



FORREST PRIMARY SCHOOL
PARENTS & CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

CANTEEN CHARTER

Revised 2025

Healthy • Safe • Inclusive • Sustainable • Community-focused

A governance and operational framework for the Forrest School Canteen

Forrest Primary School Parents and Citizens Association Incorporated

Prepared for consideration and approval by the P&C Committee

Document Control

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Approval & Version History

Version	Date	Status	Approved / Reviewed by	Summary of change
1.0	May 2016	Approved	Forrest School P&C	Original Canteen Charter
2.0	2026	Draft	P&C Committee – pending approval	Comprehensive review and update

Executive Summary

The **Forrest School Parents and Citizens Association Incorporated (P&C)** provides and supports a range of services that contribute to the wellbeing, participation and connection of families within the Forrest Primary School community. These services include **Forrest Out of School Hours Care (FOOSHC), the school uniform shop and the school canteen.**

The P&C operates the canteen as a **community-focused, not-for-profit service**. It provides students and staff with access to a varied range of nutritious, affordable and appealing food and drink options during the school day, while also providing opportunities for parent and community participation. Any surplus generated by the canteen contributes to the broader work of the P&C and is reinvested into initiatives that benefit the Forrest Primary School community.

The P&C employs a Canteen Manager who is responsible for the day-to-day management and operation of the canteen. The Canteen Manager works with the Canteen Subcommittee, a P&C subcommittee comprising parent and community volunteers, a school representative and the Canteen Manager. The Subcommittee provides advice, support and community input into the operation of the canteen, including menu planning, healthy food choices, financial sustainability and continuous improvement.

The Executive Director of Forrest Children's Services also provides operational and organisational support to the Canteen Manager and P&C, particularly where matters intersect with broader P&C services, governance, staffing or compliance.

The canteen operates **Tuesday to Friday during school terms** and relies on the valued contribution of parent and community volunteers. Volunteering provides an important opportunity for families to contribute to the school community, connect with other parents and support positive experiences for students.

Financial Sustainability and Community Benefit

The canteen is operated on a not-for-profit basis and is expected to operate in a financially sustainable manner, with the aim of at least covering its operating costs over time. Financial sustainability enables the canteen to maintain appropriate staffing, equipment, facilities, food quality and service levels. Where a surplus is generated, funds are retained by the P&C and directed towards initiatives that benefit students and the broader school community.

The P&C will support the ongoing development and maintenance of appropriate canteen equipment and facilities to promote safe, efficient and sustainable operations.

Online Ordering

Online ordering and cashless payment are the preferred methods for placing lunch orders. The use of an online ordering system supports efficient administration, accurate order processing, improved communication and more streamlined canteen operations. Ordering data also assists the Canteen Manager and P&C to monitor demand, plan food purchases, minimise waste, manage stock and inform menu and budget decisions. Families can access current information about canteen operations, menus and ordering through the P&C's nominated online ordering platform and communication channels.

Community Connection

The canteen is an important part of the Forrest Primary School community. In addition to providing a practical service to students and families, it creates opportunities for parents, carers and community members to volunteer, develop relationships and contribute to the life of the school. The P&C recognises the contribution made by canteen

staff, volunteers, families and the school community and is committed to maintaining a canteen that is welcoming, inclusive, sustainable, child-focused and responsive to the needs of the Forrest Primary School community.

1. Purpose and Scope

The Forrest Primary School Canteen is a community service operated by the Forrest Primary School Parents and Citizens Association Incorporated (P&C). This Charter establishes the governance, management and operating framework for the canteen and should be read alongside current P&C policies, school requirements, food safety procedures and applicable ACT Government requirements.

The Charter applies to the P&C, Canteen Manager, employees, volunteers, Canteen Committee members and other people engaged in the operation of the canteen.

2. Purpose of the Canteen

- Provide students and staff with a safe, welcoming and accessible food service.
- Provide nutritious, appealing and reasonably priced food and drinks.
- Support the health, wellbeing and learning of students.
- Contribute positively to the culture and community of Forrest Primary School.
- Provide opportunities for parent and community participation.
- Operate in accordance with applicable legislation, ACT Government requirements and school policies.
- Operate in a financially responsible and sustainable manner, with any surplus contributing to the broader school community through the P&C.

3. Vision and Guiding Principles

The Forrest School Canteen aims to be a valued part of the school community.

