

# SCHOOL BREAKFAST CLUBS PROGRAM

## RISE & SHINE NEWSLETTER

REAL  
HEALTHY  
SUPPORT

March 2026

### Welcome to the first Rise & Shine for 2026!

In this edition we're excited to let you know the details of the first webinar in the Breakfast Table series for 2026: How Vic Kids Eat Well Can Strengthen Breakfast Club.

With the introduction of a couple of new lunch items last year, Red Lentil Dahl and the Garden Veggies with Brown Rice, we'll share the benefits of these small but mighty foods. We have a quick and easy empanada recipe kids can whip up for a nutritious snack and we take a look at how schools are tailoring further support with home food packs.

Harmony Week (16–23 March) is just around the corner! Are you planning something special at your school. If you're comfortable, we'd love to be part of it – invite us along or snap some photos and send them through. We'd love to share them on our socials and in future newsletters!

Take care,

**The School Breakfast Clubs Team**



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **Volunteer Needs Survey - closes Friday 6 March**
- **Labour Day Public Holiday - Monday 9 March**
  - **No deliveries**
- **Harmony Week - Monday 17 to Friday 23 March**
- **Term 1 Webinar - Monday 23 March**
- **Last delivery for Term 1 - Thursday 2 April**



## Program News & Reminders



With rising living costs affecting families across the state, the School Breakfast Clubs Program continues to be a dependable source of support, ensuring every student has the nourishment they need to learn confidently, participate fully, and thrive every day.

### How you can support your students

#### At school

In 2026, the program continues to prioritise access to nutritious food during the school day. School Breakfast Clubs Program food is available to all students, creating a welcoming, inclusive start to the morning. Emergency lunch items remain available for students who need extra support.

#### At home

Home food packs continue to be an important resource for families experiencing hardship. Schools can identify students who may benefit and order packs directly through the online portal to provide discreet, meaningful support beyond the school gates.

### Supporting the broader school community

Every community is unique, and some families may need additional help. Schools can guide families to Foodbank Victoria's "Find Food" tool, which connects them with local food relief options across the state.

### Coming Soon – Breakfast Table: Conversations, Connection & Collaboration Term 1 Webinar

The first webinar for 2026, How Vic Kids Eat Well Can Strengthen Breakfast Club welcomes guest speaker, Emilia Renney. Emilia leads the Vic Kids Eat Well initiative and will share how [Breakfast Club Bites](#) aligns with the School Breakfast Clubs Program and share with you some practical, achievable actions that can strengthen the impact of your own brekky club. The webinar is due to take place at 9:30am, Monday 23 March – stay tuned for more information and an invitation coming soon.

If you have any questions, please get in touch by email at [schoolbreakfastclub@foodbankvictoria.org.au](mailto:schoolbreakfastclub@foodbankvictoria.org.au).

# Nutritious Eating in Schools

## Benefits of brown rice

Brown rice is a quiet superstar when it comes to fuelling busy school days, sports, and study sessions. As a whole grain, it keeps all its natural layers, meaning more nutrients for steady energy and healthy growth.

It's rich in fibre for digestion, packed with minerals like magnesium, potassium, and calcium for strong bones and muscles, and loaded with B vitamins that help turn food into fuel. One standout perk is its high manganese content, which supports bone development, metabolism, muscle function, and blood sugar regulation.

Because brown rice is low-glycemic, it releases energy slowly to help students stay focused and avoid the afternoon slump. With its nutty flavour and satisfying texture, it's an easy addition to lunchboxes, weeknight meals, or meal prep.



What are other schools up to?

## Term 4, 2025 Case Study

The School Breakfast Clubs Program isn't just about providing meals at school – it also supports students at home. Schools across Victoria are finding practical ways to support families who need a little extra help through the home food packs program.

[READ MORE →](#)



## Spotlight On: Red Lentils

In Term 4, 2025 we welcomed a new lunch product – Red Lentil Dahl and we're so pleased to see it has been well received.

Red lentils may be small, but they deliver big benefits for growing students. They provide long-lasting energy to help kids stay focused through classes, homework, and after-school activities.

These colourful legumes are rich in plant-based protein and fibre, supporting healthy digestion and keeping students full longer – great for steady concentration. They're also packed with iron for energy and folate for healthy development.

Like brown rice, red lentils are naturally low-glycemic, helping maintain stable blood sugar levels. Their soluble fibre and potassium support heart health, and their antioxidant-rich polyphenols may help protect the body from inflammation.

