



Nutrition Policy

Rationale

Gawler & District College B-12 Children's Centre promotes safe, healthy eating habits and uses as its guideline Department of Education's Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2022, Outcome 3: Children are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health and personal safety and the 'Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Standards for South Australian Schools. We recognise healthy eating and nutrition as a Centre priority and have highlight its importance by including it in the Centre's Philosophy Statement.

Early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in three ways:

- Short term - maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health.
- Long term - minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.
- Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning activities.

Therefore

- Staff at this centre model and encourage healthy eating behaviours.
- Food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children.
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the Right Bite strategy for their children while at the centre.
- Staff are to ensure they are aware of any food allergies, religious or cultural food preferences of each child before provision of care.

Curriculum

Our food and nutrition curriculum 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.
- Opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food
- Relates to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

Children at our centre:

- Have chilled water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day
- Educators consider children's interoceptive needs of hunger and thirst and offer rolling snacks and lunches. Educators monitor children and provide reminders for those children who have not taken up the opportunity to eat and drink at intervals throughout the day.
- Eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours.
- Use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods.

Our centre

- Provides rewards/encouragements that are not related to food or drink.
- 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 Children's Centre

- Encourages healthy food and drink choices for children in line with the Right Bite strategy.
- Encourages food choices which are representative of the foods of the community.
- Ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive.
- Ensures a healthy food supply for activities and events in line with the Right Bite strategy.
- Shares nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating.
- Uses safe food practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children in their care, see Food Standards Code.

Snack Time

Parents and carers are encouraged to supply fruit and vegetables at snack time to

- Provide children with important minerals and vitamins.
- Encourage a taste for healthy foods.



Lunch Time

Parents and carers are encouraged to supply food mostly from the GREEN list with some choices from AMBER list for lunch.

We strongly encourage children and parents not to provide food from the RED list for the child's day at the centre to:

- Provide children with important minerals and vitamins.
- To acknowledge good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in the learning activities at the centre.
- Encourage a taste for healthy foods.
- Support preschool curriculum and child's learning as part of the Right Bite strategy.

Care Plans

If a child requires support with oral eating and drinking, parents and carers should complete an Oral Eating and Drinking Care Plan with their child's health professional. Education and care staff who regularly engage with the child will need to know what is in the plan. If required, staff will be provided with any necessary training. Following training staff will then implement the plan (refer to DECD Oral eating and drinking procedure for forms).

Food safety

During the preschool session children's lunch boxes are stored in a refrigerator. We encourage parents to pack a snack and lunch separately and ensure all boxes, bags and containers are clearly labelled with their child's name.

Children will be encouraged to keep any uneaten meat and dairy products in the refrigerator to minimise the risk of contamination.

When possible, we will send home other uneaten food so that as a parent/caregiver, you are aware of what your child has eaten during their session/day. We recommend that this food is then disposed of at home as it may no longer be fresh.

Our Children's Centre

- Promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum
- Encourages staff to access training as appropriate to the Right Bite Strategy
- Provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- Promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff

Allergies

Our Children's Centre is an Allergy Aware site and

- Liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues
- A risk management plan will help to identify areas of potential risk and possible solutions to reduce the risk. Which may include banning food items such as nuts and nut products to support health plans of some children.

Working with families, health services & industry

Our Children's Centre invites parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our whole of site food and nutrition policy and provides information to families and caregivers about the Right Bite Strategy through a variety of ways including

- Newsletters
- Policy development/review
- Information on enrolment
- Pamphlet/poster displays
- Workshops and information sessions
- Promotes the alignment of fundraising with the Right Bite strategy

Food Guidelines using "RIGHT BITE" strategy

This list has been prepared using the Right Bite Guidelines. We have modified this slightly to

- Acknowledge the constraints of the preschool
- Support the preschool curriculum
- Acknowledge that children are only here for 15 hours of their week, enabling children to access a range of other foods at other times

The Right Bite Strategy teaches children the "Traffic Light" system of Healthy Eating:

GREEN – GO – Eat Plenty

AMBER – SLOW DOWN – Select Carefully

RED – STOP – Eat Occasionally

We recommend packing food in named containers along with a small ice brick.



GREEN FOOD LIST – Choose plenty

Children can bring GREEN list foods for snack and lunch.

We encourage fruit and/or vegetables for snack as these will not spoil without refrigeration

Breads	All types of bread including wraps, burritos, tortillas etc. Multigrain, wholemeal, hi-fibre are extra good!
Cereal Foods	Rice, pasta, noodles etc. (unfortunately we cannot heat these up).
Breakfast Cereals	Whole grain breakfast cereals that are high in fibre and low in salt and sugar can be good snacks.
Vegetables	Any – chop up into sticks and add a low fat dip
Fruit	Any – fresh, dried or fruit packs in natural juice
Legumes	Any – again, we cannot heat these up, but many children enjoy cold baked beans!
Dairy Products	Yoghurt, custard and cheese. Pack these with an ice-brick
Drinks	Water only please. No juice, cordial, flavoured milk or soft drinks.
Meats	These need to remain cold – so we recommend always packing with an ice-brick. No 'highly processed' meats such as kabana, salami, mettwurst etc.

AMBER FOOD LIST – Select Carefully

Children may choose from this list to add to their GREEN lunch choice

Savoury Products	Check for fat and salt content. Examples could be cheese and tomato, vegetable pizza, vegetable pastries, quiches etc.
Spreads	Use sparingly. Choose reduced salt and sugar if available. Includes Vegemite, Fruit jam and honey. We have a ban on NUTS / NUT PRODUCTS in support of Children's health needs, so NO NUT SPREADS
Snack Food Bars	Try high-fibre, low sugar varieties such as breakfast bars, cereal bars and real fruit bars. NO NUTS or CHOCOLATE
Fruit Bars or Chews	Fruit bars often don't contain much real fruit. Check for sugar content and go for varieties with fruit content over 80%. Try to avoid those that look like lollies. "Roll-Up's" are not recommended.
Savoury Snack Foods and Biscuits	Check for fat and salt content. "Oven Baked" varieties are usually good, as are dry biscuits, air popped popcorn or rice cakes or crackers.
Cakes, Muffins etc.	English muffins, small muffins high in fibre and fruit, scones, small pancake/pikelets are all acceptable Healthy home-made varieties are great! No icing or chocolate.
Dairy Products	Yoghurt, custard and cheese. Pack these with an ice-brick

RED FOOD LIST – Eat Occasionally

Please DO NOT pack as part of your child's snack or lunch

Foods high in Sugar, Fat and Salt	This includes Chocolate, lollies, chips and any other foods with a high sugar, fat and salt content. NO NUTS and NUT PRODUCTS – including Nutella or peanut butter.
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