Creek Street
Christian College

Healthy Eating Policy (Primary Prep to Year 6)

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1. Purpose:

Creek Street Christian College (the College) is a registered independent, co-educational Christian school providing education from the Early Learning Centre (ELC) to Year 12. This policy applies specifically to the Primary School (Prep to Year 6).
This policy explains how the College promotes healthy eating and physical activity and their contribution to good health and overall wellbeing. It outlines how these are supported through the College's curriculum, events, environment and ethos.

This policy provides guidelines for:

- engaging with external initiatives that promote active and healthy lifestyles
- promoting food choices informed by the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Australian Dietary Guidelines, while taking a balanced approach that allows 'sometimes' foods in moderation.
- considering the dietary and cultural needs of students and families when planning food for College events and activities
- demonstrating the benefits of active play and healthy eating throughout the College environment.
- The Australian Dietary Guidelines encourage Australians to eat a variety of foods from each of the five food groups every day:
    - grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fiber varieties
    - vegetables and legumes/beans
    - fruit
    - milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives
    - lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans (Note: the College promotes a nut & allergy aware environment)

2. Policy Statement:

The College acknowledges the importance of healthy eating and physical activity and its contribution to good health and overall wellbeing.

The College is committed to:

- promoting a healthy lifestyle for all students, including eating nutritious food and participating in physical activity
- providing a safe, supportive and social environment in which children can enjoy eating
- providing regular opportunities for active play and physical activity
- encouraging students to make healthy lifestyle choices consistent with national and state guidelines and recommendations
- considering the dietary and cultural needs of students and families when planning food for College events and activities
- consulting and working collaboratively with families in regard to their child's nutrition and dietary requirements, including responding appropriately to food allergies and recognising cultural and religious practices.

- promoting awareness of food allergies and anaphylaxis by maintaining a nut & allergy aware environment, and asking families not to send nuts or foods containing nuts to the College, as a nut-specific risk-minimisation measure
- Promoting healthy, packaging-free lunchboxes through the Nude Food Week educational program
- respectfully discussing any concerns about a student's food choices with their parents or carers
- working with the wider community, where possible, to share healthy eating initiatives and help families understand how healthy eating supports learning.

3. Scope:

This policy applies to the College Council, Executive Team, teachers, staff, students on placement, volunteers, contractors, parents/guardians, students and others attending the programs and activities of the Creek Street Christian College Primary School (Prep to Year 6). Healthy eating and physical activity are encouraged throughout the College, including the Secondary School.

4. Background:

Promoting a healthy lifestyle has a positive impact on each student's learning and development. Learning about healthy eating and the importance of physical activity from an early age helps students develop good habits that can last a lifetime. Teachers and staff are well placed to build this awareness with students and their families, while respecting each family's lifestyle choices and cultural and religious values.

The food we eat gives our bodies the nutrients we need to stay healthy. Good nutrition comes from eating a balanced variety of foods. It matters most in childhood and adolescence, when students need plenty of nutrients to grow and develop. Research shows that when students are offered a variety of healthy foods, they can and do make good choices.

Physical activity uses large muscles of the body. It helps students build a strong and healthy body, develop motor and coordination skills and feel a sense of wellbeing, and it helps protect against disease.

Good nutrition and an active lifestyle support a strong sense of health and wellbeing. This gives students confidence, energy, and optimism, which helps them concentrate, cooperate and learn.

The Australian Government has published guidelines, recommendations and resources for healthy eating and physical activity. These include the National Health and Medical Research Council's Australian Dietary Guidelines. Schools can also get practical healthy eating advice from the Healthy Eating Advisory Service (refer to Sources).

5. Relevant Standards and Legislation

Relevant legislation and standards include, but are not limited to:

- Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Food Act 1984 (Vic)

- Ministerial Order 706 – Anaphylaxis Management in Victorian Schools
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

6. Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Nut & Allergy aware Environment: An approach where the whole College community works together to reduce the risk of allergic reactions. This includes staff training to recognise and respond to allergic reactions, education for students, individualised management plans for students at risk of anaphylaxis, and risk-minimisation measures such as asking families not to send nuts or foods containing nuts to the College. Because the College cannot guarantee a completely allergen-free environment, and blanket food bans are not recommended, the term “allergy aware” is used rather than “nut free”.

Healthy eating: Eating patterns that provide all the recommended nutrients for growth, development, good health and wellbeing, now and in the future. It also includes preparing, serving and eating food in a way that recognises its importance as a social and cultural activity.

Nutrition: The process of providing or receiving the food needed for health and growth.

