

Nutrition and Healthy Food Policy

Rationale

Educators at this preschool aim to promote nutritional, healthy eating habits in a safe, supportive environment for all children attending this preschool. We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in three ways:

1. Short term: Maximises growth, development, activity level and good health.
2. Long term: Minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in the preschool learning environment.

Therefore:

- Educators will model healthy eating behaviours.
- Food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment.
- Families are encouraged to supply healthy foods and given individual support where appropriate.
- Educators will encourage children to be independent and make healthy, informed choices.

Curriculum

Our preschool's food and nutrition curriculum:

- Is consistent with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, and the *Rite Bite strategy*.
- Includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health.
- Includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills around growing, preparing and cooking healthy food.
- Integrates nutrition across the curriculum and relates to the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standards.

The Learning environment

Children at our preschool:

- Have tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day.
- Are encouraged to bring their own named drink bottle.
- Eat in a positive, appropriate, social environment with educators who model healthy eating behaviours.
- Use the preschool garden and sustainability practices to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods.

Our preschool:

- Understands and promotes the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children.
- Teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum.
- Is a breastfeeding friendly site.

Food supply

Our preschool:

- Has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home:

FOODS RECOMMENDED INCLUDE:

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|----------------------------------|--|
| • any fresh fruit and vegetables | • savoury wholemeal sandwiches and wraps |
| • cheese | • dried fruit |
| • wholemeal crackers | • small yoghurt |

FOODS NOT RECOMMENDED INCLUDE:

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|----------------------------|---|
| • custard | • jelly and jam |
| • cakes and sweet biscuits | • processed fruit in syrup/juice |
| • lollies | • fairy/sprinkle bread |
| • rollups | • take away foods eg McDonalds, KFC, Hungry Jacks |
| • muesli bars | • cold chicken nuggets and pies |
| • chips | |

Please **only send water** for your child to drink, **NO** milk drinks, including 'Up and Go' or 'Yakult', **NO** cordial or fruit juice.

The preschool has a commitment to providing a safe environment for all children including those with **severe allergies**. We are an allergy-aware site. We advise parents to be mindful of children with allergies, teaching their children not to share food and to wash hands after eating to reduce the risk of accidental exposure to known allergic triggers. Where a child is enrolled that has a known allergy, risk minimisation strategies will be introduced.

Please do not send birthday cakes. Children's birthdays are celebrated at preschool with a special birthday song and a play dough cake.

Fruit sharing day is Friday. Children only need to bring a piece of fruit to share on a Friday.

Food safety

Our preschool:

- Promotes and teaches food safety to children during food learning/cooking activities.
- Encourages educators to access training as appropriate to the Healthy Eating Guidelines.
- Provides adequate hand washing facilities and encourages hand washing before eating.
- Is aware that during hot weather some foods i.e. meat and dairy, are unsafe to eat unless refrigerated, and suggest avoid supplying this type of snack during hot weather. Please make sure food is kept cold with a frozen cold pack or frozen bottle of water as the fridge is not big enough for everybody's lunches.
- Does not heat food for children as we consider this an unsafe practice.

Food-related health support planning

Our preschool:

- Liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues, allergies and dietary requirements.

Working with families, health services & industry

Our preschool:

- Has consulted with Governing Council, educators and families within the preschool community in the review of our Nutrition and Healthy Food Policy.
- Invites health professionals to participate in food and nutrition experiences with children.
- Provides information from health professionals to families and caregivers on the *Healthy Eating Guidelines* through a variety of media such as:
 - Newsletters
 - Policy development/review
 - Information on enrolment
 - Pamphlet/Poster displays
- Promotes the alignment of fundraising with *the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* and the *Rite Bite strategy*.
- Supports individual families with nutrition and health concerns.

Last reviewed: February 2022

To be reviewed: February 2025