

CASE STUDY



DAVIDSON HIGH SCHOOL

Your Name:	Linda Humphrey & Sally Betts
Your position/role:	Canteen Manager
Name of school:	Davidson High School
Number of students:	900
Years/range:	Years 7 - 12
Type of School:	Government High School
Canteen operates:	Monday to Friday
Number of employees:	Six employees in total with three paid staff in the canteen each day
Management:	P&C

How long have you been a canteen manager?

Less than a year. We were previously canteen assistants (Sally for 9 years and Linda for 2 years), and before that we spent many years volunteering in school canteens.

What changes were made to your menu in order to meet the criteria of the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy?

Our menu was in good shape before the Strategy was introduced but there were several very popular items on our menu that did not meet the criteria (such as cookies, lollies and chips). These were replaced with healthier options such as fresh muffins, bread sticks and popcorn. We also added lots of new Everyday items like rice cups, frozen fruit and fruit tubs and added variety to existing Everyday items like salads, drinks and toasted wraps. We minimised our Occasional items by offering less variety.

How do you promote and market Everyday foods & Drinks in your canteen?

Our daily specials are advertised on signage on the canteen counters. Whenever a new item is introduced or we want to remind students about what we have to offer, we put something in the Daily News (school news that the students receive in roll call every day). We also have a canteen Facebook page that we use to promote our daily specials and new Everyday menu items. If we're trialling a new product, we give samples to members of our Student Representative Council or ask them to assist in choosing flavours.

'I WOULD NEVER HAVE THOUGHT THAT CUPS OF PLAIN RICE OR FROZEN FRUIT ON A STICK WOULD WORK IN A HIGH SCHOOL BUT YOU DON'T KNOW UNTIL YOU TRY!'

What are the best-selling menu items?

Our toasted wraps have been growing in popularity and we have experimented with different fillings. Our daily specials are always popular - chicken burgers, butter chicken & rice, hamburgers, and pasta bolognese. In the cooler months our pizzas, rice cups and garlic rolls are very popular and when it is warmer the frozen fruit sticks and fruit tubs sell quickly.

What feedback do you receive from students?

Our sales have increased so obviously we are doing something right! Most students are happy to try new things and it's very rare that a student walks away from the canteen empty handed.

Do you change your menu regularly?

Yes but not significantly. We are constantly tweaking it - trying new things and removing the less popular items. We have lots of ideas for the future but the students do like their favourites.

What challenges did you face with implementing the Strategy and how did you overcome them?

There was quite a bit of resistance to the removal of some items but as we modified our menu to meet the criteria we offered lots of new things to try. It was a gradual process but we were pleasantly surprised at how quickly the students got on board.

We did find the process of finding new items for our menu (that met the criteria) quite time consuming and it was often easier to ask the supplier what they had that met the criteria rather than the other way round. While some of our suppliers were up to speed with the new criteria, many were not which made it difficult to get the products we wanted. We would love to offer more freshly prepared items but time and cost do not allow it.



BEST SELLER
'Our toasted wraps have been growing in popularity...'

Did you receive any support in getting your canteen on board with the Strategy?

Healthy Kids Association were always very supportive and happy to answer any questions. Within the school, the most supportive group was probably our parent volunteers who were very positive about and interested in the changes we were making.

Were there any particular resources you found helpful when adapting your menu to meet the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy?

Our Secondary Support Officer was invaluable in helping with the preparation of our menu for submission. I also got a lot of useful information from the Canteen Manager Network NSW Facebook page and a rep from one of our main suppliers had a really good understanding of what products were Everyday and Occasional and was very helpful in advising what products they had that met the criteria and what sold well in other schools.

What are your personal highlights of working in the school canteen?

Introducing new menu items and seeing them rise in popularity, working with lovely staff as well as other school parents and the school prefects (who help serve at recess and lunch).

Do you have any tips or advice on successfully running a healthy school canteen?

Be positive and don't be afraid to try new things. Involve students in your decisions and ask for their feedback. Look for different ways to use ingredients that you already have in the canteen. And don't forget the simple things. I would never have thought that cups of plain rice or frozen fruit on a stick would work in a high school but you don't know until you try!

