



Bertram Hawker Kindergarten

Healthy Food Policy

RATIONALE

At Bertram Hawker Kindergarten we support children to learn about healthy lifestyles including healthy eating and physical activity in the everyday routines and experiences.

Healthy foods help children to learn, concentrate and build sustained energy for physical activities and are essential for good health and well-being. Research shows that most children's intake of vegetables, fruit, milk, and cheese is below recommended levels, while their intake of fats, sugar and salt exceeds them.

We support families to provide a variety of healthy food options each day for children. We acknowledge that some children have food likes and dislikes and that it can be challenging for families to always provide healthy food options. We support families by providing suggestions and ideas for packing healthy food.

We provide opportunities each day for children to independently choose from the food options that have been sent from home. It is normal for children's appetites to vary from day-to-day. We encourage children to choose how much they eat at each time, as the evidence is that children who are able to make independent choices about eating are better able to develop lifelong healthy eating habits. We use the opportunities for eating to be times of happy, social interaction. We know the importance of educators and other children role modelling eating healthy food.

We do not have nuts at our kindergarten, as many children have nut allergies. This includes peanut butter, Nutella, bars containing nuts and food cooked in oil containing nuts.

We all have a responsibility to care for our environment. We teach the children about recycling, reusing items and the effects of landfill on our planet. We ask families to provide their food without excess packaging - "nude food". Durable, reusable containers are recommended for providing long term cost savings and environmental benefits. Please ensure your child can open and close their containers and unwrap items independently.

COOKING AT KINDY

We cook frequently at kindy, using eggs from our chickens and when available, produce from our garden. We encourage parents to come into kindergarten and cook savoury or sweet food with a small group of children. Cooking is a wonderful experience for young children.

This food can be shared at kindergarten and assists children to explore new tastes.

BIRTHDAYS & SPECIAL OCCASIONS

We celebrate children's birthdays by singing 'Happy Birthday', while the birthday child blows out candles on a pretend cake.

We discourage parents providing birthday cakes or treats when it is their child's birthday. However, parents are welcome to come in and cook with the children anytime. All food should follow the guidelines of this policy and should not be highly processed and **no food can contain nuts or nut products.**

FOOD SUGGESTIONS

We encourage families to consider the Australian Dietary Guidelines (NHMRC 2013).

Families can look at sites such as <https://healthyinbox.com.au/> (run by Cancer Council NSW) for healthy lunch-box ideas and recipes.

We recommend that families pack one option from each of the five core food groups to create a healthy lunchbox every day:

- Fruit (e.g. fresh, frozen, pureed and canned in natural juice)
- Vegetables, legumes and beans
- Yoghurt, cheese and alternatives
- Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, seeds, and legumes/beans
- Grain (cereal) foods

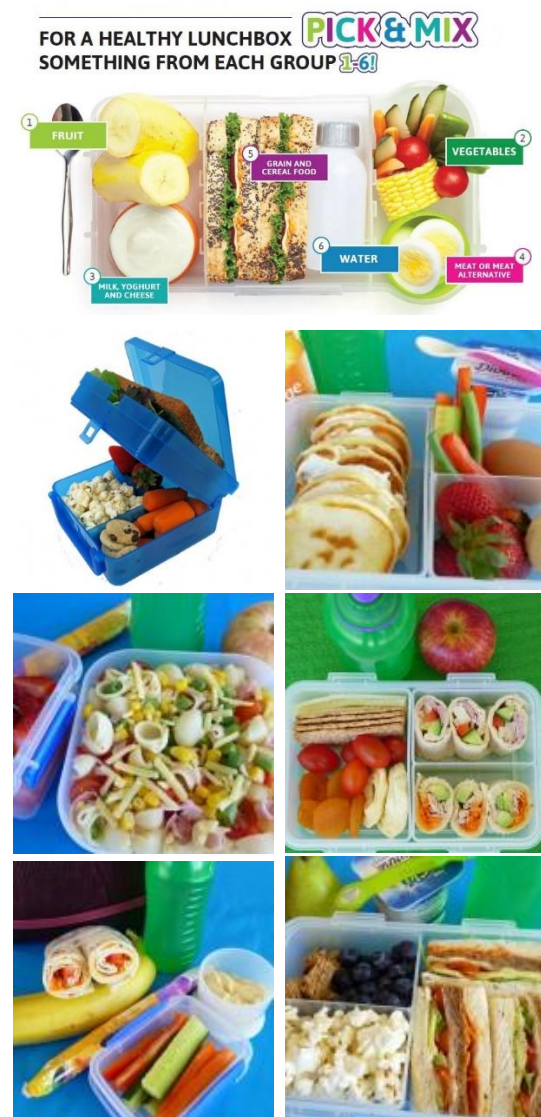
Please avoid packaged snacks. We understand that many children enjoy these foods, but we have found kindy to be a wonderful environment where children explore new foods by observing others. We therefore encourage the preparation of simple and naturally prepared foods. Where pre-packaged snacks are unavoidable, opt for snacks that are:

- Less than 600kJ per serve
- Low in saturated fat (less than 2g/serve)
- Provide some fibre (more than 1g per serve)
- Nutrient dense, providing ingredients such as dairy, fruit, vegetables or oats

We encourage children to drink water. Children should bring their own named drink bottles and filtered water and cups are provided for children to independently serve themselves. Cordial, milk and fruit juice should not be sent to kindy.

TIPS FOR PARENTS PACKING NUDE FOOD LUNCHES

- Involve children in making their own lunches including selecting fillings, fruit etc.
- Cut up fruit and vegetables and pack in reusable containers so that children can eat some and save the rest for later. A rubber band around a sliced apple will prevent browning.
- Encourage your children to bring home uneaten food to eat later.
- If your child has yoghurt, savoury biscuits, or other snacks, try buying a larger bulk pack and put the same quantity into a reusable labelled container that they bring home each day.



July 2022