

HEALTHY FOOD SUPPLY AND NUTRITION POLICY

Rationale

This children's centre 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 DECS 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 this children's 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 that fit within the *Right Bite* strategy for their children at preschool.

This food policy has been established after consultation with staff and the Governing Council.

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 curriculum where possible
- supports children to develop a strong sense of physical wellbeing as guided by the Early Years Learning Framework, Outcome 3 and the National Quality Standard
- is inclusive of children with intolerances, allergies and cultural beliefs.

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
- eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- use the school and centre gardens to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods

Our children's 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
- is a breastfeeding friendly site

Food supply

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 preschool community
- ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive

- ensures a healthy food supply for activities and events in line with the *Right Bite* strategy
- displays nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating

Morning and Afternoon Snack

Parents and carers are to provide a healthy snack for their child in line with the Right Bite Strategy, which:

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

Fresh fruits, vegetables or a slice of cheese are recommended for snack time.

Lunch

- Parents and carers are to supply a healthy lunch in line with the Right Bite Strategy.
- Families are encouraged to pack children food in an insulated container with a frozen brick or frozen water. This lunch box is placed in the lunch trolley every day. Pennington Children's Centre will provide a cool place to store food (inside an air-conditioned space).

Food Safety

Our centre

- Promotes and teaches food safety to children during food learning/cooking activities
- Encourages staff to access training as appropriate to healthy eating guidelines
- Provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- Promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.
- Wherever possible we provide recipes to families when cooking

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a serious and sudden form of allergic reaction and usually occurs within minutes of exposure to a trigger substance. Anaphylaxis can be life threatening without immediate appropriate treatment.

There are often times when children attending our kindergarten have severe life threatening allergies to particular foods/substances. Staff will inform the centre community when there are children with severe allergies attending and what foods/substances trigger these reactions.

As we almost always have at least one child enrolled and attending with a nut allergy which can be life threatening, we ask that **no nuts or nut products are brought to the site**. As children with allergies enrol or the type of allergy is reported to staff, this restriction may expand to include other triggers when necessary.

Birthday Celebrations

We acknowledge that birthdays are a special time for children and a celebration children enjoy sharing with friends. Families are welcome to provide a fruit and vegetable platter to be shared with the whole group of children in celebration of their child's birthday. No other food items are to be brought in by families at these times.

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 family, health services and industry

Our centre:

- Invites families to be involved in the review of our whole of site healthy 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, and promotes the alignment of fundraising with the Right Bite strategy.

This policy has been ratified by the Pennington Kindergarten Governing Council in October 2017. This policy will be reviewed in October 2019 or when circumstances related to the programme warrant an earlier review.

Reference: Right Bite Food and Nutrition Policy for Preschool – Nov 2007NQS 2.2.1