



Ministry of Education, Heritage & Arts.

**POLICY ON
FOOD AND SCHOOL CANTEEN**

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1.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE

- 1.1 This policy provides clear procedures and expectations by the Ministry of Education, Heritage & Arts (herein after referred to as MoEHA) where canteen operators, management, School Heads and teachers are to collaboratively engage towards the provision of healthy food and beverages in the school canteen and to promote healthy food environment in the school.
- 1.2 This policy intends to support the principles taught in various year levels which aim to promote healthy eating practices, healthy living, well-being and the safety of all students in school.

2.0 POLICY

- 2.1. The Head of School shall be responsible for the establishment and function of the canteen committee.
- 2.2 It shall be the responsibility of the Head of School, School Manager and the school canteen operator to ensure that healthy food items and beverages are provided to support the health and wellbeing of students at all times.
- 2.3 The Head of School shall ensure that the standard of hygiene of the school canteen is maintained in accordance with Fiji's Food Safety Act 2003 and Food Safety Regulations 2009.
- 2.4 The Head of School shall ensure that selling of food items from unauthorized individuals inside and within 10 meters of the school premises is strictly prohibited.
- 2.5 This Policy shall supersede and replace the School Canteen Guidelines 2009 and the National Food and Nutrition Policy for Schools 2009 and any other school-based guidelines or procedures concerning the school canteen.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 A school is an ideal place to promote healthy eating and nurturing of positive health amongst its students. The school canteen is an integral part of the learning environment and therefore needs to operate in a manner that supports the health messages of curriculum.
- 3.1.2 This is achieved by enhancing the food and nutrition knowledge as a cross-cutting content in all subjects taught in Primary and Secondary Schools. Beyond the school environment, a school canteen influences and reflects a child's food and beverage choices and those of the broader community. It also promotes the social and multicultural aspects of eating and drinking.
- 3.1.3 For this reason, it can have a significant influence on a child's overall health, nutrition and potential learning outcomes. A school canteen plays an important role in promoting healthy foods and creating a culture of healthy eating.
- 3.1.4 Good nutrition is fundamental to children's:
- 3.1.4.1 growth
 - 3.1.4.2 bone health and development
 - 3.1.4.3 dental health
 - 3.1.4.4 weight management and body image
 - 3.1.4.5 mood, concentration and learning
 - 3.1.4.5 development of food preferences, tastes, eating habits and skills
 - 3.1.4.6 health and prevention of lifestyle diseases
 - 3.1.4.7 future productivity
- 3.1.5 The School Canteen Guidelines was first formulated in 2005 and later reviewed in 2013 through a partnership with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (hereinafter referred to as MOHMS) and the National Food and Nutrition Centre. As the School Canteen Guidelines was voluntary, many canteen operators failed to adhere to the main intent of the guideline. Therefore this compliance to this policy is mandatory for all schools in Fiji.
- 3.1.6 In 2016, the MoEHA collaborated with MOHMS and formulated the National School Health Policy with the underlying objective to implement and support

wellness activities in all schools, targeting the health of children in schools.
The School Health Policy supports the contents of this policy.

3.2 Rationale

- 3.2.1 It is envisaged that with this policy, it would be possible for school canteen operators to adhere to the mandatory procedures which is be aligned to meet the legal responsibility under the 2013 Constitution to ensure that every child has a right to basic nutrition and fulfill all obligations under the Food Safety Act 2003.
- 3.2.2 An efficient and effective canteen at the school promotes opportunities to reinforce healthy eating practices and provides a convenient venue for food and beverages to be purchased by children and staff.
- 3.2.3 The Policy is to also create awareness on the responsibilities of the School Head as well as the canteen operator on the minimum standards required under law to ensure the child's right to basic nutrition is not compromised in the name of business and to get all stakeholders to have mutual understanding on the main role of a school canteen.
- 3.2.4 The Policy adds value to the teaching of healthy living and health curriculum by ensuring that the School Head, teachers and school managements practice what they preach and make strong attempts to foster and instill healthy habits in students.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 School Canteen

Is a registered business located within the school premises that provides food and beverage to students.

4.2 Canteen Contractor

The owner of the school canteen business who is responsible for managing the operations of the school canteen including supervising employees and volunteers involved in operating the Canteen.

