Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education

Healthy School Lunches Programme

Conditions of Participation

2027

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1. Background

The Healthy School Lunches Programme (Programme) supports the wellbeing of Students through the provision of nutritious lunches at participating Schools | Kura. The Programme aims to mitigate the impacts of food insecurity and support student wellbeing, engagement, attendance, and participation in learning.

The success of the Programme relies on active participation and shared accountability between the Ministry, Schools | Kura, and lunch providers. Regardless of the delivery arrangement, participating Schools | Kura play a critical role in ensuring lunches reach Students, supporting positive participation in the Programme, minimising Food Waste and Surplus Meals, and contributing to the achievement of Programme outcomes.

2. Purpose

These Conditions of Participation:

- Set out the expectations of participating Schools | Kura.
- Support the safe, effective, and sustainable operation of the Programme.
- Describe how Schools | Kura, lunch providers, and the Ministry work together to support participating Students.
- Support continuous improvement of the Programme; and
- Recognise the shared responsibility of Schools | Kura, lunch providers, and the Ministry in achieving the Programme's intended outcomes.

3. Participation in the Programme

Participation in the Programme is conditional on Schools | Kura meeting these Conditions of Participation and any applicable Programme Requirements issued by the Ministry from time to time.

Participating Schools | Kura are expected to actively support the operation of the Programme and work collaboratively with the Ministry and lunch providers to achieve positive outcomes for Students.

4. Programme Requirements

Schools | Kura must meet the Programme Requirements applicable to their participation in the

Programme.

Programme Requirements apply consistently across the Programme and may include operational, nutritional, reporting, food safety, sustainability, monitoring, Special Diet, and policy requirements issued by the Ministry from time to time. The way Programme Requirements are applied may vary depending on the delivery model.

5. Programme Objectives

The Programme aims to:

- Mitigate the impacts of food insecurity;
- Support the wellbeing of Students;
- Provide nutritious lunches to participating Students;
- Support engagement, attendance, and participation in learning;
- Support positive lunchtime experiences for Students.
- Minimise Food Waste.
- Minimise Surplus Meals; and
- Minimise Programme-related Waste.

Participating Schools | Kura contribute to these objectives through their day-to-day operation of, and engagement with, the Programme.

6. Working Together

The successful operation of the Programme relies on Schools | Kura, lunch providers, and the Ministry working together.

The Ministry will:

- Provide oversight and management of the Programme;
- Communicate Programme Requirements and operational expectations;
- Support Schools | Kura and lunch providers to identify and address issues;
- Monitor Programme performance and outcomes; and
- Facilitate continuous improvement of the Programme.

Lunch providers will:

- Provide lunches in accordance with Programme Requirements and contractual obligations;
- Communicate operational matters affecting lunch provision;
- Work collaboratively with Schools | Kura and the Ministry to resolve issues;
- Support food safety requirements and incident management processes; and
- Participate in continuous improvement activities.

Schools | Kura will:

- Act in the best interests of Students;
- Work collaboratively and in good faith with the Ministry and lunch providers;
- Communicate openly, respectfully, and in a timely manner;
- Identify and raise issues as early as practicable;
- Participate in continuous improvement activities;
- Support the achievement of Programme outcomes; and
- Recognise their role as active participants in the Programme and their shared responsibility for Programme outcomes.

7. School | Kura Responsibilities

Participating Schools | Kura play an important role in the successful operation of the Programme.

Schools | Kura will:

- Promote and encourage positive participation and meal uptake among Students;
- Work collaboratively with the Ministry and, where applicable, the lunch provider;
- Maintain effective communication with the Ministry and lunch provider;
- Notify the Ministry and, where applicable, the lunch provider of any matter that may affect lunch provision;
- Identify and communicate barriers to participation that may affect Programme outcomes;
- Support a positive culture around the Programme within the School | Kura community;
- Demonstrate leadership in promoting the value of the Programme and its contribution to student wellbeing; and
- Actively support the achievement of Programme outcomes.

8. Operational Requirements

Schools | Kura are responsible for supporting effective operational delivery of the Programme.

Schools | Kura will:

- Provide accurate and timely information relating to attendance, enrolments, Special Diet requirements, school closures, and operational changes;
- Maintain processes that support the accuracy of attendance, enrolment, Special Diet, and lunch number information;
- Provide lunch numbers that reflect the best available information regarding attendance, planned absences, school events, and roll changes;
- Notify the Ministry and, where applicable, the lunch provider of planned closures, Teacher Only Days, Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) activities, industrial action, or other events that may affect lunch numbers as soon as practicable;
- Work with the Ministry and, where applicable, the lunch provider to minimise over-ordering and under-ordering of meals;
- Identify and communicate any specific requirements relevant to participating Students;
- Provide information regarding satellite classes, alternative education sites, specialist learning environments, or other participating locations;
- Support lunch provision and distribution arrangements appropriate to the needs of participating Students and the learning environment; and
- Notify the Ministry and, where applicable, the lunch provider of changes that may affect lunch arrangements.