Principle	Commitment
Student wellbeing	The welfare and wellbeing of students is paramount.
Healthy eating	The menu will support healthy eating and comply with current ACT requirements.
Inclusion and accessibility	The canteen will seek to welcome and accommodate the diverse needs of the school community.
Child safety	Everyone working or volunteering in the canteen contributes to a child-safe environment and abides by Forrest P&C Child Safeguarding policies. All personal require a ACT WWVP to work int the canteen .
Respect	Students, families, staff, volunteers and suppliers will be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect.
Community	The canteen is a P&C community service and an opportunity for families to participate in school life.
Sustainability	Environmental considerations will inform purchasing, packaging, food waste and operational decisions.

4. Governance and Accountability

The P&C provides strategic governance and accountability for the canteen. Day-to-day operational responsibility is delegated to the Canteen Manager. The governance structure comprises the P&C, P&C Executive, relevant Executive Director of Forrest Children's Services where applicable, Canteen Manager, Canteen Committee and a representative of Forrest Primary School.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Primary responsibility
P&C Association	Provides governance, strategic oversight, financial accountability, policy approval and long-term sustainability oversight.
P&C Executive	Supports governance, liaises with the school and relevant P&C officers, and addresses significant matters within delegated authority.
Executive Director – Forrest Children's Services	Where the role has operational responsibility for the canteen, provides management support, financial oversight and advice to the Canteen Manager and P&C.
Canteen Manager	Leads day-to-day operations, menu and stock management, food preparation and service, volunteers, suppliers, records, food safety and routine financial controls.
Canteen Sub- Committee	Provides consultation, parent/community voice, ideas, operational feedback and recommendations to the P&C.
School Principal / Delegate	Supports a safe and collaborative relationship between the school and P&C and addresses matters concerning school premises and school operations.

6. Canteen Sub-Committee

The Canteen Sub-Committee is a consultative forum for parent and community participation. It may include the Canteen Manager, P&C representatives, parent representatives, a school representative and the Executive Director of Forrest Children's Services or delegate where appropriate.

- Meet at least once each term where practicable.
- Provide feedback on canteen operations and community needs.
- Contribute ideas for menus, special food days and fundraising activities.
- Support volunteer participation and community engagement.
- Consider operational and financial sustainability.
- Support policy development, review and continuous improvement.
- Make recommendations to the P&C where a decision falls outside the Committee's authority.

7. Food and Nutrition

The canteen will provide a menu that supports healthy eating and complies with current ACT school food requirements.

- Prioritise GREEN foods and drinks.
- Provide a variety of foods from the Australian Dietary Guidelines.
- Include fresh and minimally processed foods where practicable.
- Provide appropriate vegetarian and culturally diverse options.
- Provide water as the primary drink option.
- Limit foods high in saturated fat, added sugar and sodium.
- Avoid RED foods and drinks on the regular menu where prohibited by current requirements.
- Provide appropriate portion sizes for primary school students.
- Consider affordability and value for families.
- Review the menu regularly against current requirements.

8. Cultural and Dietary Diversity

The canteen recognises the diversity of the Forrest Primary School community and will, where practical, reflect cultural, religious, dietary and medical needs in menu planning and special food opportunities.

9. Food Allergies and Intolerances

- Maintain appropriate information regarding known student allergies where information has been properly provided.
- Follow relevant school and P&C procedures.
- Use appropriate food handling and cleaning practices to minimise cross-contact.
- Provide accurate ingredient information where available.
- Ensure employees and volunteers understand their responsibilities.
- Never knowingly provide a student with food identified as unsafe for that student.
- Discuss arrangements with families and the school where a child's medical needs cannot safely be accommodated.

10. Food Safety and Hygiene

The canteen will operate as a safe and hygienic food service and maintain procedures appropriate to its activities. Procedures will cover receiving deliveries, storage, temperature control, preparation, cooking, reheating, cleaning, personal hygiene, pest control, allergen management, stock rotation, waste and incident response.

11. Volunteers

Volunteers are an important part of the Forrest School Canteen. The canteen will provide a welcoming, respectful and appropriately supervised environment for volunteers.

- Follow the direction of the Canteen Manager.
- Follow food safety, hygiene and workplace safety procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality and appropriate professional boundaries.
- Treat children, families, staff and other volunteers respectfully.
- Meet applicable Working with Vulnerable People requirements.
- Undertake only tasks for which they have been appropriately instructed.

12. Child Safety and Student Wellbeing

The canteen is committed to a child-safe environment. All employees and volunteers must place children's safety and wellbeing first, maintain appropriate professional boundaries, communicate respectfully, protect privacy and follow relevant reporting and child safety procedures.

13. Workplace Health and Safety

The canteen will provide a safe workplace for employees and volunteers, including appropriate controls for manual handling, slips and trips, knives and kitchen equipment, hot surfaces and liquids, electrical equipment, chemicals, emergency evacuation, first aid and incident reporting.

