

Lean, green meals prove right recipe for school

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Jessica Tercier with Lily Tercier, 8, Jamie Gabriel, 11, and Charlie Tercier, 11.

A southern suburbs mum has managed to get an entire school eating healthier food.

When Jessica Tercier took on the role of canteen manager at her children's school six months ago, she threw out the old menu and restocked with dishes made from scratch.

Even the sausage rolls at Samson Primary School's tuckshop have at least four kinds of vegetables — and the students can't get enough.

Other favourites are pasta sauce with eight vegetables, icy

poles from freshly squeezed orange juice and butter chicken with rice and cucumber slices.

Mrs Tercier said many schools were concerned that if they offered only healthy options, children would not buy it, parents would complain and they would not be able to get enough volunteers to do the extra work.

But in recent months Samson's canteen has gone from selling between 25 and 50 meals a day to selling up to 180 to the school's 380 students.

"Our takings have gone from around \$6000 per term to \$14,500 per term and seem to be increasing," Mrs Tercier said.

She hopes to inspire other schools to introduce healthier food options.

All public schools enforce a healthy food and drink policy which uses a traffic light system to classify items. Red foods such as chips and soft drinks are banned, amber foods such as muffins and fruit drinks are limited and children are encouraged to eat mostly green foods such as salads, fruit and wholemeal bread.

Mrs Tercier said many products classed as green and amber were marketed to school canteens

and warmed up in their packaging, but the only packet items she used were Nudie Juices and puff pastry.

WA School Canteen Association executive officer Megan Neeson said Samson's canteen menu was assessed as 90 per cent green — well above the average score of 73 per cent.

"The minimum standard is 60, so she's doing a really good job," she said.