4.3 Canteen Operator

Is a paid or volunteer staff delivering canteen services at the canteen on a regular basis.

4.4 Head of School

Refers to the Head Teacher, the Principal, or the Head of Technical College of Fiji or any vocational school.

4.5 Healthy Menu

A list of options to choose food and beverages of nutritive value.

4.6 Registration

Refers to listing the Canteen with the Food Authority as a food provider and food preparation service.

4.7 School

For the purposes of this Policy, schools include Early Childhood Education Centres, Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Special Schools, and Vocational and Technical College Campuses.

4.8 Student

A learner, or someone who attends an educational institution.

4.9 Volunteer

A person who assists the Canteen Operator in the operation of the Canteen without financial gain or reward.

5.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATIONS AND AUTHORITIES

5.1 The Constitution of Fiji 2013

5.2 Food Safety Act 2003

5.3 Food Safety Regulations 2009

5.4 Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Act

5.5 Fiji School Health Policy 2016

5.6 MoE OHS Policy

5.7 National Food and Nutrition Policy for Schools 2009

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 School Canteen Committee

6.1.1 The Head of School shall be the person incharge overall of monitoring the establishment and operations of the School Canteen Committee, irrespective of whether the canteen is operated by the school management or by Canteen Contractor.

6.1.2 The School canteen Committee shall consist of the following members:

6.1.2.1 Head of School

6.1.2.2 Assistant Head of School (if applicable)

6.1.2.3 School Manager

6.1.2.4 Canteen operator

6.1.2.5 Canteen contractor, if applicable

6.1.2.6 HPS (Health Promoting Schools) Teacher (if applicable)

6.1.2.7 Parents and Teachers Association representative

6.1.2.8 Students' Council representative

6.1.3 The committee shall be responsible for the following:

6.1.3.1 Provide a forum for suggestions and improvement of nutritious food items and beverages sold in the school canteen.

6.1.3.2 Ensuring strict compliance to this MoEHA School Canteen Policy

6.1.3.3 Monitoring of canteen in terms of hygiene, menu, food, beverages to ensure students' nutritional needs as well as OHS guidelines are met.

6.1.4 The Committee shall schedule a minimum of one meeting per school term to discuss the accomplishment on the responsibilities outlined in 6.1.3.

6.2 Contracted Canteen Operator

6.2.1 Any arrangement for the operation of a canteen in a school shall be governed by a written agreement between the school and the canteen contractor or operator.

6.2.2 Heads of Schools shall ensure that the relevant documentation such as memorandum of agreement, school canteen hire and registration of food

business shall first be formalized between the school and a canteen operator before the school canteen becomes operational.

6.2.3 The canteen operator shall ensure that all legal requirements concerning the canteen operation are met before operating the school canteen. It shall be the duty of the Head of School to verify and confirm all the legal requirements before the canteen business commences including displaying the Health and Business licence.

6.2.4 It shall be the responsibility of the School Head to monitor that the canteen contractor does not sell food and beverages that have a high content of fat, salt, oil and sugar.

6.2.5 Any school canteen contractor or operator found to be in violation of this Policy or selling prohibited items shall be given a written warning on the first instance and any repetition will result in termination of the agreement after a thirty (30) days notice.

6.2.6 A comprehensive list of:

6.2.6.1 prohibited items are outlined in **Appendix 1** and

6.2.6.2 approved items that may be sold in the school canteen are outlined in **Appendix 2**

6.3 School Canteen and OHS

6.3.1 The canteen operator shall clearly display the Occupational Health and Safety compliance certificate and the business registration certificate on the inside wall of the canteen. The Head of School shall monitor and ensure strict compliance to this requirement.

6.3.2 Under the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act:

6.3.2.1 The canteen contractor shall take all reasonable steps to protect the health, safety and welfare of canteen operators.

6.3.2.2 Canteen operators shall not take any action that would create risks to the health and safety of themselves or any other individuals at or near the workplace.

6.3.2.3 All accidents shall be recorded and must be reported to the Head of School at the earliest.

6.3.2.4 Employees must report any hazardous circumstances which they encounter regarding the canteen to the Head of School who must actively address the concerns and inform the School Canteen Committee.

