

## Tips for School Canteens Reopening in NSW

The following information aims to support school canteens during the transition back to full face-to-face teaching in Term 2. Beyond these tips, canteen staff are encouraged to seek advice from the school Principal and make decisions based on the needs of the school community.

A blue rectangular sign with the word 'OPEN' written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The sign is hanging from a thin grey line that connects to a small grey dot on the right side of the text box above.

### Planning for re-opening

- **Contact your suppliers** - check for any shortages or changes to deliveries; current and expected.
- **Consider staged opening** - e.g. offer lunch service only; or open 1-2 days per week.
- **Contact the principal** - find out expected student numbers so you can re-open based on demand.
- **Link in with school staff** - find out the 'whole of school' plan for transitioning back to normal.
- **Minimise the use of cash** - e.g. offer online ordering or EFTPOS.
- **Plan how to communicate** to the school community - e.g. letting them know the canteen is open and what menu items are on offer.

For more advice on managing the transition back to full canteen operations visit the [Healthy Kids Association](#).

### Maintaining Profits and Reducing Waste

- **Use a pre-ordering system** (where possible) to reduce food waste.
- **Promote the canteen** - use the school's communication channels to advertise what you are doing to provide a safe food service for volunteers and students.
- **Contact the principal** - find out expected student numbers so that you can order the right amount of stock and prepare the right amount of food to reduce waste.
- **Find long shelf-life alternatives** e.g. buy long-life milk instead of fresh milk.
- **Consider making items in batches** and freezing, where possible

For more advice on maintaining a profitable canteen visit the [Healthy Kids Association](#).



## Hygiene Practices

In addition to normal hygiene and health and safety practices, consider implementing the following:

- **Increase the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing** - cleaning surfaces thoroughly with water and detergent and applying cleaning agents is sufficient.
- **Maintain frequent hand washing** - when entering and leaving the canteen; between each food handling task; after going to the bathroom; after touching your face or hair.
- **Ensure appropriate glove use** when preparing and handling food.
- **Use tongs** where possible to avoid touching food and packaging.
- **Ensure social distancing** measures are in-place in the canteen where possible.
- **Provide hand sanitiser and/or handwashing** stations at the canteen for students and staff.
- **Create a barrier** between students and the food by covering it and moving it back from the bench front where possible.
- **Have a designated staff member to handle money** and the other(s) to serve (where possible).
- **Encourage on-line ordering**, if available.
- **Introduce staggered collection times** to reduce the number of students in the canteen.
- **Canteen staff with a cold, cough or flu-like symptoms should not come to work.**

For more information on Food Safety please see the [NSW Food Authority Website](#).

For the latest information on health and hygiene advice to schools visit the [Department of Education Website](#).

## Meeting the Strategy

Menu changes may be needed to help with the transition over Term 2. You will not need to complete another menu check after these changes, but your menu should still meet the Strategy.

To make sure your menu still meets the Strategy, please consider the following:

- **Use Everyday base recipes** that can be turned into multiple Everyday dishes e.g bolognaise sauce can be used for pasta bolognaise, pasta bake, burritos, lasagne, melts, pockets or even pizza topping.
- **Try to keep the 3/4 Everyday, 1/4 Occasional ratio** in your hot items as well as in snacks and cold items.
- **Look for a Health Star Rating of at least 3.5 stars** if you need to buy a commercial or packaged product that you'd normally make in the canteen.

The following support is available to help you meet the Strategy during the transition:

**Primary schools:** contact your [local health promotion officer](#) or email [info@healthy-kids.com.au](mailto:info@healthy-kids.com.au)

**Secondary schools:** email [support@healthy-kids.com.au](mailto:support@healthy-kids.com.au)

The [Healthy Food Finder](#) is available for you to check if an item meets the criteria.

For more information about the Strategy, visit the [NSW Healthy School Canteens Strategy Website](#).