Easy to digest and incredibly nourishing, red lentils are a simple, wholesome choice for all ages. And when cooked into a fragrant Red Lentil Dahl, they become a comforting, flavour-packed meal that's as satisfying as it is nutritious.

# What's Cooking?

## Apple Empanadas

**Makes:** 12

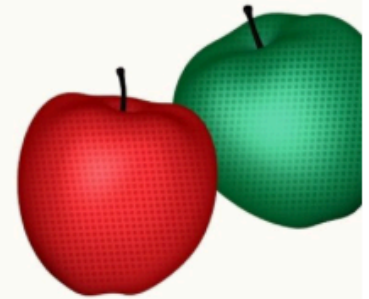
**Difficulty:** Easy

**Health Rating:** Green



### Ingredients

- 4 apples
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 6 slices wholemeal bread
- 1 egg (for egg wash)



### Method

1. Dice apples into small cubes.
2. In a saucepan, add apples, cinnamon and 3 tablespoons of water.
3. Cook until softened. Set aside to cool.
4. Preheat oven 200°C.
5. Remove the crusts from the bread.
6. Using a rolling pin, roll out bread slices until thin.
7. Crack egg into a small bowl and whisk.
8. Add a spoonful of the apple mixture into the centre of the bread.
9. Brush egg wash on 2 edges.
10. Fold one side of the bread over and press the edges together using a fork until it's a fully sealed triangle.
11. Line a baking tray with baking paper and place empanadas on tray.
12. Brush the tops with the egg wash.
13. Bake until golden, about 12-15 mins.
14. Enjoy!

**Optional:** Serve with yoghurt or drizzle with honey.

## Feel Good Feedback

We're so grateful for all the wonderful cards we receive from our school breakfast club students and schools – they truly make our day. We've put them up so everyone passing by can pause, smile, and feel the kindness behind each message. These small acts of appreciation mean so much to us, and they highlight the impact we can create together. We just love them!



### Tips and Tricks

In our Tips and Tricks section, we're sharing creative ways schools are creating impact through their breakfast club!

#### Got a little extra on hand?

It happens to the best of us – and there are plenty of clever, sustainable ways to put surplus supplies to good use.

#### Leftover fruit?

Apples, pears, oranges, and bananas can easily be transformed into:

- Fresh fruit juice or smoothies
- Tasty additions to muffins or slices
- A delicious, chopped topping for Vita-Brits or warm oats

## Delivery pallets piling up?

Unused wooden pallets can make fantastic garden resources, such as:

- Raised veggie beds
- Compost bays
- Garden seating or potting benches
- Handy outdoor storage solutions

## Have a tip to share?

Send it through to [schoolbreakfastclub@foodbankvictoria.org.au](mailto:schoolbreakfastclub@foodbankvictoria.org.au).

## Friendly Reminders...

### Update your key contact information!

Do you have a new breakfast club coordinator? Has there been a change to who we should be talking to?

Don't forget to update your information with us. You can do so by emailing [schoolbreakfastclub@foodbankvictoria.org.au](mailto:schoolbreakfastclub@foodbankvictoria.org.au).

## Volunteers

**Volunteer Needs Survey reminder!** Volunteers can be super helpful in the day-to-day of Breakfast Club, giving you the capacity to do even more with your program! We want to make sure your school and program have access to meaningful and tailored support, so don't forget to provide your feedback for our 2026 Volunteer Needs Survey!

**Submit your feedback [here](#)**, by 5pm AEDT Friday 6 March.

If your Breakfast Club requires volunteer support, please email us at [schoolbreakfastclub@foodbankvictoria.org.au](mailto:schoolbreakfastclub@foodbankvictoria.org.au) and we can list your school details on our volunteer map [here](#).

Don't forget we also have volunteer resources and a certificate to thank your volunteers on our [website](#) (you can also order the certificate on the ordering portal).



# SCHOOL BREAKFAST CLUBS PROGRAM



Department  
of Education

[About School Breakfast  
Clubs Program](#)  
[Volunteering in the program](#)  
[Newsletters](#)  
[Contact us](#)  
[Newsletter Signup](#)  
[Place Order](#)  
[Privacy Policy & Disclaimer](#)

Foodbank Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands throughout Victoria and pays respect to Elders past and present.

Copyright © 2026, All rights reserved.  
[Support](#) / [Unsubscribe](#) / [Update preferences](#)