning Federation Snr
King Island District High School
Kingston High School
Lauderdale Primary School
Lenah Valley 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
Montagu Bay PS (on hold)
Mount Stuart PS
Princes St Primary School
Risdon Vale Primary School
Romaine Park Primary School
Scotch Oakburn College (Junior)
Smithton High School
Taroona High School
Woodbridge 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
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





Executive Officer - Kirsty Grierson

School Lunch Program Manager -

Kate Carlin

Northern Operations Coordinator -

Sam Rathmell

Program Support Officer - P Jackson

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

P.O. North and North West - Rachael

Smith, Stephanie Lightman, Deb Gardner, Astha Bisht, Claire Hamrock

People, Finance & Operations

Coordinator - Penny Holmes

Special Projects - Alicia Hansen

Project Assistant - Liana Stubbs

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, Boupkaisone Banmanivong, Cassie Wilson, Jo Steedman, Melissa Yost, Chris Williams, Laura Pickering, Helen Stonehouse, Jacinta Jones, Maddy Devon, Allie Lange, Emma Wylie, Kerri Cox, Kiera Hohne, Annalise Andrews, Joni Chuter

Department of Health

Public Health Services Team - Dietitians

Kate DePaoli and Pen Clark

**Department of Education for
Children and Young People**

Curriculum Services and Policy
Services

This initiative is funded by the Tasmanian Government by the Crown through the 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.