



North Ainslie Primary School

Dedicated to healthy, accessible food

A long-term commitment by parents and the community has firmly embedded a healthy food and drink culture at North Ainslie Primary School.

“We have an incredibly strong parent community and great support from our P&C Association,” explained Sarah Buckley, the school’s Fresh Tastes coordinator.

In addition to the school’s fresh garden and cooking lessons, North Ainslie Primary School has been actively supporting a healthy canteen and fresh food at fundraising activities as part of the Food for Sale action area.

“We ran a great mango fundraiser last year that was incredibly profitable for the school,” said Sarah. “It’s encouraging to see that selling something healthy can still raise a significant amount of money for the school to reinvest into our canteen and other resources.”

“At the moment our P&C helps fund our canteen manager, and she does all the cooking and sources fresh produce from local suppliers including IGA and Tom’s Superfruits,” Sarah said. “It’s a real commitment from the school community to allow the canteen to operate without always making a profit.”

“We’re working with the Healthy Kids Association to find ways to make the canteen break even while remaining healthy.” The canteen offers fresh vegetable soups, smoothies and pastas, and free vegetable sticks as a healthy snack.

Where possible, the canteen also uses produce grown and harvested by the students from the ‘He-Hub’ garden, which grows a variety of vegetables and herbs.

“The garden is really accessible to students so they can walk through and pick a bean or tomato and eat it there and then,” said Sarah. “We hope to expand the garden in the future to better support the canteen.”

Students regularly talk about growing their own veggie patches at home and love to make their own salads during lunchtime activities, where they are encouraged to pick things straight out of the garden patch.

Nonetheless, it’s the canteen and fundraising events that share the reputation for healthy delicious food.

“The canteen makes these impressive homemade pizzas made from scratch with wholemeal flour for the dough and minimal cheese,” explained Sarah. “The students love them. It’s the kind of lunch you’d be happy for your kids to have.”

During the school’s big community celebrations, such as the Big Green Garage Sale and Fiesta, there is always home-cooked, healthy food on offer. “We fire up our outdoor pizza oven and the parents create some delicious, wholesome treats for our events,” Sarah said.

Fresh Tastes is open to all primary schools across Canberra. Contact the Fresh Tastes team for information about how your school can get involved. Fresh Tastes is part of the ACT Government’s Healthy Weight Initiative supporting a healthy, active and productive community.