9. Special Diets

Schools | Kura play an important role in ensuring Students with dietary requirements can participate safely in the Programme.

Schools | Kura will:

- Identify and communicate Special Diet and Complex Special Diet requirements;
- Ensure required Special Diet documentation is completed where applicable;
- Notify changes to dietary requirements as soon as practicable;
- Support communication between whānau and the lunch provider where required; and
- Support the safe distribution of Special Diet meals.

10. Food Safety and Lunch Distribution

Schools | Kura share responsibility for supporting the safe provision of lunches to Students.

Schools | Kura will:

- Ensure lunches are stored, handled, and distributed in accordance with applicable food safety requirements;
- Ensure special diet meals are correctly identified and distributed;
- Ensure lunches are only distributed to Students attending the School | Kura to which the lunches have been provided and are not redistributed to other schools, organisations, or members of the public;
- Promptly report any food safety concern, complaint, allergen incident, contamination concern, or quality issue to the Ministry and, where applicable, the lunch provider;
- Notify the Ministry and, where applicable, the lunch provider within 2 hours of becoming aware of any actual or suspected food safety incident that may impact the safety of lunches provided under the Programme;
- Cooperate with any food safety investigation or response activity; and
- Support food safety requirements communicated by the Ministry or lunch provider.
- Ensure lunches are distributed in a timely manner so that Students are able to access lunches during the agreed lunch period.
- Ensure lunch distribution arrangements are appropriate to the learning environment and the needs of participating Students.

11. Food Waste, Surplus Meals and Programme-related Waste

Schools | Kura contribute to the efficient and sustainable operation of the Programme.

Schools | Kura will:

- Actively monitor and support efforts to minimise Food Waste and Surplus Meals.
- Provide timely information regarding attendance, planned absences, events, and closures that may affect lunch numbers;
- Support agreed waste management arrangements;
- Participate in Food Waste monitoring activities where requested;
- Support initiatives that reduce Programme-related Waste;
- Work with Students, whānau, the Ministry, and lunch providers to identify opportunities to improve participation, reduce Food Waste, and reduce Surplus Meals;
- Support initiatives agreed with the Ministry or lunch provider to address consistently high levels of Food Waste; and
- Support initiatives agreed with the Ministry or lunch provider to address consistently high levels of Surplus Meals, including improving lunch ordering information, participation, and distribution arrangements.

12. Communication, Reviews and Feedback

Continuous improvement relies on active participation and feedback from Schools | Kura.

Schools | Kura will:

- Engage constructively with the Ministry and lunch provider;
- Participate in reviews, meetings, hui, or wānanga, as appropriate, to discuss Programme performance, risks, issues, feedback, and opportunities for improvement;
- Encourage and share feedback from Students and whānau;
- Participate in Programme evaluation and improvement activities; and
- Notify the Ministry of significant concerns relating to the operation of the Programme.

13. Reporting and Surveys

Programme monitoring and continuous improvement rely on the participation of Schools | Kura.

Schools | Kura will:

- Complete all Ministry-required surveys, evaluations, monitoring activities, and information requests within the timeframes specified by the Ministry;
- Provide complete and accurate information;
- Support Programme monitoring, assurance, and evaluation activities; and
- Participate in reviews, assessments, or site visits where requested by the Ministry.

Where requested by the Ministry, completion of the Termly Programme Survey is mandatory.

14. Concerns and Issue Resolution

Where issues arise, Schools | Kura are expected to work collaboratively with the Ministry and, where applicable, the lunch provider to identify and implement solutions.

Schools | Kura will:

- Notify issues as soon as practicable;
- Participate constructively in resolving concerns;
- Support agreed actions to address issues; and
- Continue to support the operation of the programme where reasonably practicable while issues are being resolved.

15. Withdrawal from the Programme

If a School | Kura wishes to withdraw from the Programme it must:

- Notify the Ministry as early as possible;
- Work collaboratively with the Ministry to support the transition; and
- Follow the Programme withdrawal or transition process notified by the Ministry from time to time.

16. Acknowledgement

By participating in the Healthy School Lunches Programme, the School | Kura acknowledges its shared responsibility for supporting the successful operation of the Programme and agrees to meet these Conditions of Participation and applicable Programme Requirements.

School | Kura name:

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date: