Oral Health Policy

Definition:
Oral Health is the absence of active disease in the mouth. It affects overall wellbeing and enables people to participate in their chosen roles without discomfort or embarrassment.

Rationale:
- Oral health is essential for the overall health and wellbeing of children and young people. Oral health behaviours have a major influence on the health and wellbeing of children and young people, and a direct impact on their growth and development.
- Oral diseases can negatively affect individuals through pain and discomfort and impacts on general health and quality of life.
- The main oral health condition experienced by children is tooth decay, which affects over half of all Australian children (making it five times more prevalent than asthma).
- Tooth decay is Australia’s most prevalent health problem despite being preventable.
- Schools play an important role in promoting young children’s oral health, being a time when lifelong oral health behaviours are being formed.

Purposes:
- To develop within students an informed appreciation of good oral health habits
- To encourage children to make healthy food and drink choices
- To create environments that support good oral health and general health
- To promote the oral health of students, staff and families through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment, and developing community links and partnerships.

Guidelines:
- Our whole school community has an impact on students’ health and can contribute to an environment that promotes oral health, and are key partners in promoting and supporting oral health initiatives in the school.
- Our whole school curriculum should have an approach that reflects AusVELS and encourages good oral health and healthy eating.
- The school seeks to work with health professionals, services, businesses or agencies, where possible, to support the whole school community to promote oral health.
- The school respects and celebrates the cultural diversity of its community through recognising and valuing traditional beliefs about food and oral health.
- Teachers and students should be encouraged to bring fresh fruit and vegetables and fresh water to school each day.
- All students should understand the importance of oral health.
- Foods and drinks brought by students to school should be grouped (see below).

Procedures:
- Food groupings will be communicated to parents and caregivers as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Everyday/Green foods</th>
<th>Select carefully/Orange foods</th>
<th>Should not be at school/Red foods –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>Home-cooked food eg cakes, slices,</td>
<td>Soft drinks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>(if made with low fat, low sugar and low salt)</td>
<td>Chips</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandwiches with healthy fillings</td>
<td>Special occasion cake - birthday cake</td>
<td>Chocolate or lollies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yoghurt (be careful of sugar content)</td>
<td>Fruit juice on Fridays</td>
<td>Packaged food/snack bars high in salt, sugar or fat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheese and dry biscuits</td>
<td>Commercially prepared pastas, noodles and soups, meat products</td>
<td>Other drinks like fruit drinks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home-cooked savoury, and soups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy ‘nude’ food</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Food available to students at school will work towards being everyday foods.
- The school will involve itself in local strategies designed to raise awareness of oral health, and the availability of dental checks.
- Students will have access to their own water bottle at any time during class time (no sweet drinks are permitted).
- Students will be encouraged to undertake oral hygiene practices where appropriate.
- Students are encouraged to undertake safety practices to prevent against dental injuries. Procedures for dental injuries will be part of the staff annual First Aid information sessions.
- School community members (staff and families), including new families to the school, will be informed of the oral health policy and will be provided with regular information (display, newsletter inserts, website) to assist them to meet this policy requirement, and to keep up with key oral health messages to the Australian public.
- Staff will inform the principal of any student who appears to be suffering from oral health issues.
- Staff are supported in accessing resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote oral health across the curriculum.
- Teachers will discuss tooth brushing practices and why they are important whenever appropriate.
- The school will actively promote dental services located at Maryborough, and through the Welfare Officer, promote any other services that will support oral hygiene.

**Related School Policies:**
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Staff Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Camps and Excursions Policy

**Monitoring and Review:**
The Oral Health Policy will be monitored and reviewed by staff, School Council and students representatives at least once every three years.

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The Oral Health policy was endorsed by School Council in August 2014