



School Garden Policy

Background:

The Bonbeach Primary School Garden has evolved over the last 5 years from a small Asian Garden initiated by a staff member, to a large organic permaculture garden that incorporates Asian vegetables, Australian bush tucker, herbs and hens. The school has recently been awarded a substantial amount of kitchen items from the Good Guys to enable the development of a teaching kitchen. With this kitchen and the garden combined, a wonderful opportunity exists for school staff and students to: gain hands on experience with gardening; exposure to healthy food choices; food preparation; and cooking.

In recent times, the resourcing of the school garden has been undertaken by parent volunteers and environment team. The environment team was implemented to: support this work; move to a self-sustaining model; and provide an opportunity for staff and student involvement and ownership.

Healthy eating has a long-lasting and positive impact on a child's growth, development and health. Good nutrition is not about good and bad foods but rather food uses and choices.

Eating choices are ultimately the responsibility of the individual, but the home and school environment can influence decisions in a positive way to counteract negative messages promoted elsewhere.

Bonbeach Primary School will support the promotion of healthy eating through its curriculum, canteen, school garden, school environment and ethos.

The provision of an efficient and effective canteen at the school provides opportunities to reinforce healthy eating practices, provides a service for parents and staff wishing to purchase lunches and it presents an opportunity to raise funds for the school.

The School Garden has an important role in providing healthy food education to students and the wider school community. It complements student learning as well as being an integral part of the school's educational goals. It is important that parents, teachers and students work together to support a whole-school approach to build a school culture in which students actively choose nutritious foods and a healthy lifestyle. This is supported by the Victorian Curriculum:

Student attitudes and behaviour regarding healthy living can be influenced by providing students with opportunities to learn about where their food comes from, how it is produced, and how they can prepare it. In the Victorian Curriculum, students are taught about food and nutrition in both the Health and Physical Education and in Design and Technologies learning areas. In Health and Physical Education, students develop knowledge and understanding of nutrition principles to enable them to make healthy food choices and consider the range of influences on these choices. In Design and Technologies, students learn how to apply knowledge of the characteristics and scientific and sensory principles of food, along with the nutrition principles described in Health and Physical Education, to food selection and preparation. They do this through the design and preparation of food for specific purposes and consumers. They also develop understandings of contemporary technology-related food issues such as *convenience foods*, *highly processed foods*, *food packaging* and *food transport* (VCAA n.d.).

Definitions:

For the purpose of this policy:

'School garden' means the garden beds developed for planting edible produce and the school hens.

Purpose:

This policy seeks to:

- promote environmental stewardship by involving students and local community in the ongoing maintenance of the garden space, care of livestock, weeding, watering, and garbage removal and compost care

- provide opportunities for developing connectedness to school and community for students with social and emotional and special learning needs
- give students the opportunity to plant, harvest, prepare, and eat food they have grown
- embrace the spirit of caring, social responsibility, inclusiveness, co-operation, team-work, consensus and collaborative processes in the development of the garden space
- engage students with active, hands-on learning experience
- encourage students to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes which enable them to make healthy eating choices;
- clarify how the garden can be used; and
- continue to build the framework to support the sustainability of the garden both now and into the long term.

Policy:

Bonbeach Primary School is committed to promoting healthy eating across the school at every possible opportunity. Resources including the garden and garden produce are available have been developed for teachers to use as classroom resources.

- The school will encourage healthy food choices and eating practices through the curriculum, canteen and communication with the school community.
- Students will be encouraged to bring healthy snacks and lunches and clearly named water bottles to school for consumption during the day.
- Students will be encouraged to drink water and will be provided with access to water throughout the day.
- Staff concerned about food choices may speak with parents or carers.
- The promotion of food for fundraising activities will reflect the nutrition principles outlined in the “Healthy Canteen Kit” and support AusVELS Health and Physical Education Standards.

Each year a teaching staff member will be appointed to the role of Environment Officer. The purpose of this role is to ensure the sustainability of the school garden by overseeing its use and maintenance and to work in conjunction with the environment team and parent volunteers.

