



Healthy Food and Nutrition Policy

Rationale

"Healthy Eating is fundamental to good health throughout life for all people. It underpins healthy growth and development, contributes to health and wellbeing, positive mental health and quality of life, and plays a role in preventing disease and disability".

"Overall for good health children need to drink plenty of water and eat plenty of fruit, vegetables, legumes and cereals; adequate amounts of lean meat and low fat milk products; and importantly choose foods containing less fats, less saturated fat, less sugar, and less salt".

"Children with appropriate nutrition have improved cognitive development, attention span, work capacity, behaviour and attendance at school and preschool. Establishing healthy eating patterns at a young age provides a critical foundation for good eating patterns in adult life..."

(Healthy Eating Guidelines, DECS, 2004)

At Pimpala Kindergarten we aim to promote nutritional eating habits in a safe, supportive environment for all children. We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong healthy eating habits, which can benefit children in these ways:

- Short term: maximises growth, development and activity levels whilst minimising illness.
- Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life, e.g. heart disease, strokes, some cancers and diabetes.
- Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning experiences.
- Advice from speech pathologists and dentists indicates that children should be eating crunchy foods.

Therefore:

- kindy staff encourage and model 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.

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 food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food.
- encourages children to develop an understanding and responsibility for sustainable practices.
- integrates the Early Years Learning Framework (LO3 Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing) and NQS (QA2 – Standard 2.1 Each child's health is promoted).

The Learning environment

Children at our preschool:

- have fresh, filtered tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day.
- are encouraged to bring their own named drink bottle filled with water only.
- eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours.

The Learning environment (cont.)

- eat whilst seated.
- use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods.

Our preschool:

- provides rewards and encouragements that are not related to food or drink.
- 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.
- provides a positive eating environment which reflects cultural and family values.
- is a breastfeeding friendly site.

Our preschool will ensure a healthy food supply for preschool activities, celebrations and events, strictly limiting availability of high fat, high sugar, or processed foods to no more than twice a term, in accordance with the *Healthy Eating Guidelines*.

We will display nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating, and provide information updates in newsletters and on our community noticeboard.

Food and water supply

Staff will ensure that food provided to children by the preschool is in line with the **Right Bite** strategy and will ensure healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive.

Parents and carers are encouraged to provide healthy food and drink choices in line with the **Right Bite** strategy.

Our preschool has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home:

Snack Time

Parents and carers are encouraged to supply foods that:

- provide children with important minerals and vitamins.
- encourage a taste for healthy foods.

Parents/Caregivers are asked to supply fruit and vegetable snacks at fruit time only.

Parents/Caregivers are required to provide enough snacks for two snack times (morning and afternoon). Snacks are to be packed in a separate container to lunches to support children's independence, and be kept in children's bags.

Lunch Time

For lunch, the healthy eating guidelines will be in place.

Parents are encouraged to follow these guidelines and ask staff if they have any issues or concerns.

A healthy lunch box might include:

- a sandwich
- sushi
- fruit
- yoghurt/custard
- veggie sticks
- savoury rice
- pita bread
- salad wrap
- rice cakes with savoury filling

Please do not pack any unhealthy foods in your child's lunchbox.

Kindy staff will discourage non-healthy food choices, such as highly processed snack foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar and low in essential nutrients in children's lunchboxes eg. lollies, chocolates, sweet biscuits, muesli bars, breakfast bars, fruit filled bars, chips, oven-baked crackers and corn chips. Children will not be prevented from eating these foods but kindy staff will encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious foods provided.

Lunch Time (cont.)

Please note that due to food safety regulations we will not be able to heat or cook any foods for lunch. Refrigeration facilities are NOT available for lunchboxes. Parents/Caregivers will therefore need to supply children's lunches in an insulated lunchbox with a freezer brick, where possible.

If foods containing life threatening allergens are packed (e.g. a nut based sandwich), the food will be removed to the kitchen until dismissal time and the child will be offered an alternate food eg. a plain sandwich. Children will be sent home with a note to inform parents that their food does not fit in with our Healthy Food and Nutrition Policy and guidelines.

Nude Food

Our preschool encourages nude food (ie unpackaged or with minimal packaging) and children will be required to take their food packaging and any uneaten lunch home. Fruit and vegetable scraps will go into our compost bin or worm farm.

Birthdays

Children's birthdays are celebrated with a "Happy Birthday" song and a pretend cake with candles. Please do not send birthday cakes or other birthday food treats to preschool. Families are asked to reserve birthday cakes and sweets for celebrations at home.

Fundraising

Our preschool will aim to align its fundraising initiatives with the healthy eating guidelines provided by 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 *Healthy Eating Guidelines*.
- provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone.
- promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.
- cooks healthy options and whenever possible provide recipes for families.
- will liaise with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues. It is however the parents/ carers responsibility to notify the preschool if their child has a special dietary requirement. Children identified as having an allergy or special dietary requirement will be recorded on the 'Allergies and Medical Conditions' sheet displayed on the kitchen wall.

Allergy Aware/ Nut Free Zone

- Anaphylaxis is a life threatening condition caused by extreme allergic reaction to an allergen eg. nuts.
- Due to the prevalence of nut allergies in the community, the preschool is a nut free zone.
- No foods containing nuts or traces of nuts are permitted.
- From time to time there may be a restriction on other foods if there is a child attending with other specific food allergies.

Working with families, health services and industry

Our preschool:

- invites parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our food and nutrition policy.
- provides information from various sources, including the **Right Bite** strategy to families and caregivers through a variety of ways including:
 - newsletters
 - policy development/review
 - information on enrolment
 - pamphlet/poster displays

This Healthy Food and Nutrition policy has been established after consultation with staff and parents on Governing Council.

References:

Right Bite, Easy guide to healthy food and drink supply for South Australian schools and preschools policy (2015)
https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/easy_guide_to_healthy_food_and_drink_supply_in_sa_schools_and_preschools.pdf

Right Bite Ready Reckoner

https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/right_bite_ready_reckoner.pdf

Eat Well SA Schools and Preschools Healthy Eating Guidelines (2004)

https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/healthy_eating_guidelines.pdf

Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia (2003)

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-family-toc~gug-family-guidelines>

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating (2013)

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/n55>

National Quality Standard 2.2 (2018)

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard/quality-area-2-childrens-health-and-safety>

Endorsed by Governing Council: 25/09/18

Next review: July 2021