

Healthy Food Practices at Riverview School



Riverview School seeks to educate and encourage healthy attitudes and practices in our ākonga/ learners, including what children eat and drink at school.

Healthy eating is a key component of a healthy life experience, and needs to be included in the curriculum programmes taught in classrooms. This need not be a separate topic, rather it can be integrated across a range of subjects and topics of learning.

Following consultation with our school community, and in alignment with other school policies and practices, Riverview School will implement the following guidelines:

- **Lunches from Home:** We encourage families to provide good quality food which is low in fat, salt, and sugar, and which has high nutritional value suited to children actively engaged in a busy school day. For example, foods such as chippies and pies with a high fat content and sugar-loaded cakes and desserts are discouraged. Lunchboxes should not have any sweetened drinks as we are a 'water only' school.
- **'Water Only' School:** Riverview School is adopting a 'Water Only' approach for all children. We strongly discourage other drinks, including 'fizzy', juices, cordial, etc., which are all high in sugar. As a 'water only' school, the school will be supplying good quality drinking water throughout the school.
- **Considerations related to Food Allergies:** There is a growing number of children with food allergies, some being quite severe. Riverview School has adopted an approach of community responsiveness, in order to support these children. Where a child has a food allergy (often related to nuts, eggs, fish, and other food types), families with children in that child's class will be asked to avoid putting these foods in their child's lunches.
- **Brain Food Snack:** Classes plan a short 'brain food' snack' midway through the first two-hour teaching block. These snacks need to be of a healthy nature (e.g. raw vegetables, fresh/dried fruits). Class teachers will help children and their families understand good food choices in this regard.
- **Celebrations and Special Occasions:** The following guidelines apply:
 - **Children's birthdays** are family events and should be held out of school. Parents are asked not to bring food and other birthday treats to school to celebrate their child's birthday.
 - **Shared lunches** and other 'food sharing' class events: These are to be used on an occasional basis only, and children are encouraged to bring healthy food for these if possible.
 - **Food as treats from teachers/school:** This should not be a regular practice, but may be used on a special occasion, with examples being:
 - completing the Cross Country.
 - a winning class on a particular project, such as selling the most raffle tickets for the Bazaar.
- **Lunch Orders:** The school lunch orders need to fit within the same healthy food expectations as for the rest of the school. This will include:
 - Water only, therefore no juice or other flavoured drinks
 - Food that has high nutritional value and that is generally low in salt, sugar, and fat.

Conclusion:

The school's approach will be that of educating about, and promoting, these practices.



Our school is water-only

Rationale

We care about the health of our students

Sugary drinks¹ are one of the most significant causes of poor oral health and contribute greatly to childhood obesity and Type 2 diabetes.

We care about their achievement

Sugary drink consumption is associated with problem behaviours. Studies have found poor diet and nutrition are associated with lower academic achievement.

Our commitment

We will ensure parents and students receive clear, consistent messages about the importance of healthy choices and the impact of sugary drinks by:

- continuing to educate students about the importance of healthy drink choices and the benefits of consuming water
- actively promoting water as the best option in school publications
- ensuring staff commitment to model healthy drinking habits.

And we will create an enabling environment by:

- actively discouraging sugary drinks being brought to school by students
- providing water (and plain reduced fat milk) as the only drink option for students
- allowing students access to water during class time
- not associating our school with programmes that promote sugary drinks
- ensuring school lunch options don't include sugary drinks
- ensuring sports teams will only use water as their source of hydration

¹ Any beverage that contains added caloric sweetener usually sugar. The main categories of sugary drinks include soft-drinks/fizzy-drinks, sachet mixes, fruit drinks, cordials, flavoured milks, flavoured waters, cold teas/coffees, and energy/sports drinks