‘Sometimes’ foods and drinks: Also called discretionary foods. Foods and drinks that are not needed for a healthy diet and are high in saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt, with few vitamins, minerals or fibre.

7. Food and Eating Arrangements

7.1 Meal and Snack Times

Primary meal and snack arrangements include:

- Morning Fruit: Piece of fruit to help students get through to morning tea.
- Morning Recess: Healthy snacks to get your child through to lunch.
- Lunch: A healthy lunch is packed in a separate container kept in their bags until lunch time.

7.2 Lunch Box Ideas

Ideas for your child’s snack bag and lunch box include:

- Fruit and vegetables for vitamins, minerals and fibre, e.g. carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes, apples, pears, strawberries, bananas, diced fruit in natural juice.
- Breads and cereals for body and brain energy and to help fill hungry tummies, e.g. wholegrain sandwiches, rolls and wraps, pikelets, fruit bread, plain wholegrain savoury biscuits, rice and pasta.
- Meat and other protein foods for strong muscles, e.g. lean meat in wholegrain sandwiches or salads, leftover meat-based casseroles and pasta (packed with an ice brick).
- Dairy foods for strong bones, e.g. reduced-fat cheese slices, reduced-fat cheese in sandwiches, reduced-fat yoghurt with chopped fruit. (Full-fat dairy is recommended for children under 2 years.)

- Water: children bring a named drink bottle filled with water for everyday drinking. Other drinks may be provided occasionally at College-approved events and celebrations, consistent with students' allergies and individual dietary needs.
- High-fibre foods support happy, healthy and regular tummies. Try to include plenty of high-fibre foods every day, e.g. wholegrain/wholemeal bread or wraps, fruit and vegetables (skin on where possible), brown or wholegrain rice, pasta and noodles, and beans and lentils.

Healthy food choices for daily lunches are strongly encouraged. The College promotes a balanced approach to eating and recognises sweet biscuits, flavoured savoury biscuits (e.g. Shapes), flavoured rice biscuits, cakes, chocolates, chips, lollies, flavoured custards, fruit straps and bars, fruit juice and cordial as 'sometimes' foods, to be enjoyed in moderation.
Staff will encourage safe and healthy mealtime practices. The College applies these guidelines flexibly where a student has an agreed medical, disability-related, sensory, cultural or religious dietary plan and works with families to support each student's individual needs.

Children are encouraged to:

- wash their hands before handling food
- manage their own food independently
- sit down to eat in the designated areas
- put their food scraps in the correct buckets for recycling and composting.

Staff will supervise children while they are eating.

7.3 Nut & Allergy Aware Environment

The Primary School (Prep to Year 6) takes a nut & allergy aware environment approach. Students with severe nut allergies attend the College, so please do not send nuts or nut products, such as peanut butter or nut spreads, to the College. Severe allergic reactions can be caused by many different foods. Common food allergens include cow's milk (dairy), egg, peanut, tree nuts, sesame, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish, although almost any food can cause an allergic reaction. This is an awareness list, not a list of prohibited foods: blanket food bans are not recommended, and any targeted precautions are determined through each student's individualised management plan. For this reason, the College does not claim to be free of any allergen. The nut and allergy aware environment approach combines staff training in recognising and responding to allergic reactions, individualised management plans for students at risk of anaphylaxis, education for students and practical risk-minimisation measures. Food should not be shared between students. Refer to the Anaphylaxis Procedure for more information.

7.4 Prep to Year 6

  - Drinking water: students are encouraged to bring a named water bottle each day and have access to drinking water throughout the day.
- Food services: food and drinks sold or provided by the College or lunch order food services follow the Healthy Eating Advisory Service guidelines (refer to Sources).

- Food as a reward: When food is used as a reward or provided at school events and celebrations, the College will take a balanced and flexible approach that encourages healthy choices while allowing 'sometimes' foods in moderation.
    - Celebrations and fundraising: The College takes a balanced and flexible approach to food at class celebrations, College events and fundraising activities. These occasions may include 'sometimes' foods and are not limited to healthy food options. Students' allergies and individual dietary needs are considered when planning these activities.
    - Curriculum: healthy eating, nutrition and physical activity are taught through the Health and Physical Education curriculum and where relevant, through other learning areas such as Science and Food Technology.
    - Cooking and food activities: food used in classroom and curriculum activities follows food safety practices and the nut & allergy aware environment requirements of this policy.
- Physical activity: students take part in regular physical education, sport and active breaks and play, consistent with Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines. For guidance on Sun protection and outdoor play refer to Sun Protection procedure.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 College Council

- ensuring this policy is implemented across the Primary School (Prep to Year 6)
- ensuring the College environment, curriculum and events support students and families to make healthy choices about eating and physical activity
- ensuring the College meets its obligations under Ministerial Order 706 and the Anaphylaxis Procedure
- ensuring food services, canteen providers and contractors are aware of and follow this policy
- ensuring staff receive the training and information they need to implement this policy.

