



# Nutrition, Food, Beverages', Dietary Requirements Policy

## **Rationale:**

At Hamley Bridge Kindergarten, we believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong healthy eating habits. We aim to promote nutritional eating habits, to support children growing up with a sound knowledge of good nutrition. We aim to promote this in a safe, hygienic and supportive environment with partnerships that assist in the sharing of nutritional family and multicultural value for all children attending this centre. The centre will communicate with families about their child's nutrition and have a range of healthy eating resources available and displayed.

## **Aims:**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Encourage and support children to develop healthy eating habits.
- Promote children's understanding of how food affects health and the relationship between healthy eating and good health.
- Ensure that food provided at the kindergarten and foods brought from home will reflect the Australian Dietary Guidelines for children and adolescents.
- Support children who have health and cultural needs relating to special dietary requirements.
- Raise awareness of good nutrition principles amongst our community.

## **Parents and Caregivers:**

Parents/Caregivers are to provide all food, including snacks and lunch. The food supplied will be consistent with the dietary guidelines for children. Parents are to ensure that they pack ample food for their child for their time in Occasional Care or Preschool.

- On enrolment parents are provided with the Centres Nutrition, Food, Beverages & Dietary Policy as well as supporting resources to assist in providing an age appropriate healthy lunchbox.
- Parents will also be given nutritional information in an informal way through conversations with educators, newsletter articles, and information leaflets at regular intervals.
- Children who require specific foods because of dietary health needs or because of cultural/religious beliefs need to liaise with the Director.

## **Food and Beverages in the learning environment:**

- Children will eat their snacks and lunch in designated areas.
- Children will eat their own food.
- Children will bring a drink bottle containing water to Occasional Care and Preschool.
- Children attending in our Under 2 Occasional Care Program will provide milk/ formula as required.
- Food will only be shared at Kindy during group cooking and eating experiences.



- Food including cultural food events and produce from the kindy garden will be used as learning experiences to introduce children to a variety of foods, with children taking part in activities involving food preparation and cooking. Family participation will be encouraged.
- Food waste will be disposed of thoughtfully recycling through the chook/worm farm buckets.
- The centre will maintain a small supply of food in case of an emergency or if children require additional food.
- A maximum of one food experience that contain added salt and sugars may be offered per term in line with the Healthy Eating guidelines. These experiences may be for special occasions such as theme days, celebrations or fundraising events.

#### **Staff Responsibilities:**

- Staff will supervise children when eating.
- Provide a Learning Program which provides ongoing education about healthy eating. This will include experiences growing vegetables, cooking experiences, introduction and opportunity to taste new foods, involving children in formal and informal discussions about health, nutrition and good eating and drinking habits – including rainbow and nude foods.
- Staff will encourage children to try new foods.
- Food will not be used as a form of behaviour management by its provision or denial.
- Staff will act as role models in relation to their own food choices at the centre.
- Children will be encouraged to use self-help skills and to learn to choose to eat the healthier food options from their lunch box first.
- Remind children to bring their drink bottles to meal times and have regular drinks throughout their time at Preschool.

#### **Food Safety and Hygiene:**

- All members of the kindergarten community should use effective hand washing techniques before and after eating, or food preparation.
- Children and Staff will remain seated while eating, to minimise potential choking incidents.
- Foods considered a high choking risk, such as raw apple and carrot; whole grapes and cherry tomatoes will be prepared appropriately for the age of children. The guidelines for prevention of choking apply to all children birth to 5 years old.
- Staff will provide supervision to ensure children's safety during meal times. Staff will use positive attitudes and behaviours in providing food and follow hygiene procedures.

#### **Special Dietary Requirements:**

Parents must advise the Director on enrolment or when appropriate, if their child has a special diet for medical or non-medical reasons such as allergy, intolerance, food sensitivity or specific requests based on family or cultural preferences. A modified diet care plan will be developed according to the type of special dietary requirements required.



### **Allergy Awareness:**

Some children have severe allergies to foods which can cause life threatening reactions just from the smell or touch of food products. The most common allergy is that of a nut allergy however children can also have a severe food allergy to egg, wheat, milk and dairy products and fish. We advise parents not to provide children with foods containing nuts including peanut butter and Nutella.

### **Dental Hygiene:**

Staff and Governing Council regard Dental Hygiene as a high priority in the area of children's health and wellbeing and will incorporate this into the Centre's curriculum. It is important for children to understand dental hygiene to ensure the growth of healthy teeth and the use of hygiene practices throughout life.

Dental Hygiene will be fostered by:

- Encouraging healthy eating and drinking practices by incorporating these in Centre policies.
- Dental checks by the school Dental System in the child's eligible preschool year are encouraged and promoted,
- Parent education programmes and information sharing.
- Children are encouraged to drink water after eating.
- The rules of hygiene and dental care will be included in the centres program and staff will initiate discussion about these subjects with groups and individual children at appropriate times.

### **Bottles and Breastfeeding:**

If babies and toddlers attending Occasional Care require a bottle during their session time parents are asked to bring in a premade bottle. Staff will warm the bottle using a bottle warmer and test the temperature prior to giving it to the child. We are a breastfeeding friendly centre and parents are welcome to breastfeed in the centre.

### **Birthdays and Celebrations:**

With respectful consideration of the family's cultural and religious beliefs, our Centre appreciates the significance of a child's birthday. Where appropriate, we acknowledge the event with a centre based celebration. Children have the right to feel special and be appreciated by those around them.

Due to healthy eating guidelines and food allergies we ask that food is not brought in as part of the birthday celebration.

Developed: January 2019

Review: February 2020

Endorsed: Director:

Chairperson: