

Meningie Kindergarten Food and Nutrition Policy.

Rationale

This preschool promotes safe, healthy eating habits in line with the **Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools**.

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 this preschool 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 at preschool.

This food policy has been established after consultation with staff and parents within the preschool community.

Curriculum

Our preschool'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
- children have opportunities to use vegetables/herbs from the kindergarten garden.
- includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food
- provides programs such as 'Eat a Rainbow' annually to children
- integrates nutrition across the EYLF framework where possible, **relating to the Developmental learning outcome: 'Children have a strong sense of wellbeing'**.

The Learning environment

Children at our preschool:

- have fresh, clean tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day
- will eat routinely at scheduled break times such as fruit time, lunch time and an opportunity to eat a healthy snack in afternoon if desired.
- 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 preschool:

- provides rewards/encouragements that are not related to food or drink
- involves students in regular cooking activities using healthy foods.
- 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 preschool:

- 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 preschool community
- ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- ensures a healthy food supply for preschool **activities and events** in line with the *Right Bite* strategy
- displays **nutrition information** and promotional materials about healthy eating through displays and newsletters.
- has the following guidelines for families for **food brought from home** or provided by staff within preschool time:

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.

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.

Food safety

Our preschool:

- promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum
- encourages staff to access training as appropriate to the *Right Bite Strategy eg Food handling course*.
- provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.

Food-related health support planning

Our preschool:

- 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 preschool:

- 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 and other programs such as Eat a Rainbow and other Community Initiatives eg Opal, Coorong Healthy Highways* 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.

Note: If a child has a serious **food allergy** (eg. nuts), a separate policy for the duration of that child's involvement with the preschool should be developed and communicated to parents and staff.