Roles and responsibilities

Environment Officer is responsible for:

- overseeing the maintenance of the school garden including liaising with staff, students and volunteers regarding planting, maintenance and resourcing;
- communicating with school staff about produce required for future curriculum lessons (this needs to be done at least a term in advance) and the produce currently available for use;
- negotiating with teaching staff about when the environment team need to be released for their duties; and
- ensure daily and weekly completion of tasks outlined on the Environment team job sheet (set out in Attachment 1).

Environment team are responsible for:

- Collecting eggs every morning, recording the date collected on them and taking them to the school office for sale;
- Ensuring the chickens have adequate fresh water and food each morning;
- Cleaning out the chicken coop every Friday and ensuring;
- Watering the school garden when required;
- Coordinate a roster for selling worm wee at the monthly school Farmers’ Market; and
- Monitoring rain fall data on behalf of the Bureau of Meteorology.

Guiding Principles for Food Selection:

The School Garden aims to:

- plant, harvest and eat seasonal produce, using healthy food practices and principles of sustainability;
- make it easy for students to choose healthy snacks and meals;
- offer a variety of nutritious foods;
- promote foods that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia;
- be an avenue for consistent and continual health education;
- complement the diverse elements of the school curriculum and student population;
- involve students, parents and the wider school community where possible; and
- be an integral part of the entire healthy school environment.

The food items provided in the School Garden will depend on variables such as:

- teacher preference due to future curriculum requirements;
- cost and availability of produce grown and harvested in the school's gardens;
- needs and backgrounds (including cultural) of the students;
- season and temperature; and
- the school's food preparation and storage facilities;

The School Garden program will aim to provide foods that reflect the Australian Dietary Guidelines as set out in the *Healthy Eating for Children* brochure

https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the_guidelines/n55f_children_brochure.pdf where possible.

Whole School Approach:

A health-promoting school is a place where all members of the school community work together to provide students with integrated and positive experiences and structures that promote and protect their health.

– World Health Organization, 1996

The School Garden, teachers, students and community members aim to provide healthy food education to students and the wider school community. The School Garden will seek to encompass elements of the following:

1. Curriculum, teaching and learning

- developing curriculum that supports healthy food choices
- encouraging students to become involved in food-related activities, for example planning meals, growing foods, shopping for food products, cooking and promoting foods.

2. School organisation, ethos and environment

- offering a variety of nutritious foods at the school food service and regularly changing the menu
- being creative with presentation and preparation of healthy foods
- maintaining consistent messages about healthy foods in all parts of the school operation.

3. Community links and partnerships

- making links with local fruit and vegetable retailers – this could include a school visit by the retailers, or an excursion to a local market
- supporting an enthusiastic group of people to serve the food to students.

Evaluation

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

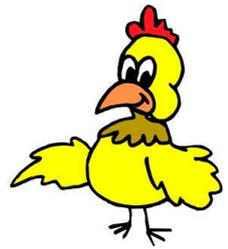
Approved by School Council on: 13 December 2016

Reference

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). (n.d.) *Victorian Curriculum Foundation to 10: Design and Technologies*. Retrieved from:

<http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/technologies/design-and-technologies/introduction/learning-in-design-and-technologies>

ATTACHMENT 1 - ENVIRONMENT TEAM



JOB SHEET

Name: _____

Date ___ / ___ / ___

CHECK OFF ✓	TASKS
	Clean red automatic waterers in pens and all outside automatic waterers.
	Collect food scraps from all classrooms including specialist rooms and sort and feed to chickens or place on worm farm.
	In the morning fill chicken water and food.
	Clean out chicken pen every Friday.
	Wipe benches and tables down and wash knives and chopping boards. Clean around sinks, remove all debris from drains.
	Collect and date eggs from chicken pens and place in office every morning.
	Make sure all lids are securely on all feed bins.
	Take out garbage and recycling bins and place back inside gate
	Water the school garden as requested
	Coordinate a roster for selling worm wee at the monthly school Farmers' Market
	Monitoring rain fall data on behalf of the Bureau of Meteorology.

Notes: (Document any maintenance issues, odd behaviour or illness in chickens)
