



## NUTRITION, FOOD AND BEVERAGES – DIETARY REQUIREMENTS POLICY

NQS: QA 2 CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY– Regulation 168

Mitchell Park Kindergarten promotes 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 children in the following 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.

### 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
- includes opportunities for children to develop practical and safe food skills like storing, handling, preparing, cooking healthy food
- integrates nutrition across the Early Years Learning Framework where possible, **relating to Outcome 3: 'Children have a strong sense of wellbeing'**

### The Learning environment

Children at our preschool:

- Have 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,
- Eat in a positive, appropriate, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- Use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods

Staff at our preschool:

- understand and promote the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children
- teach the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum
- support breastfeeding parents on site
- model and encourage healthy eating behaviours

### Food supply

The following offers guidelines for families for food brought from home:

#### **FRUIT TIME**

Parents and carers are asked to supply fruit and vegetables at fruit time to:

- Provide children with important minerals and vitamins
- Encourage a taste for healthy foods
- Encourage chewing which promotes oral muscle development
- Fruit time is an important break in the session that provides a social environment for children to develop healthy eating habits as well as providing children's brains and bodies with important fuel and energy to continue learning throughout the day.

## **Fresh fruits, vegetables or a slice of cheese are recommended for mid-morning fruit time**

We understand that at times families may run out of **fruit. A healthy sandwich (multigrain or wholemeal bread) with savoury filling or plain unsalted crackers (e.g Vitawheat)** are most acceptable.

**FOODS UNSUITABLE FOR FRUIT TIME:** include packaged foods, cakes and sweets. NUT PRODUCTS.

Cordials and sweetened fruit juices are not recommended.

## **LUNCH**

Parents and carers are asked to supply healthy food for lunch and after lunch snack. These can include **Breads, cereal foods, breakfast cereals, vegetables, fruit, legumes, reduced fat dairy products, lean meat, fish, poultry and alternatives.**

**FOODS UNSUITABLE FOR LUNCH TIME:** Foods from the 'Red Food Category' (see attached list) or nut products.

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

Mitchell Park Kindergarten understands that many children experience adverse reactions to some foods. In particular, allergic reactions to nuts and nut products, eggs and seafood are more common. We have children attending the centre from time to time who experience **Anaphylaxis –a severe and life threatening reaction to foods. PARENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED IF THIS IS THE CASE. WE ASK THAT ALL FAMILIES**, including those who attend Occasional Care **DO NOT** provide foods containing nuts or nut products including spreads (such as Nutella and Peanut Paste). All children with allergies are expected to have a Health Care Plan. Where children bring foods that may cause allergic reactions staff will take necessary precautions to avoid adverse reactions. Staff will reinforce the importance of food safety with all families.

**Red Category Foods** (Please see table attached)

Where children bring unhealthy foods staff will encourage children to eat their healthiest/most suitable options first. Staff will discuss the benefits of healthy eating with families and encourage families to choose healthy options.

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

**Staff must be provided with information that is required to support all children with their health care needs. Where a child has emergency or routine health care needs a SEPARATE HEALTH CARE PLAN MUST BE PROVIDED by the enrolling family.**

Our preschool:

- liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply is provided for children with health support plans related to food allergies or sensitivities.
- ensures that staff are appropriately trained to provide appropriate health care support for **all** children

## **TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF CONTAMINATION ALL FOOD SHALL BE STORED AND HANDLED HYGIENICALLY.**

### **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*
- provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.
- encourages families to pack an ice brick to keep lunch food cool or pack a thermos if children prefer hot food.

## **Working with families, health services & industry**

Our preschool:

- invites parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our 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

**Special Occasions eg; end of term celebrations and birthdays:**

- We will ensure a healthy food supply for preschool events and special occasions, limiting availability to foods that are in the **Red Food category** to twice per term.
- We will acknowledge children's birthday by singing Happy Birthday at group time. We discourage families providing cakes or sweet treats on the occasion of their child's birthday. There may be some children who have allergies and we prefer to remain in line with our healthy eating guidelines. Families wanting to provide something may supply a fruit platter for children to share.

*Reviewed Term 2, 2021*

*Revision dates:*

*Endorsed by Governing Council:*

*Next review July 2024*



<p><b>Foods encouraged at Mitchell Park Kindergarten</b>  <b>CHOOSE PLENTY – the GREEN category</b>  Food and drink in this category are the best choices for schools and preschools.</p>	<p><b>Foods to avoid at Mitchell Park Kindergarten</b>  <b>CHOOSE VERY RARELY – the RED Category</b></p>
<p><b>Food Examples</b>  <b>Breads</b> Multigrain, wholemeal, rye, hi-fibre breads or rolls including: burritos, English muffins, focaccia, lavosh, Lebanese, pita, raisin/ fruit, tortillas and Turkish. Some corn crispbreads and rice cakes.  <b>Cereal foods</b> Rice, pasta, noodles, polenta and burghul/cracked wheat that are high in fibre  <b>Breakfast cereals</b> Wholegrain breakfast cereals that are high in fibre and lower in salt and sugar. Please note: Wholemeal and wholegrain bread and cereal foods are particularly healthy choices  <b>Vegetables</b> Fresh and frozen vegetables used in a variety of different ways.  <b>Fruit</b> Washed fresh fruits, frozen, canned and dried fruits.  <b>Legumes</b> All forms of prepared beans and peas – baked beans, red kidney beans, soy beans, mung beans, lentils, chickpeas, peas, bean curd, tofu and pappadums (made from legume flour).  <b>Dairy products</b> Plain milk – 375ml or less for primary schools and preschools, yoghurt and cheese.  <b>Lean meat, fish, poultry and alternatives</b>  Lean chicken, beef, lamb, pork, canned tuna and salmon and eggs.</p>	<p><b>Food Examples</b>  <b>Deep fried foods</b> All types.  <b>Snack foods</b> <b>Commercially</b> produced snack foods such as crisps, chips, biscuits and other similar products.  <b>Ice-creams</b> All types.  <b>Cakes and slices</b> <b>Commercially</b> produced cakes, muffins, sweet pastries and slices – croissants, doughnuts, cream-filled buns/cakes, sweet pastries, slices and bars.  <b>Savoury pastries</b> <b>Commercially</b> produced pies, pasties, sausage rolls.  <b>Other savoury hot or cold foods</b> <b>Commercially</b> purchased pasta meals, pizzas, baked potato products, dim sims, fried rice and noodles, crumbed and coated foods, frankfurts and sausages.   <b>RED</b> category foods and drinks are banned from sale at our preschool. However, some may be provided on special occasions (maximum 2 per term) such as family gatherings and end of term celebrations in which the whole preschool community is involved. The preschool also offers cooking experiences as part of the program. Sometimes red food category foods will be prepared however the preschool will communicate this to families as appropriate.</p>

### Drinks

**Water** is the best drink and a great thirst quencher! Cool, fresh, clean tap water is recommended and is readily available at the preschool.

**Sugary drinks or soft drinks** are not recommended at all.

**The staff at Mitchell Park Kindergarten thank you for supporting the healthy growth and development of all children. For more information refer to Right Bite Policy**

[http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/eatwellsa/files/links/Easy\\_Guide\\_Updated\\_June.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/eatwellsa/files/links/Easy_Guide_Updated_June.pdf)