

Food & Nutrition Policy

Policy Statement

The Nuriootpa Community Children's Centre is committed to utilising food preparation and food hygiene activities as part of the education and multi-cultural experiences of children. Staff will model healthy eating, good hygiene practices and present food in a safe manner to support the goals of the Food and Nutrition Policy. Parents will be provided with the Food and Nutrition Policy with their Centre handbook and are able to access the policy at any time in the policy folder displayed in the entrance to the Centre.

The Nuriootpa Community Children's Centre is an "Allergy Aware" Centre. (See Allergy Aware Policy)
It is crucial that any foods that contain nuts are avoided.

How the Policy will be implemented

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years. If new legal requirements or research findings are available then the policy will be reviewed sooner. Recommendations will be presented to the Governing Council and made available for staff/parent consultation for final determination.

The Food and Nutrition Policy will be available from the "Centre's Policy" Folder, located in the front foyer.

Healthy Food – Food bought from home

We believe that the Centre should model healthy eating practices and eating habits, with an emphasis on introducing children to a wide variety of food. The use of added sugar, salt, preservatives and colourings will be avoided where possible. Families will be encouraged to provide food, for their children, that is nutritious, safe, varied and culturally diverse. Food will be used as a learning experience, and at times children will take part in activities including its preparation.

Centre Responsibilities

- To make information available to parents about providing foods that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents and provide at least 50% of the recommended dietary intake for key nutrients, Families will be given a copy of the Centre's Food and Nutrition Policy.
- Parents will be advised when their child is not eating well, or of any concerns.
- An eating environment which promotes family and multicultural values will be provided.
- Children will have the opportunity to learn about food and nutrition through food awareness activities, practical food preparation experiences and discussions about food.
- Tap water will be the main drink and will be available, supplied by the centre, at all times.
- Food will always be available in case of an emergency.
- The Centre will implement and encourage practices that assist children to receive safe food.
- Food will be stored and handled hygienically by staff and children to minimise food contamination.
- The Centre will implement practices that ensure children receive food hygienically e.g. washing hands.

Parent Responsibilities

The Centre asks that parents support the food & nutrition policy in the following ways:

1. Providing foods that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents, and this food will provide at least 50% of the Recommended Dietary intake for key nutrients. (See attached Food Guidelines information).
2. Supplying at least one piece of fruit per day in your child's lunch box.
3. All products containing nuts are not to be brought to the Centre (**Also see the Centre's Allergy Aware Policy**)
4. Avoid sending whole eggs and whole fish (particularly in the Kangariilla Room – as these are high risk allergy foods).
5. Not sending lollies, crisps, sugar drinks, chocolate covered muesli bars or chewing gum to the Centre with your child(ren).
6. Foods to avoid to prevent choking **for Under 4 yr olds**
 - a. Avoid foods that can break off into hard pieces
 - b. Avoid foods like raw carrot, celery sticks
 - c. Avoid popcorn nuts, corn chips or other similar foods.

Mealtimes and the Eating Environment

Mealtimes and the eating environment play a large role in the nutrition outcomes of children. It helps children:

- to learn and form good food habits which become eating habits for life
- to learn a positive attitude about food
- to try a variety of foods, and
- to learn family and community values and culturally inclusive perspectives.

When planning the Centre's mealtimes, consideration is also given to food safety as well as staff role modelling and family and cultural values and practices.

Centre Responsibilities

- Staff will support an environment where positive food habits are encouraged
- The Centre provides fruit and cheese for morning tea and afternoon tea in the Child Care Rooms.
- Late afternoon tea (Child Care) – children can eat food from their lunch box or the Centre will provide fruit.
- Children will be closely monitored whilst eating.
- Staff will sit with children and, where possible, eat and enjoy the same food.
- Staff will promote a positive, relaxed, social eating environment with children.
- Staff promote positive discussion about the foods being served to children.
- Staff will provide positive encouragement and role modelling.
- The food preferences of children will be respected.
- Cultural food events and practices are celebrated.
- Staff discuss food from a variety of cultures.
- Staff talk about health and nutrition.
- Staff encourage self-help and, where necessary, assist children at mealtimes.
- Precautions to prevent and treat choking are known by all staff and implemented.

Other Dietary Considerations

Special Diets

Goal:

The special need of children with food allergies, food sensitivities or medical diets will be catered for in consultation with parents and the appropriate medical professionals.

Centre Responsibilities

- Families will be informed about what dietary support can be provided upon enrolment.
- If the child has individual dietary needs, parents/carers will be asked to provide a health care plan, written by a relevant health professional e.g. doctor, paediatrician, specialist, dietician. The care plan should include information (provided by a Doctor/ paediatrician/specialist) about medical conditions and any recommended emergency procedures, as well as information about nutrition intervention required (provided by a Dietician).
- Special diets for cultural or religious reasons will be discussed and negotiated with parents/carers to the best of the Centre's ability.
- The health and safety of the child is foremost and any concerns about the child's dietary intake will be discussed with parents/carers.

Steps to be taken if an allergy or food sensitivity is suspected:

- A food allergy should be confirmed by a specialist (e.g. Paediatrician or Immunologist) or a General Practitioner. A food intolerance should be confirmed by a Paediatrician, Immunologist or dietician. The specialist should provide detailed information about the allergy or sensitivity and details of any emergency procedure required.
- A dietician's input is strongly recommended. A dietician can provide information about foods that may be eaten and foods to avoid for the period of time that the special diet is needed. Detailed written information needs to be obtained from a dietician.
- Staff will regularly check with parents/carers to see if their child still requires a special diet.
- All staff will be informed of any emergency procedure necessary for the child, and this procedure will be stored where appropriate.

Endorsed November 2017
Next Review November 2019