Rationale

Maryborough Education Centre (MEC) acknowledges the importance of healthy eating and oral health behaviours, which contribute to good health and overall wellbeing. As a health promoting school, MEC promotes healthy eating to students, staff and families through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment, and developing community links and partnerships. Healthy eating and good nutrition have a major influence on the health and wellbeing of children and young people, and a direct impact on their growth and development. Oral health is essential for the overall health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Goals

MEC is committed to:

- Encouraging students to make healthy food and drink choices
- Promoting the importance of a healthy lifestyle, which includes drinking water, eating healthy food and maintaining oral health
- Creating a supportive environment for healthy eating and good oral health for students, staff, families and visitors.

Definitions

Everyday Foods and Drinks

- breads and cereals, rice, pasta, noodles
- vegetables
- fruits
- dairy foods – reduced or low-fat milk, yoghurt and cheese
- lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, nuts and legumes (dried beans and lentils)
- water.

Select Carefully Foods and Drinks

- full-fat dairy foods – milk, yoghurt and cheese
- processed meats
- commercially prepared hot foods
- margarines, oils, spreads, sauces and gravies
- snack food bars (for example, breakfast bars, cereal bars, fruit bars)
- cakes, muffins, sweet biscuits, slices
- savoury snack foods and biscuits
- low or reduced-fat ice-creams, milk-based ice confections and dairy desserts, ice blocks and ice slushies based on 100 per cent fruit juices
- drinks – 100 per cent fruit juices, some moderate-kilojoule sports waters, artificially sweetened drinks
- some breakfast cereals (with added sugar and/or saturated fat and low fibre).

Occasional (discretionary) food and drinks:

- sugar-sweetened drinks – sports drinks, cordial, fruit-flavoured drinks
- deep-fried foods
- pastry-based or crumbed hot foods
• savoury snack foods – crisps, chips, biscuits and other similar products
• ice-creams, ice confections and dairy desserts, for example chocolate-coated and premium ice-creams, icy-poles
• cakes, muffins, sweet biscuits, slices, bars, donuts, danishes, croissants, cream, butter, copha and chocolate spreads

Food Literacy

"Being food literate means having the knowledge, skills and the capacity to source, prepare and cook food in a sustainable manner to promote a health and balanced lifestyle. Food literacy is also about individuals understanding the role that food plays in communities and cultures" (Home Economics Victoria, 2013).

Oral health

Health of the tongue, mouth and oral cavity and absence of active disease of the mouth.

Guidelines

• The school promotes the consumption of fruit and vegetables and healthy food options in line with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia (Appendix A).

• MEC will work towards increasing the availability of everyday foods, and limit select carefully and occasional foods and drinks as outlined in the DET The Healthy Canteen Kit – Food Planner (Appendix B)

• Everyday foods and drinks are promoted as tasty, fresh and good value choices. Select carefully foods don't dominate the menu. Occasional foods are never available from the canteen menu.

• Occasional foods are served on no more than two occasions per term per area (Specialist, Primary, Secondary). These may be in the form of fundraisers or celebrations and should be approved by the Healthy Achievement Committee and the MEC fundraising approval process

• Confectionery, caffeine and high sugar content (soft) drinks are not supplied through school food services. This includes energy drinks and flavoured mineral waters with high sugar content

• School food service menus are assessed by the Healthy Together Healthy Eating Advisory Service to meet the Victorian ‘School Canteens and other School Food Services Policy. (Appendix C)

• Vending machines, breakfast clubs and other school food supplies provide nutritious and healthy food

• Tap water is easily accessible within the school setting at all times.

• Sponsorship, advertisements or marketing of food and drinks are consistent with the school's healthy eating policy

• The school provides a welcoming eating environment that encourages social interaction

• Only Canteen vouchers are permitted as a reward. No other food or drink are to be used as a reward or incentive
- Staff, students and families are encouraged to role-model healthy eating practices and positive leadership

- Students are provided with opportunities to shape, develop and apply knowledge and skills that enhance healthy eating and oral health practices and increase their food literacy

- Staff are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote healthy eating and oral health across the curriculum

- Families, students and staff are key partners in developing and supporting healthy eating initiatives, including food literacy
- Families are encouraged to follow the guidelines of the Healthy Eating policy

- Staff work with local health professionals, services and other organisations to increase their capacity to deliver and promote healthy eating and oral health initiatives.

Links and Appendices

Appendix A:
Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia

[Link to guidelines]

Appendix B:
DET The Healthy Canteen Kit – Food Planner

[Link to canteen kit]

Appendix C:
School Canteens and other School Food Services Policy

[Link to policy]

Associated documents

National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Dietary Guidelines

DET School Policy and Advisory Guide – Health Education Approaches

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia
DET Safe Food Handling Policy
DET Canteen Operations Policy
DET Healthy Canteen Kit

Related school policies:
MEC Canteen Policy
Fundraising Policy

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's 3 year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on Wednesday 28th June 2017

Signed: [Signature]

Paul Rumpff
School Council President