8.2 Teachers and Staff (Prep to Year 6)

- complying with this policy and the Food Act 1984 (Vic)
- following safe food handling, hygiene and storage practices, and preventing cross-contamination for students with diagnosed food allergies
- keeping parents/guardians informed about healthy eating and physical activity
- supporting volunteers and students on placement to follow this policy
- being aware of students' food allergies, medical conditions and dietary needs, and following each student's individual management plan
- considering this policy when planning class celebrations, excursions, camps and events
- role-modelling healthy eating and physical activity
- teaching healthy eating and physical activity through the Health and Physical Education curriculum and other relevant learning areas

8.3 Canteen, Food Service Providers and Contractors

- following this policy, including the nut & allergy aware environment requirements
- providing food and drinks consistent with the Healthy Eating Advisory Service guidelines
- following safe food handling practices under the Food Act 1984 (Vic) and the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.

8.4 Parents/Guardians

- following the requirements of this policy
- providing details of their child's nutritional and dietary requirements, including cultural or religious practices and food allergies, on the enrolment form, discussing these with the College before their child starts, and updating the College if requirements change (refer to the Anaphylaxis Procedure and Asthma Procedure)
- communicating regularly with educators and staff about their child's nutritional and dietary needs, including food preferences
- supporting the College's balanced approach by prioritising healthy, nutritious food and drinks for everyday meals and snacks, while recognising that celebrations, fundraising and College events may include 'sometimes' foods.
- encouraging their child to drink plenty of water and to be active, including walking or riding to the College where appropriate
- Water is the everyday drink of choice at the College. Students bring a clearly labelled drink bottle and have access to drinking water throughout the College. Other drinks may be provided occasionally at College-approved events and celebrations, consistent with the College's balanced approach and students' dietary needs.

8.5 Students

- bringing a water bottle and healthy food each day
- not sharing food with others, to protect students with allergies
- taking part in physical education, sport and active play.

8.6 Volunteers and Students on Placement

Volunteers and students on placement are responsible for following this policy and its procedures while at the College.

9. Sources

- Australian Government Department of Health, 24-hour movement guidelines (Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines): https://www.health.gov.au/topics/physical-activity/24-hour-movement-guidelines-for-all-australians
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (V2.0): https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/Belonging_Being_And_Becoming_V2.0.pdf
- Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA), Food Allergy FAQ: https://www.allergy.org.au/patients/food-allergy/faqs
- Better Health Channel: https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au
- Cancer Council – SunSmart: https://www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart
- Department of Education Victoria, Anaphylaxis Policy and Ministerial Order 706: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/anaphylaxis/policy
- Department of Education Victoria, Canteens, Healthy Eating and Other Food Services Policy (used as a guide): https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/canteens/policy
- Food Safety Victoria, Department of Health – Food Safety and Regulation: 1300 364 352
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand – food safety and food handling: https://www.foodstandards.gov.au

- Healthy Eating Advisory Service (delivered by the National Nutrition Foundation with support from the Victorian Government) – free advice, resources, menu assessment (FoodChecker) and training for schools and early childhood services. Phone 1300 22 52 88, email heas@nnf.org.au: https://heas.health.vic.gov.au
- National Allergy Council – Best Practice Guidelines for anaphylaxis prevention and management in schools and children's education/care services: https://allergyaware.org.au; Manage anaphylaxis risk in schools: https://allergyaware.org.au/schools/manage-anaphylaxis-risk
- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Australian Dietary Guidelines: https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/adg

10. Related College Policies

- Anaphylaxis Procedure
- Asthma Procedure
- Camps and Excursions Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Curriculum Development Policy
- First Aid Procedure
- Sun Protection Policy

11. Evaluation

To assess whether this policy is achieving its purpose, the College will:

- regularly seek feedback from staff, educators, parents/guardians, students and others affected by the policy about its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation of and compliance with, this policy, including any complaints and incidents
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, guidelines and best practice
- review the policy and procedures as part of the College's policy review cycle, or as required

12. Attachments

Nil

13. Authorisation

This policy was approved by College Council on 26 October 2026

14. Review Date

October 2029, or earlier if legislation, guidance, service practices or identified risks require review.