

NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy

Lambton High School

CASE STUDY

The nitty gritty

Name: Leanne Ryan
 Position/role: Assistant Canteen Manager
 No. Students: 1200
 Year range: 7-12
 Canteen Operational Days: 5 Days
 Number of Employees: 4 (3 per day)

How long have you been the canteen manager?

I've been here for about three and a half years.



How did you turn the canteen around to meet the Strategy?

I had to do a lot of research into a lot of different food and drink. We had to change a few things, take a few things away and add some things.

With our juice poppers - we had a lot of the fruit drinks, not the 100% juice, so I had to get rid of those and bring in more of the juices. Now we've only got a couple of fruit drinks and the rest are 100% fruit juice.

We didn't have to make too many changes; we already had a pretty healthy menu anyway.

Have you seen any changes in how your canteen staff have been working?

We do a lot more cooking and food preparation. We're about to introduce rice paper rolls to the menu and we are planning on making them fresh and putting them together ourselves to keep the costs down for the students.

At this stage we don't have volunteers because of COVID so things have been much busier.

Does the canteen currently run any promotions?

We have specials every day. In winter we'll offer soups and we'll do a meal deal - so you can order the soup with a bread roll or canteen-made garlic bread at a cheaper price.

How do you promote and market Everyday food and drinks in your canteen?

We don't really do much marketing for the canteen. We have some signs and chalkboards so if we make a soup or something a little different to normal we'll put them on the board outside so the students can see (Everyday items only).



Do you change your menu regularly?

We'll introduce some new foods for summer and winter, but generally our menu stays quite similar. In winter we'll offer soups – one is a chicken and sweet corn soup and the other is Thai pumpkin. We always try to offer a vegetarian or vegan alternative. Next week we are going to introduce the rice paper rolls and see how they go. We'll also add a pasta salad and a few other bits and pieces to the menu in summer and we've introduced sparkling water because some of the kids have been asking for it.

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

Just do your research – a lot of it comes down to having your fresh foods. In summer we'll offer watermelon, strawberries, pineapple and oranges all cut up and fresh. You just need to think about it.

What feedback have you been receiving from the students?

Most of the kids here are pretty good. It took some adjusting – especially with their salt and vinegar and honey soy chicken chips. They were a bit funny at first – but they are all adjusting. As long as we don't take away their flame grilled's they'll be alright!

What are your personal highlights from working in the canteen?

I just love the kids and the people I work with. The kids are all great and the staff are really good too. The teaching staff are all very helpful and its always their favourite playground duty that they do.

