



The Willows
Children's Centre
for Early Childhood
Development and Parenting



NUTRITION, FOOD SAFETY AND HYDRATION POLICY

The Willows Children's Centre is committed to providing a positive and safe environment in which children, families and staff can enjoy a wide variety of foods in a social setting. Through the provision of programmed experiences children will have the opportunity to learn appropriate hygiene practices, as well as learning about the importance of good nutrition and food safety.

We believe that through staff role modelling healthy eating practices, engaging positive conversations, good hygiene practices and presenting food in a safe manner children will develop healthy eating habits which will contribute to their growth and development, healthy skin, hair, gums and teeth, good muscle development, regular bowel, alertness and interest in activities: also promoting a healthy lifestyle and a sense of wellbeing. We encourage and support parents and carers in their role to provide healthy nutrition for their babies and children inclusive of the community socio-economic, culture and spiritual perspectives.

Children

- Will be encouraged to eat safe, nutritional food that has been both sent from home and made at the centre.
- Will have programmed food experiences within the curriculum to reinforce positive nutrition habits and hygiene standards.

Parents

- Will be provided with healthy food ideas and will be able to obtain recipes of food children have made at the centre.

Staff

- Will ensure that safe hygiene and handling procedures are followed.
- At least one staff member has attended "Follow workplace hygiene procedures" from a National Training Provider.

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- Will provide programmed experiences for children to learn about good nutrition, hygiene and food safety.
- Will communicate with families/carers about children's nutrition achievements, concerns, progress and suspected/real food intolerances.
- Staff will receive this policy as part of their induction.

Governing Councils Role

- To provide support for this policy ensuring work place safety for children and staff, visitors, volunteers, secondary and tertiary students.
- Support the positive learning environment at the preschool.

Review

- The policy will be reviewed yearly and updated when necessary according to changing legislation and/or guidelines (particularly in regard to choking). It will be presented to Governing Councils for ratification.
- The policy will be accessible to staff and families on enrolment - a hard copy provided in the enrolment package. The policy is located in the Policy folder in the reception area and a hard copy available on request.
- All families will be notified when the policy has been updated.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Families are required to notify staff of any food allergies, food intolerances and dietary preferences during the enrolment process. If a food allergy exists please follow the 'Food/Medicine Allergy Procedure' in the Policy Folder and supply the kindergarten with an Allergy Care Plan.

NUT FREE ZONE

The Willows Children's Centre is a **Nut Aware Zone**. Nuts and traces of nuts are widely used in processed foods and labels need to be read carefully to ascertain if the foods are nut free. Peanut butter, Nutella, commercially produced muesli bars and nuts are **not** to be provided at Kindergarten due to health and safety reasons i.e anaphylactic /choking. Parents will also be informed if other anaphylactic causing food allergies are present and are to be avoided at kindergarten. The kindergarten will display such notices at the kindergarten.

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HYDRATION

Please **supply** a **water bottle** for your child whilst at Kindergarten. **Water** is the recommended and **only** drink for children at Kindergarten. There is always water available for children, either the filtered water or water container situated outside with cups at kindergarten and staff will refill bottles as necessary.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are celebrated at The Willows Children's Centre and are inclusive of everyone. Consequently, parents are asked to refrain from providing cake for their child's Birthday as this reinforces our *Healthy Eating, Hydration and Nutrition policy* and is inclusive of everyone, including those who have food allergies/restrictions. Celebrations include a special time during 'mat-time' in which the child is a focus, a pretend cake with candles for the child to blow out and a Birthday song.

This policy links with the Early Years Learning Framework - Outcome 3 "Children have a strong sense of well-being". Specifically "Children show an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles & good nutrition" page 32 'Belonging, Being & Becoming'