

Healthy eating

We believe that good nutrition is vital for the wellbeing of children and they will be offered food according to their individual needs and timetable. We encourage nutritious, safe eating habits for all children attending the Centre.

The centre cook will provide childcare children all food including morning and afternoon snacks and lunch. We are guided by the recommendations of the 'Australian Dietary Guidelines: Eat For Health' program to ensure that the National Quality standards are met. All food supplied is nutritionally balanced, appropriate to the age of the children, and of sufficient quantity to meet the child's needs. Parents are invited to discuss with the staff what their child has eaten/drunk throughout the day, including information such as likes and dislikes.

Kindergarten children have the choice when they start kindy to nominate for a centre cooked lunch. There is a fee for this per day and only includes lunch. These children still need to bring their own snacks. This can be changed either way at the beginning of each term only.

The Centre is a "Nut Aware" environment in consideration of the number of varying severity in the broad community. No products containing nuts are to be brought into the centre.

For kindergarten you need:

- A healthy, nutritious lunch in a named container that does not need heating as there is no access to the kitchen
- Snacks such as fruit, vegetables or cheese
- A piece of fruit
- Clearly named drink bottles

Due to the high risk of choking and allergies do not send nuts. Do not send nuts & products containing nuts including Peanut Paste/Butter and Nutella. This includes children 0-6 years. It is a rule that children sit to eat.

Water is the preferred drink and drinking water is always available. The children are offered or reminded to have regular drinks throughout the day.

Parents are asked to avoid sending foods that are highly processed and high in sugar, salt or fat, such as chocolates, lollies, sweet biscuits, chips, chocolate coated fruit bars, roll ups, and soft drinks.

Please send food with minimal packaging – to assist staff in food preparation and support our environmental education program.

Food considered dangerous will not be served to the child, but will be sent home again. In such a situation, staff will have an informal discussion with the parents concerned, and explain why the food was considered unsuitable.

As part of the enrolment process it is vital that the Centre be notified in writing of any special dietary restrictions, requests and/or allergies on the appropriate paperwork at the time of enrolment or as anything arises or changes. Children with allergies will have child notification strips with a photo of the child and information of allergy/medical condition displayed throughout the centre for staff information, the centre will require any relevant health plans. Correct and update information ensures quality care. Please ask if you have any questions.

Super Snack Suggestions

Snacks are an important part of daily food intake, especially for children. They need to be nutritious, tasty, quick and easy to prepare.

- Slice of fruit loaf / bun
- Fruit bread, made into jaffles with ricotta cheese, dried fruit
- Pikelets, add mashed bananas to the mixture for a change
- Fruit / date / pumpkin or plain scones
- Sandwiches, cut into strips or shapes
- Small pita bread, spread with cream cheese, grated carrot, sprouts and roll up
- Small handful of rice crackers
- Wholemeal crackers with cheese
- Rice cakes with a thin scrape of reduced fat cream cheese and vegemite
- Breakfast cereals served dry, fruitybix, mini wheats, WeetBix, Wheat Bites To Go
- WeetBix spread with vegemite, butter etc.
- Handful of homemade pita chips (pita bread cut into triangles, sprinkle with a little parmesan cheese and bake 180C for 15 mins until crisp)
- Rice cakes spread with ricotta or cream cheese and vegemite and fruit spreads
- Crispbreads with vegemite, promite, fruit spreads
- English muffin with margarine and cheese, or vegemite
- Plain biscuits (Wheatmeal, arrowroot)
- Small can baked beans or spaghetti
- Tub of yoghurt or Fruche
- Cheese stick or triangle and sultanas
- Piece of fresh fruit or fruit salad in a small container or canned fruit snack pack
- Small handful of dried fruit (can serve in an ice cream cone)
- Homemade fruit muffins (aim for recipes with less than ¼ cup oil)
- Small container or assorted salads (eg. tabouli, pasta, rice)

Here are some ideas of balanced lunch boxes, which include foods from all groups.

- Sandwich, roll or flat bread with favourite filling
- Ice cream cone filled with dried fruit, 2-3 fruit biscuits or 2 slices of fruit loaf
- Tub of yoghurt, custard or frozen yoghurt tube
- 1-2 pieces of fresh fruit - kiwi fruit, pear, rockmelon, watermelon, mandarin
- Corn or rice thins or cruskits with vegemite, cream cheese or cheese spread
- 2-3 savoury pikelets or vegetable/pizza muffin
- Fruitybix bar or container of fruitybix / Nutrigrain or Apple & cinnamon muffin
- 1-2 cheese sticks or pieces, grated cheese or flavoured milk
- 1-2 pieces fresh fruit – apricot, nectarine, banana, grapes, orange
- Savoury rice crackers or multigrain Saladas with vegemite

For more ideas and recipes look in the parent library in the foyer.