



# **MINLATON DISTRICT EARLY LEARNING CENTRE** **HEALTHY FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY**

## **Rationale**

This centre promotes safe, healthy eating habits for all children attending the site.

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:

- educators 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
- parents will inform educators of any food allergies your child may have

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

## **Curriculum**

Our site'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 curriculum where possible
- relates to the Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standards

## **The learning environment**

Children at our centre:

- have fresh, clean tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day
- are encouraged to bring their own named drink bottle
- will eat routinely at scheduled break times
- eat in a positive, social environment with educators who model healthy eating behaviours
- use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods

Our centre:

- 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
- encourages healthy food and drink choices for children in line with the Right Bite Strategy (eating more from the green area and less from the orange and red areas)
- we observe the 2hr – 4hr rule in relation to food storage as recommended by SA Health (food is OK to use for up to 4 hours when stored between 5°C and 60°C)
- is a breastfeeding friendly site

## **Food Supply**

Our centre:

- displays nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating
- has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home or provided by educators within preschool time

### **Snack Time:**

Parents and carers are encouraged to supply (in a named snack container) fruit (pre-cut saves waiting for an adult to cut), vegetables or healthy foods such as cheese and biscuits or a sandwich at snack time to:

- provide children with important minerals and vitamins
- encourage a taste for healthy foods
- encourage chewing which promotes oral muscle development

### **Foods unsuitable for snack time:**

- Packaged foods, cakes and sweets
- Cordials and sweetened fruit juices are not allowed

### **Lunch Time:**

- A healthy lunch box could include a sandwich, fruit, yoghurt, vegie sticks etc.

- Please reduce the inclusion of “red foods”
- Parents are encouraged to follow the above guidelines and ask educators if they have any issues

#### **Food and drinks provided to children:**

- The centre will provide opportunities for children to take part in cooking activities. These activities will promote healthy eating

#### **Birthday Celebrations**

- If families choose to bring along food to share we ask that they consult educators prior to the event.

#### **Food safety**

Our centre:

- promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum
- encourages educators 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 educators

#### **Food-related health support planning**

Our centre:

- 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 centre:

- invites parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our Healthy Food & Nutrition policy
- provides information to families and caregivers about the Right Bite Strategy and Healthy Eating Guidelines through a variety of ways including:
  - newsletters
  - policy development/review
  - information on enrolment
  - pamphlet/poster displays

**Governing Council Chairperson**

**Centre Director**

**Policy Creation Date:**  
2012

**Policy Reviewed:**  
August 2018, 2021

**Next Policy Review Date:**  
August 2023