



Callington Kindergarten and Occasional Care Healthy Eating Policy

Policy Number 13

Issue number 1

Link to NQS for ECE Principals: Quality areas:

1.2.1	2.1.1
2.1.3	2.1.4
2.2.1	2.3.1
2.3.2	4.1.2
6.1.1	6.1.3
6.2.1	7.2.3
7.3.2	7.3.3

Policy statement

- The Healthy Eating Policy reflects the following concepts, to:
 - promote a child's normal growth and development;
 - promote appropriate food choices and physical activity; and
 - regularly review children's physical growth.(National Health and Medical Research Council, 2003)
- The kindergarten plays an important role in supporting the nutritional needs of children¹ while in care.
For example, the Start Right Eat Right program suggests children who attend a full day of long day care should be offered at least 50% of their recommended daily dietary intake while in care² (South Australian Child Care Nutrition Partnership, 2005).

¹ For the purpose of this policy, a child or children is defined as a person or group of persons aged from birth to eighteen years (UNICEF).

² Start Right Eat Right considers a full day of care includes morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

The Healthy Eating Policy is consistent with the current 'Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia' (2003). Children's snack and lunch boxes should reflect a wide variety of nutritious foods, such as:

- plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruits;
 - cereals (preferably wholegrain), which include breads, rice, pasta and noodles;
 - lean meats, poultry and fish (or protein alternatives);
 - dairy products, which includes milk, cheese, yoghurts;
- For children older than two years, a diet low in fat and in particular, low in saturated fat, is appropriate. Low fat diets are not suitable for children under two years of age due to their high energy needs.
- plenty of opportunity to drink water;
 - foods containing calcium and iron, and low in salt; and
 - **moderate** amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars or artificial sweeteners.
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- The kindergarten encourages children with opportunities to experience a healthy, balanced and nutritious meals and/or snacks through programmed cooking activities.
 - The Kindergarten ensures that meals and/or snack times are conducted in safe, clean, positive environments that promote meaningful interactions between children and staff.
 - The kindergarten staff understand that there is a requirement to implement and adhere to the service's Healthy Eating Policy and ensure a consistent level of practice.
 - The kindergarten endeavours to meet individual and family needs however, the health and safety of children who are in care may, at times, come into conflict with cultural or family beliefs. The kindergarten reserves the right to **promote** the nutritional needs of children in care at all times.
 - Where children have food allergies confirmed by a medical practitioner, the kindergarten will actively adhere to the medical recommendations, and ensure that it is communicated to those persons who directly care for the child. (see nut free/awareness appendix)
 - Note: Some medical conditions require a dietary intake of certain foods that is in conflict with national nutritional guidelines. For example, children with cystic fibrosis require a higher than normal dietary intake of salt, fat and protein, or diabetes requiring higher sugar levels at times.

Rationale

Callington Kindergarten's aim is to encourage children to eat healthy and nutritional foods. Water is also vital in our children's growth so alternative drinks (soft drinks, cordial, and fruit juice) are suited for having at home.

Strategies and practices

- Drinking water is available at all times (Pura tap)
- Children are supported to identify healthy food.
- Children must always be seated when eating or drinking.
- Staff and children's hands will be properly washed before eating.
- Food will not be used as a punishment or as a reward.
- All surfaces are to be cleaned before and after preparation of food with disinfectant.
- Children are encouraged to help prepare foods at Kindy when this activity is in process.
- Children will be encouraged to develop self help skills in feeding routines eg opening containers, spoon feeding.
- Children with special needs/dietary needs will have a plan in progress that all staff are aware of.

Food provided by the service

Callington Kindergarten and Occasional care are supported by Kickstart for Kids - a free breakfast service. Our site provides toast, milk, yoghurt and fruit each day to meet the needs of the children. This food is provided by Kickstart for free and is passed on to the children for free. This program ensures all children are able to start the day with a healthy breakfast and morning snack.

Providing suitable foods which meet children's nutritional needs

- The kindergarten will maintain a small range of healthy snacks for certain situations (such as when children spill their food or leave it at home).
- Cooking activities with the children may cover the rainbow of foods but with a focus on healthy choices.

Minimising the risk of choking

- The kindergarten is non-negotiable regarding its practice that all children must be seated while eating; this includes occasional care and playgroup sessions.

Documenting children's nutritional and fluid input

- At this point staff are only required to document nutritional and fluid intake for children on health care plans.

Food supplied by the family

Callington kindergarten encourages the eating of healthy and nutritional food for all children while acknowledging parent's right to choose their child's diet and the individual needs of children.

Meeting individual needs

- Kindy staff will consult and collaborate with families to achieve the best outcomes for children regarding their nutritional needs across their Kindy time.

This will include not only children on health care plans, or with special needs but also families whose nutritional needs are governed by:

- religious beliefs, such as Judaism (kosher) or Islam (halal), or
- family lifestyle, such as vegetarianism.

Defining, determining and monitoring an allergy

- Callington Kindergarten requires medical proof that an allergy exists, from a doctor or health specialist. As well as the completed health care plan or "allergic reaction plan".

Communicating with staff about a child's allergy or nutritional needs

- Children's allergy and/or health plans are kept in their files, with a copy in the staff induction book and a photo id on the office wall.