6.4 Roles and responsibilities of Head of School

6.4.1 The Head of School shall ensure that:

6.4.1.1 A school canteen committee is established and functional.

6.4.1.2 The canteen services comply with relevant legislation and health requirements.

6.4.1.3 Relevant agreements are in place and conditions are met when students are on work experience placements with the canteen operator.

6.4.1.4 The canteen has a valid business license.

6.4.1.5 The provision of services by the canteen operator shall be aligned to the *"Food Safety Act- 2003, Food Safety Regulations – 2009 and School Canteen Policy"*.

6.4.1.6 The facilities and premises provided to the canteen operator are OHS compliant and safe.

6.5 Health and Safety Requirements

6.5.1 Canteen operators must be aware of and must meet all the legal obligations and standards including:

6.5.1.1 Safe food handling practices.

6.5.1.2 Health and hygiene requirements of food handlers.

6.5.1.3 Advisory or warning statements next to or in connection with food containing allergens.

6.6 Non-complying Heads of School and Canteen Operators

6.6.1 School Heads found to be in breach of this Policy shall be disciplined and dealt with accordingly by MoEHA procedures.

7.0 EFFECTIVE DATE.....

8.0 REVIEW DATE.....

9.0 KEY SEARCH WORDS

Food Safety Act 2003, Food Safety Regulations 2009, Canteen Operator, School Canteen, School Canteen Committee

**10.0 APPROVED BY THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, HERITAGE & ARTS,
HONOURABLE DR. MAHENDRA REDDY**


.....
Signature

16/01/17
.....
Date

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF PROHIBITED FOOD ITEMS AND BEVERAGES

Foods and Beverages under this category include but is not limited to the following:

1. Deep-fried foods like *bhajia*, *bara*, *gulgula*, doughnuts
2. Pastry-based e.g. sausage rolls or crumbed/battered hot foods like fish (as in fish and chips)
3. Savoury snack foods - crisps, chips, biscuits
4. Ice-creams and ice confections - chocolate-coated and ice-creams, ice blocks, sun pops
5. Cakes, muffins, sweet pastries, slices.
6. Sweets (lollies, chocolates, jelly beans) or any other form of confectionery
7. Home-made sweets such as *barfi*, *jalebi*, *gulab jamun*, toffee, fudge
8. Tamarine lolly and tamarine *chutney* with peas (fried or boiled)
9. Chinese lollies and skins, mango skin powder
10. Processed salted and cheese snacks
11. Uncooked noodles – all noodles sold in canteens should be cooked prior to being sold
12. Sugar-sweetened drinks that include fruit-flavoured drinks, sports drink, cordials.
13. Biscuits
14. All Fizzy drinks
15. Chewing gum except sugar free gum.



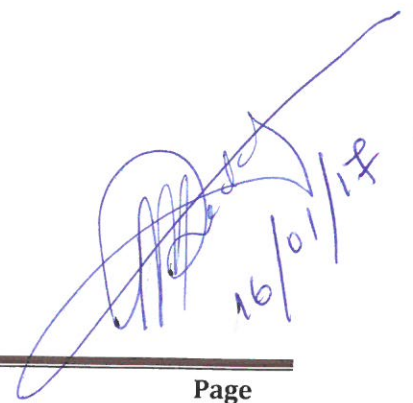
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APPENDIX 2

LIST OF APPROVED FOOD ITEMS AND BEVERAGES

Foods and Beverages under this category include but is not limited to the following:

1. Boiled or baked: root crops (*cassava, dalo, kumala*), *vudi*, breadfruit; and cereals such as whole meal bread, rice and roti.
2. Stir fried or boiled vegetables (*bele, cabbage, rourou, chauraiya*, bean, pumpkin, tomatoes, carrot, corn); fresh salads including lettuce, cucumber, tomatoes, capsicum and carrots.
3. Fruits in season and widely available (banana, orange, mango, pineapple, mandarine, pawpaw, guava, apple, watermelon).
4. Legumes like split peas and *toor dhal*.
5. Meat (*with skin and visible fat removed*) and poultry, fish and eggs.
6. Nuts in season (*vutu, ivi*, peanut), bean and popcorn.
7. Milk
8. Water
9. Sugar free drinks



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