

Holden Hill Kindergarten's "Healthy Eating" and "No Nuts" Policy

At Holden Hill Kindergarten, we are dedicated to educating children across all areas of learning, including health and nutrition. As part of this program, a healthy eating policy, combined with a "no nuts" component is critical to help educate children about taking care of themselves through healthy eating habits. A balanced and nutritious eating lifestyle, including drinking water, has been clearly linked to healthy brain development which is a crucial component to learning.

We frequently have children enrolled at kindy with severe allergic reactions to certain foods. Therefore it has become necessary to implement a **NO NUTS AT KINDY POLICY** to reduce the risk of harm to children and make our kindergarten a safe environment.

This policy also aims to promote awareness amongst children and parents/caregivers about allergic reactions suffered by some children after coming into contact with these products. The policy aims to alert parents to the potential severity of ANAPHYLACTIC reactions and provide information on how parents can help prevent such reactions by only providing **fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, or plain cheese, meat or sandwiches**. If food is brought into the centre that is unsuitable it will not be eaten but packed safely to take back home.

The duty of care of the Director, Staff and Community is to ensure the safety of all children whilst attending kindergarten; therefore we need to provide an environment that will prevent the risk of exposure to nuts and other allergens. In the event that accidental exposure may occur, the preschool has an emergency procedure in place.

Individual cases may occasionally require other foods to be added to this policy and amended accordingly. In these cases, families will be notified of any changes as soon as possible.

Information on Allergies

Many children have allergies and if exposed react in the following ways; hives, swollen eyes, wheezing and symptoms of asthma, itching especially around the mouth, swelling tongue, flushed face, cramping and nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, and loss of consciousness. A few reactions are life threatening, some children are severely allergic to foods such as peanut butter and products that may contain traces of nuts. Even tiny amounts could be fatal within minutes. Children who have severe allergies to such food substances are exposed to a health risk not only when peanut products are consumed in their environment but from residue left on fingers, toys and other surfaces this is called cross contamination. These children are termed "ANAPHYLACTIC" – i.e. suffer from ANAPHYLAXIS.

What is anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of an allergic reaction that can result in death. An anaphylactic reaction (or full body shock) can occur within seconds of exposure to an allergen or it may occur as a delayed reaction several hours after the initial exposure. Anaphylaxis is a critical medical emergency that requires immediate treatment with adrenalin by injection to prevent permanent injury or loss of life (Adrenalin opens up the airways and blood vessels in the body).

What can children bring to eat at Holden Hill Kindergarten?

We encourage healthy food – creating positive eating habits and nutrition for healthy brain development. An extensive list of ideas is included in this policy. **Children CAN NOT bring biscuits, cakes, muffins, 'health' bars, sandwich spreads such as peanut butter or nutella, muesli bars, LCM bars, fruit bars, lollies, chocolate, chips, as many of these items have nuts or 'traces' of nuts in them or are classified as being 'unhealthy' (i.e. a treat to eat at home not at kindy).** Please read packets/labels carefully, even those that say they are packed in a place that has other nut products should not be considered as there is still a minimal risk of containing nuts etc.

Here are some suggestions of what you can bring for snack/lunch time:

Breads and cereals:

Sandwiches, fruit bread, naan bread, scones, pikelets, rolls, pita bread, lavash bread, bagels, foccacia, crisp breads, crackers, rice cakes, Sao, weetbix cut in half and sandwiched with vegemite, rye bread, corn thins, crumpets and mountain bread. Please note: sandwiches are not to be filled with peanut butter or nutella, however cheese, fritz, ham, honey, vegemite or salad sandwiches are perfectly ok.

Fruit:

All types of fruit are ok to bring. E.G. apples, bananas, mandarins, grapes, pears, kiwi fruit, strawberries, oranges, peaches, apricots, plums, passion fruit, lycees, figs, berries, sultanas, dried fruits (e.g. apricots, pears, apple, figs, dates, prunes), watermelon, rock melon, honeydew melon, pineapple, cherries, puréed fruit, and home-made stewed fruit.

Vegetables:

All types of vegetables are ok to bring. E.G. Mushrooms, tomatoes, cucumber, capsicum, bean sprouts, lettuce, gherkins, celery, snow peas, carrots, pickled onions, olives, raw broccoli/cauliflower, mixed salad, avocado, sugar snap peas, raw beans, tinned corn kernels, pop corn (dry popped, not coloured)

Meat and meat alternatives:

Lean meat, canned tuna, baked beans, tofu, cold meats (e.g. ham, fritz, salami, kabana etc)

Dairy food:

Cheese. We discourage yoghurt as it is often messy and has a high sugar content.

Drinks:

Please pack a clearly labelled drink bottle filled with **water only** each day for your child. Staff will happily re-fill empty water bottles and provide a drinking cup if a drink bottle is forgotten.

Healthy eating practices:

- Staff will monitor children eating when necessary for medical reasons, and will reinforce hygiene habits of washing hands before eating.
- Staff will model healthy eating and adhere to the policy guidelines.
- Children will be taught how to deal with their food scraps/wrappers in environmentally appropriate ways (recycling/composting).
- Birthdays are celebrated through singing Happy Birthday to the child during group time. Please do not provide any cake/treats at kindy for birthdays.
- Please be aware of safe food storage. Food such as chicken and rice when not stored appropriately are at risk of developing salmonella and can make people sick. If in doubt, don't pack it.
- Staff will not heat food for children to eat for safety reasons, so please ensure your child will eat the food you have provided cold/at room temperature.

Please note: If children do bring any food that does not adhere to this policy, it will be returned to their kindy bag and a reminder note given to families.