



Madison Park Kindergarten Healthy Food and Nutrition Policy

RATIONALE:

At Madison Park Kindergarten we are committed to the wellbeing, health and safety of all children, we role-model food safety and hygiene practices. The Staff aim to promote nutritional eating habits in a safe, supportive environment for all children attending this preschool. We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in four ways:

1. Short term: Maximises growth, development and activity whilst minimising illness.
2. Long term: Minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life e.g heart disease, strokes, some cancers and diabetes.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and wellbeing and this is important for positive engagement in learning experiences.
4. Speech pathologists recommend that children should be eating crunchy foods, to support the acquisition of speech sounds.

Background

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements.

Legislative requirements

Our policy supports the legislative requirements under Education and Care Services National Regulations.

Health and hygiene practices (regulation 77)

Madison Park Kindergarten:

- Promotes and teaches food safety to children during food learning/ cooking activities.
- Encourages staff to access training as appropriate to the Healthy Eating Guidelines
- Provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- Promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.
- We cook healthy options and inform parents via a closed Facebook group.
- Whenever possible we provide recipes or tastings for families.

Safe practices for handling, preparing, and storing food

Section/Regulation	Description
Regulation 77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
At Madison Park Kindergarten healthy hygiene practices are demonstrated through: Children washing hands before eating food. Staff assisting children with food, washing hands before assisting in cooking experiences	

CURRICULUM:

Our Kindergarten's food and nutrition curriculum is consistent with the Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Standard, Eat Well SA Food and Drink Supply Strategy for SA schools and Preschools, the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia, and, the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. We include:

- 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.
- Integrates nutrition across the curriculum where possible.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Children at our Kindergarten:

- Have fresh, clean filtered tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day.
- Eat in a positive, appropriate, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- Are encouraged to try new foods through our cooking program and eat a rainbow program
- Have access to the preschool garden and learn about growing, caring for and eating nutritious foods.

OUR KINDERGARTEN:

- Understands and promotes the importance of breakfast for children and offers breakfast to children who need it.
- Teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum
- Teaches the importance of drinking water regularly.
- Grows fresh fruits and vegetables onsite to be included in cooking experiences.
- Is a breastfeeding friendly site

FOOD SUPPLY:

At Madison Park Kindergarten children bring their snacks and lunch from home in a lunchbox that is kept in their bag/locker. To promote independent self-help skills children are responsible for choosing foods from their lunchboxes and returning their lunchbox to their bag/locker after eating. The following guidelines are recommended for families for food brought from home:

SNACK AND LUNCH TIMES:

At Madison Park Kindergarten we have 2 designated eating times during the day, one in the morning and one at lunch time. We recognise that children may become hungry outside of these set eating times, and as such a clean table area is available for eating at all times to eat. Children will be supervised and supported to wash their hands before eating. Children are given the choice to eat what they would like from their lunch boxes. Families are encouraged to pack a healthy lunch box with options for children to choose foods they like, we encourage families to consider foods which:

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

- Encourage chewing which promotes oral muscle development

Examples:

- Any fruits/vegetables
- Cheese/dips/Yoghurt
- Savory sandwiches e.g vegemite, salad, meat and vegetables
- Tuna / baked beans / noodles
- Home-made savoury froods (no nut products)
- Air popped popcorn
- Rice cakes, crackers and unsweetened biscuits
- Dried fruit
- Sandwiches with healthy toppings
- Bento boxes with vegetables, meats and cheeses
- Savory Rice/plain rice
- Pita Breads / salad wraps
- Cold Rolls, Sushi, Salads
- NO NUT PRODUCTS – due to children's allergic reactions

Families are encouraged to follow the above guidelines, and ask staff if they have any issues or concerns for their child. Families are encouraged to consider the temperature of food storage and use a freeze brick to ensure food safety.

We recognise that some children will have strong aversions to foods or have limited food tastes/textures and we will work with families to ensure a healthy and nutritious alternative.

WE DO NOT RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING FOODS:

- Chocolate
- Chips
- Sweets
- Cordial or sweetened fruit juices
- Cakes
- Sweet biscuits
- Fruit rollups
- Drinks other than water
- NO Nuts or items such as peanut butter, Nutella, muesli bars

Due to food safety regulations, staff will not heat or cook any foods/drinks for lunch.

If children attend with unsafe food items (such as NUT products) and alternative sandwich will be provided.

CELEBRATIONS OR EVENTS:

Our Kindergarten will ensure a healthy food supply for preschool activities, celebrations and events, strictly limiting availability of high fat, high sugar, or processed foods like chips, pastries, cakes, lollies, crisps and soft drinks to no more than twice a term, in accordance with the Healthy Eating Guidelines.

GUIDELINES FOR BIRTHDAYS

Children's birthdays are celebrated with a playdough birthday cake and song. Families are asked not to send cakes or other birthday foods as they cannot be given. To support equity we also ask that families do not supply other gifts for children such as balloons or toys.

FOOD SAFETY

Our Kindergarten:

- Promotes and teaches food safety to children during food learning/ cooking activities.
- Encourages staff to access training as appropriate to the Healthy Eating Guidelines
- Provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- Promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.
- We cook healthy options and inform parents via a sign 'What we are cooking today'
- Whenever possible we provide recipes or tastings for families.

FOOD-RELATED HEALTH SUPPORT PLANNING

Our Kindergarten:

- Liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues

WORKING WITH FAMILIES, HEALTH SERVICES & INDUSTRY

Our Kindergarten:

- Has Invited families to be involved in the review of our whole of site food and nutrition policy
- Provides information from health professionals to families and caregivers on the Healthy Eating Guidelines through a variety of media such as:
 - Newsletters
 - Policy development/review
 - Information on enrolment
 - Pamphlet/Poster displays
- Promotes the alignment of fundraising with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.

Policy Reviewed: November 2023	Policy Endorsed by Governing Council	Policy to be reviewed by: November 2026
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