

# Food and Allergy Awareness Policy

## Rationale

At Lockleys Children's Centre we promote safe, healthy eating habits in line with the **Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools** and relates to the DECD wellbeing strategy.

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

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

Therefore:

- staff at our centre will model and encourage healthy eating behaviours
- food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children
- parents and caregivers will be encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the **Right Bite** strategy for their children at preschool.

## Curriculum

Our centre's food and nutrition curriculum:

- is consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, and the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*
- 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
- includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food
- integrates nutrition across the Early Years Learning Framework relating to the Developmental learning outcome: 'Children develop a sense of physical wellbeing' and the National Quality Standard – *QA2 Children's Health and Safety*

## The Learning environment

Children at our centre:

- bring their own drink bottles of water and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day. Their bottles are replenished as necessary
- will eat fruit or vegetables during the morning session and lunch at tables or picnic style on mats weather permitting
- 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 fruit time as part of the curriculum
- ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- is a breastfeeding friendly site

Our Centre will ensure a healthy food supply for preschool activities, celebrations and events, strictly limiting availability of high fat, high sugar, or processed foods during preschool activities and events to no more than twice a term, in accordance with the Healthy Eating Guidelines.

## Food and water supply

**Our centre has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home or provided by staff.**

Our 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 local community
- ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- ensures a healthy food supply for centre **activities and events** in line with the *Right Bite* strategy
- displays **nutrition information** and promotional materials about healthy eating

### Fruit Time

**Parents and carers are encouraged to supply fruit and vegetables at fruit time to:**

- provide children with important minerals and vitamins
- encourage a taste for healthy foods.

### Some ideas for fruit time include

- Vegetables (any that your child can eat independently)
- Fresh fruit in season (any that your child can eat independently)
- Fruit salad
- Dried fruit

Fruit/vegetables for fruit time should be packed in a separate container to lunches. Fruit time containers are to be kept in children's bags which are placed on a hook under the verandah.

### Foods unsuitable for fruit time

Items such as packaged foods, yoghurt, cakes/pastries, chips/corn chips, lollies, sweet biscuits, or any items **containing nuts or nut products – this includes muesli bars** are not suitable for fruit time. At times other foods may need to be excluded due to children's specific medical requirements. Families will be notified through the newsletter, Seesaw app and white board.

### Food and drinks provided to children:

- parents and carers are encouraged to provide healthy food and drink choices in line with the ***Right Bite*** strategy
- staff will ensure that food provided to children by the preschool is in line with the ***Right Bite*** strategy.

### Lunch time

Good nutrition involves eating a variety of foods. Encouraging healthy choices from an early age ensures good habits in the future. Children with appropriate nutrition have improved cognitive development, attention span, work capacity, behaviour and attendance at preschool and school. Establishing healthy eating patterns at a young age provides a critical foundation for good eating patterns in adult life. At Lockleys Children's Centre we encourage families to send fruit, vegetables, cheese and lunches to the centre with their children. Use our traffic light guide at the end of this policy document (Appendix 1) to assist you in making good choices.

## Food safety

Our 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

### Food-related health support planning

Our centre:

- liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans and medical needs that are related to food issues

### Working with families, health services & industry

Our centre:

- invites parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our whole of site food and nutrition policy
- 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
- promotes the alignment of fundraising with the *Right Bite* strategy

Our Food and allergy awareness policy does not allow for items containing NUTS or NUT products, including muesli bars to be brought into the Children's Centre due to some children having severe, life threatening allergies. This also includes nut alternatives that look, taste and smell like nut products. At times, other foods may need to be excluded due to children's specific medical requirements. Staff will engage in conversations with families regarding the suitability of foods to be brought into the centre and families will be notified via our newsletter, Seesaw app and white board.

### Heating Food

According to the Food Safety Standards developed by Food Standards Australia New Zealand, when reheating foods a heat process should be used that rapidly heats the food to a temperature of 60 degrees Centigrade or above.

As we are not able to guarantee that food will be heated in accordance with the Food Safety Standards we ask that you do not provide food for your child that requires heating. If you would like to send hot foods, please send in a thermos which will keep food at the appropriate temperature.

### Special Events

At Lockleys Children's Centre we celebrate your child's birthday in a way that supports our Food and allergy awareness policy. We celebrate by singing Happy Birthday and lighting candles on our cardboard cake and we give your child a Birthday sticker. It is not expected or encouraged to provide treats of any description to be shared.

### References

Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013

<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines>

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating>

Eat well SA Schools and Preschools – Healthy Eating Guidelines (2004)

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/projects-and-programs/eat-well-sa/developing-healthy-food-policies-schools-and-preschools>

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Part 4.2 – Children's Health and Safety

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653/chap4/part4.2>

F: Lockleys Children's Centre/Policies/Policies 2020/ Food and Allergy Awareness Policy

Developed and accepted by the Governing Council and staff team – July 2012

Reviewed and updated: 2018, June 2020 (renamed Food and Allergy Awareness Policy)

Review date: 2022

Early Years Learning Framework (2009)

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations/approved-learning-frameworks>

Food Standards Australia New Zealand

<https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

National Quality Standard 2.1 (2017)

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard/quality-area-2-childrens-health-and-safety>

Right Bite Easy Guide to Healthy Food and Drink Supply (2008)

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/projects-and-programs/eat-well-sa/developing-healthy-food-policies-schools-and-preschools>

## APPENDIX 1 – Traffic Light Guide

### Green Lunch should always come from this category

Fruits	Dried Fruit
Vegetables / vegetable sticks (cooked or raw)	Dry and savoury biscuits, rice crisps, rice cakes
Sandwiches with healthy fillings eg, cheese, meat, salad, vegemite	Rice/Pasta
Cheese	Cold meats
Salad/pasta salad	Fruit loaf
Pita pockets filled with salad or vegetables	Eggs
Baked beans	Felafel and hummus
Homemade pizza	Rice cakes
	Sushi

### Amber Sometimes foods

Fruit bars	Cakes
Muesli bars (NO NUTS)	Sweet biscuits

### Red Please do not send these foods with your child to the centre

Whole Nuts, peanut butter, Nutella	Chocolate
Lollies	Drinks other than water (Filtered water is supplied freely throughout the day)
Juices	

PORTION SIZES	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	RECOGNISING NEEDS
<p><b>Fruit Time:</b> Children need a small piece of fruit.</p> <p><b>Lunch Time:</b> You know your child best, so please consider what your child may eat. Providing more food than your child is likely to eat encourages waste, so please resist the temptation to send too much.</p>	<p>We want to give children positive environmental messages.</p> <p>We encourage reusable packaging or no packaging.</p>	<p>If your child has specific needs or has been ill, please speak to the Educators.</p>

**We are an allergy aware site, please NO NUTS**