



GEMS
CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION

GEMS Christian Education Ltd

**This policy applies to:
Emerald Christian College
Ontrack College**

Healthy Food & Nutrition Policy



**EMERALD
CHRISTIAN
COLLEGE**
LEARNING FOR LIFE



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PURPOSE

Students can attend GEMS Christian Education Ltd for up to 14 years from Kindy to Year 12. We believe that if Students eat well, at home and at school, the quality of their lives will be high.

Healthy Eating is a strong focus in the early school years when habits are formed. These habits continue through to healthy fit Secondary Students who perform well in and outside the classroom. We also need to recognize and cater for Students with common allergies and reactions to some processed foods.

Please note: *The advice provided in these guidelines is general in nature. Parents and Carers need to make choices that are best for the children under their care based on the best advice available and their individual circumstances while adhering to best practice healthy eating practices.*

PRINCIPLES

According to Nutrition and Healthy Eating Australia: Nutrition is food for your body which contains vitamins and minerals. Foods which are nutrient dense assist with carrying out everyday bodily processes such as digestion, temperature regulation, hormone regulation, delivery of oxygen around your body and creation of white blood cells to fight infection.

These nutrient rich foods fuel your body with everything it needs to run optimally and when you feed your body the right amount of nutrients you feel alert, energised, motivated and productive. You are able to function all day long and fight off any infections or the start of diseases that may come your way. When you are lacking in nutrients you will find your energy levels drop, you may feel depressed, be susceptible to infection and sickness, lack motivation and productivity. Living your life in this space can be quite debilitating.

Find out more at Australian Dietary Guidelines 1 - 5.

“Schools and preschools have a unique and important role in enabling children and adolescents to develop their capacity for healthy growth and development and healthier *futures*’ (Healthy Eating Guidelines, DECS 2004).

GEMS Christian Education promotes healthy eating habits and supports the Smart Choices Strategy which provides a framework through which we can promote learning, health and wellbeing in relation to food and nutrition.

SCOPE

To support teaching and learning in Healthy Eating, we aim to teach all Students about the link between different foods and the effect they have on our health. We believe in the power of modelling healthy eating habits to students. These influences are powerful and hopefully remain with children throughout their lives.

In relation to Little Gems please see Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy NQF QLD.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION & LINKS

- Australian Dietary Guidelines 1 - 5
- Smart Choices Strategy
- www.eatforhealth.gov.au
- Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy NQF QLD

DEFINITIONS

- The Company** - refers to GEMS Christian Education Ltd as a whole, its Employees, Properties, Assets, etc...
- Campuses** - properties under the Company (Little Gems, Emerald Christian College and Ontrack).
- The Board** - refers to the Directors and Board Members of Gems Christian Education Ltd.
- Policy** - refers to this Policy – any other Policy will be referenced by full name.
- Employees** - all Employees of GEMS Christian Education Ltd, including but not limited to Teachers, Administration, Auxiliary, Trainees, etc...
- Students** - refers to all Students under GEMS Christian Education Ltd.
- Parents/Carers** – those directly responsible for the care and needs of individual Students.
- Visitors** - includes Parents, Guardians and Carers of Students as well as Members of the Public.
- Volunteers** - anyone who is permitted to act in the capacity of a Volunteer for Gems Christian Education Ltd.
- Suppliers** - Businesses or Individuals who supply goods or services to GEMS Christian Education Ltd.
- Other and/or Persons** - anyone not listed above.

1. FOOD & NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES

- Parents and Carers are encouraged to supply healthy and nutritious foods that are in line with our Healthy Food and Nutrition Guidelines (see Smart Choices Strategy).
- Employees model and encourage appropriate healthy eating.
- A safe and relaxed environment is provided for Students to enjoy eating.

1.1 Considerations

- As some Students are required to travel some distance by bus each day please ensure that an extra snack is packed to have before class time.
- Ensure Students come each day with a healthy, nutritious snack:
 - As in fruit, vegetable, cheese or a sandwich.
 - Be aware of the items we recommended not to send.
 - Students and Employees are to wash their hands prior to handling food.
 - Students are encouraged to be independent in managing their own food. You can help them by providing food in containers that are easy to open, or loosening and then finger-tightening tight lids.
 - Students are to be seated when eating, and are supervised by Employees on duty.
- Students bring a drink bottle containing water only, each day, and are encouraged by Teachers to take regular drink breaks. Fresh drinking water is available at all times for

children to refill their personal drink bottle. Water is the only beverage allowed in classrooms. Juice and milk may be consumed during Morning Tea and Lunchtime.

1.2 Food Packaging

- a) Emerald Christian College promotes 'Nude Food', or foods that have natural wrappers or skins that are not manufactured.
- b) We ask that where possible, you send foods that are packed in reusable containers with name labels.
- c) Food scraps will be composted in our designated Compost Bins located around the Campus.

1.3 Celebrations

- a) Celebrations are an important part of all our lives. We believe celebrations are important for Students to participate in and experience.
- b) In P-6 classes it is common for Students' special days to be acknowledged by their class.
- c) Please do not send Birthday Cake or food items to share unless pre-arranged with the Teacher. Please also discuss diverse dietary needs of class with the Teacher and take care with preparation to minimise contamination.

1.4 Food Safety

Employees are to:

- a) Teach, promote and encourage food safety to Students during food handling and cooking activities.
- b) Provide adequate hand washing facilities and opportunities for Students and Employees.
- c) Promote, model and encourage correct hand washing procedures with Students and Employees.
- d) Encourage Employees to access appropriate, relevant Professional Development as appropriate to healthy eating guidelines, food handling and allergies.

As an **Allergy Aware School** our aim is to inform the GEMS Christian Education Community about the risks of allergies, with a focus on food allergies and also to provide a supportive environment in which children at risk of anaphylaxis can feel safe.

2. LUNCH BOX IDEAS

2.1 Snack Time (First Break, Morning Tea)

Some suggestions are:

- a) Fruit – fresh, dried, tinned.
- b) Cheese
- c) Savory sandwiches.
- d) Salad vegetables.
- e) Dry Biscuits – cream cheese, vegemite, cheese.
- f) Yoghurt (loosened then finger-tightened lids on 'squeezy' yoghurts).

2.2 Lunch Time (Second Break)

Please remember to pack a separate nutritious lunch for your child. Some suggestions include:

- a) Fresh sandwiches with savoury fillings.
- b) Dry biscuits and savoury toppings.
- c) Salads – vegetables and fruit.
- d) Cheese.
- e) Culturally appropriate meals.
- f) Some homemade meals from home that do not need to be reheated may include pizza, fried rice, noodle dishes, and cooked meat.
- g) If you are sending food that may spoil (eg. meat sandwiches, cheese or yoghurt), please pack their lunch in a cooler pack.

Emerald Christian College has refrigerators located in Prep and Primary classrooms for storage of Student lunch bags. The Secondary School has refrigerators located in the Breezeway at the end of D Block for Students to store their lunches in.

At Ontrack there are also refrigerators available for students to use.

2.3 Discretionary Choices

- a) Cakes, sweet rolls and donuts.
- b) Sweet biscuits.
- c) Chocolates.
- d) Lollies.
- e) Muesli Bars high in sugars or fats.
- f) Fruit Roll Ups.
- g) Chips/Twisties.
- h) Drinks other than water.
- i) Cordial.
- j) Fruit Juices high in sugar and artificial flavors.

For further information and guidelines please refer to www.eatforhealth.gov.au