Mealtimes and/or snacks

- Children must always be seated when eating or drinking.
- Staff and children's hands will be properly washed before eating.
- Food will not be used as a punishment or as a reward.
- All surfaces are to be cleaned before and after preparation of food with disinfectant.
- Children are encouraged to help prepare foods at Kindy when this activity is in process.
- Children will be encouraged to develop self help skills in feeding routines eg opening containers, spoon feeding.
- At least one staff member will remain with children when they are eating at all times.

Accommodating different cultural practices and behaviours

- The kindergarten staff will support different cultural mealtime practices that may conflict with the general consensus in the service through discussion with family members. For example, children who eat with their hands, or are fed by a family member using their hands.

Role and responsibilities of staff/carers

- Callington kindergarten staff will support and encourage children to make healthy food choices; role model healthy eating practices and socially appropriate behaviours; and explore and discuss different cultural, social and family lifestyles which may influence healthy eating concepts.
- This expectation will include volunteers and students.

Special occasions and celebrations

- The National Heart Foundation recommends that snack foods such as, cakes, biscuits, and takeaway foods are limited to once a week.

- Callington Kindergarten supports family's rights to celebrate birthdays with cakes at kindy. Families are permitted to supply a birthday cake, however the must not contain nuts or alcohol.

Healthy eating and physical activity

- Physical activity, combined with a nutritious, balanced food intake, contributes to a child's health, wellbeing and self-esteem. Kindergarten can play an important role in promoting fitness, which assists in reducing health problems, such as childhood obesity and diabetes.
- The Kindergarten has included a vegetable garden in the play environment and promotes the enjoyment of growing and tasting this fresh food.
- Callington Kindergarten builds awareness with children and families about the importance of healthy eating choices and physical activity while respecting family and cultural values. This is done through information sheets, active play take home kits, displays, Munch Crunch healthy eating kit etc.

Care giving behaviours and practices

Behaviour guidance

- Food should not be used as a reward, to punish or provide comfort to children.
- The provision of food and drink is not a behaviour guidance strategy or practice used at this site. Using food as a reward or as comfort can produce positive and negative emotional responses and associations with food.

Staff, students and volunteers as role models

- Children learn through example and role modelling is an important way to teach children healthy eating behaviours and practices.
- Staff, students and volunteers must comply with the Healthy Eating Policy.
- The kindergarten will ensure that the individual needs of children, especially those with food allergies, are respected.

Communication with different stakeholders

Children

- Staff model healthy and safe eating practices at all times.
- Staff discuss with children which items are healthy to eat first in their lunch boxes. E.g. at snack time at healthy choice food item eg fruit, vegetables or dairy must be eaten first. At lunch time the sandwich or "main meal" must be eaten first.

Families

- Callington Kindergarten builds awareness with children and families about the importance of healthy eating choices and physical activity while respecting family and cultural values. This is done through information sheets, active play take home kits, displays, Munch Crunch healthy eating kit etc.

Staff

- Staff are encouraged to attend professional development in the areas of children's nutrition, allergies, understanding and responding to anaphylaxis,

diabetes, nutrition, healthy eating and exercise, understanding eating disorders, nutritional needs of babies.

Policy review

- The service will review the Healthy Eating Policy and procedures every 12 months.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the service to review the policy and procedures.
- Staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged to be actively involved.

Procedures

The following are examples of procedures that Callington Kindergarten employ as part of its daily practices. Examples:

- Employee induction procedure.
- Food and cooking experiences for children.
- Implementing a healthy eating awareness program for children and families.
- Policy development and review procedure.
- Student and volunteer induction procedure.

Links to other policies

- Enrolment of new children and families to the service
- Food safety
- Hygiene
- Illness
- Occupational health and safety
- Play and learning experiences
- Supporting children's individual health needs

Sources and further reading

- Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. (2004). *Australia's physical activity recommendations for children and youth*.
- Australian Nutrition Foundation. (2005). *Nutrition Australia*. Retrieved February 27, 2007, from <http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/Default.htm>
- *Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991*(Cwlth).
- National Heart Foundation of Australia. (2004). *Eat smart, play smart: A manual for out of school hours care*. Victoria: Author.
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2003). *Dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
- South Australian Child Care Nutrition Partnership. (2005). *Guidelines for food and nutrition policy in child care centres*. Retrieved March 5, 2007, from http://www.chdf.org.au/icms_file?page=110/PolicyGuidelines10NovFINAL.pdf

- Tansey, S. (2005). *Outside School Hours Care Quality Assurance Factsheet #1: Nutrition and healthy eating*. NSW: National Childcare Accreditation Council Inc.
- Thompson, E. (2005). Healthy lifestyles for children. *Putting Children First*, 16, 8-11.
- UNICEF (n.d.). *Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved January 18, 2007, from http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf

Useful websites

- Anaphylaxis Australia - www.allergyfacts.org.au/
- Australian Dental Association - www.ada.org.au/
- Diabetes Australia - www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/home/index.htm
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand - <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/>
- National Heart Foundation Australia - www.heartfoundation.com.au

Policy reviewed	Jan 2018
Next review due	Jan 2019

Signatures	_____ Director