14. Financial Management and Sustainability

The canteen will operate as a financially responsible P&C service. Financial sustainability is essential, but decisions will also consider student wellbeing, accessibility, service quality and community benefit.

- Maintain appropriate financial records and controls.
- Monitor food, staffing, packaging and operating costs.
- Minimise food wastage.
- Maintain appropriate stock levels.
- Meet supplier and employment obligations.
- Provide appropriate financial reporting to the P&C.
- Contribute to P&C initiatives where a surplus is generated.

15. Purchasing, Suppliers and Pricing

Routine purchasing is managed by the Canteen Manager within the approved budget. Purchasing will consider nutritional value, price, quality, food safety, reliability, sustainability, student preferences and dietary needs.

The canteen will seek to provide reasonable and accessible prices while maintaining financial sustainability. Significant expenditure outside approved operational budgets must be approved under the P&C's current financial delegations.

16. Sustainability and Waste Reduction

- Reduce unnecessary packaging.
- Reduce food waste through appropriate ordering and stock rotation.
- Consider reusable or recyclable options where practical.
- Consider local suppliers where appropriate.
- Use energy and water responsibly.
- Incorporate environmental considerations into purchasing decisions.

17. Relationship with Forrest Primary School

The canteen operates from facilities provided by Forrest Primary School. The P&C and school will work collaboratively to support student wellbeing, safe use of facilities, communication, school events and a positive relationship between the school, P&C, families and canteen.

18. Use of School Facilities

- Keep canteen facilities clean and hygienic.
- Maintain equipment appropriately.
- Report maintenance issues promptly.
- Leave facilities clean, tidy and secure.
- Avoid unauthorised alterations to school property.
- Comply with school requirements concerning use of premises.
- Manage appliances and rubbish appropriately.

19. Communication and Community Engagement

The canteen will communicate with families through appropriate school and P&C channels. Communication may include menus, pricing, special food days, volunteer opportunities, temporary closures, ordering arrangements and food safety information.

20. Privacy and Confidentiality

Information relating to students, families, staff and volunteers must be treated confidentially. Personal information will only be collected, accessed and used where reasonably necessary for canteen operations and in accordance with applicable requirements.

21. Decision-Making Framework

Decision level	Authority / examples
Canteen Manager	Routine operations, purchasing within budget, stock, staffing/volunteer coordination, food preparation, routine menu management and supplier relationships.
Canteen Committee	Consultation, parent/community voice, menu ideas, special food days, volunteer engagement, operational improvement and recommendations.
P&C Executive / P&C	Significant financial commitments, major operational changes, governance, employment matters, closure/relocation and matters requiring P&C approval.

22. Feedback, Complaints and Concerns

Feedback is welcomed and will be used to improve the service. The preferred pathway is:

Step	Contact	Purpose
1	Canteen Manager	Routine feedback, questions or concerns should initially be raised with the Canteen Manager.
2	Executive Director / P&C delegate	Unresolved matters may be referred to the relevant operational or P&C delegate.
3	P&C Executive	Governance, employment or significant unresolved matters may be referred to the P&C Executive.

23. Special Food Days and School Events

The canteen may participate in special food days, fundraising activities and school events where appropriate. These activities must follow applicable food safety, school and P&C requirements and consider allergies, dietary, cultural and religious needs.

24. Risk, Emergency and Business Continuity

The canteen will maintain appropriate risk controls and emergency procedures. The Canteen Manager will respond to incidents affecting food safety, staffing, equipment, utilities, security or safe operation and escalate significant issues in accordance with P&C and school procedures.

25. Review and Continuous Improvement

This Charter will be reviewed at least annually, or earlier where there are significant changes to legislation, ACT Government policy, school requirements, P&C governance, employment arrangements, food safety requirements or canteen operations.

26. Related Documents and Requirements

- Forrest Primary School P&C Constitution.
- P&C financial policies and delegations.
- P&C Code of Conduct.
- Relevant P&C Child Safety and Wellbeing policies.
- Canteen food safety procedures and food safety plan.
- Workplace health and safety procedures.
- ACT Public School Food and Drink Policy.
- National Healthy School Canteen Guidelines.
- Australian Dietary Guidelines.
- Food Act 2001 (ACT) and Food Regulation 2002 (ACT).
- Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.
- Working with Vulnerable People requirements.
- Current school requirements and agreements governing use of school premises.

27. Formal Approval

This Charter was considered and approved by the Forrest Primary School Parents and Citizens Association Incorporated.

Revised by	Ali Sewter
Approved by	Teresa Gorondi
Position	President
Signature	
Date	5th January 2025
Next review	2026

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