

# Vale Park Preschool

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## Healthy food supply and nutrition policy

### National Quality Standard Area 2 | Children's health and safety

Children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health, safety, and wellbeing.

### Purpose

Department preschools, children's centres, and kindergartens support healthy choices by promoting healthy eating and physical activity. Learning about healthy lifestyles in the children's everyday routines and experiences is encouraged by this site.

A strong sense of health and wellbeing supported by good nutrition and an active lifestyle provides children with confidence, energy and optimism that contributes to their ability to concentrate, co-operate, and learn.

Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition and physical fitness, is integral to wellbeing and self-confidence

This policy applies to all staff at this site.



## Food curriculum

Our food and nutrition curriculum:

- > Is consistent with the *Australian 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.
- > Is integrated into our program and consistent with the Early Years Learning Framework and NQS.
- > Lunchtime is part of the curriculum and children are encouraged to talk about food and nutrition in a positive, relaxed, social eating environment where self-help skills are promoted.

## The learning environment

We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in the following ways:

1. Maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health
2. 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
4. Children should be eating crunchy foods (in line with advice from speech pathologists and dentists)
5. Use the school's and our garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious food

Therefore:

- > Our staff 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

Our site:

- > Provides rewards/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
- > Is a breastfeeding friendly site

## Food supply

Families are asked to provide healthy food for their child to eat. Lunches are stored inside but are not refrigerated; therefore cool packs may be required and are to be supplied by families. Educators are unable to reheat food. If children require warm food, families need to pack it in a thermos already heated. Please ensure that all snack and lunch boxes, containers and drink bottles are clearly named.

## Snack and lunch time

Fresh fruits, vegetables or a piece of cheese are recommended for snack time in a separate container kept in their bags. We understand that from time-to-time families may run out of fruit. A healthy sandwich (multigrain or wholemeal bread), with savoury filling, dried fruit, or plain unsalted crackers (e.g., Vitaweats) are acceptable. The less packaging in a container the healthier it is for children.

This:

- > Provides children with important minerals and vitamins
- > Encourages a taste for healthy foods
- > Encourage healthy food and drink choices
- > Encourages chewing which promotes oral muscle development
- > Ensure healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive

## Lunch time

The Healthy Eating Guidelines apply to lunchtime. We encourage healthy food and drink choices for children in line with the **Rite Bite Strategy**. Parents are encouraged to follow the above guidelines and speak with staff if they have any issues. A healthy lunch box might include a sandwich, wraps, sushi, rice crackers, fruit, yoghurt, cheese, veggie sticks etc. Please do not send chocolate, muesli bars, roll ups, Nutella, lollies, chocolate chip biscuits, buns, muffins, cakes, sweet slices, chips, crisps etc.

## Water

Children have fresh, clean water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day. Children are also encouraged to bring their own named drink bottle, which they store on the drink trolley.

## Canteen – Vale Park Primary School

Children have the option to order from the Preschool Menu at the school canteen. This menu is based on the healthy guidelines as well.

## Special occasions and birthday guidelines

Please do not send cakes or other birthday food treats with your child.

## Food safety

Our site:

- > Promotes and teaches food safety to children during food learning/cooking activities
- > Promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children
- > Cooks healthy options using produce from our preschool/school garden
- > Provides a cool place in the kitchen for the storage of children's lunch boxes
- > Does not reheat children's food

## Food and drinks provided to children

- > Children will sit down to eat
- > Children will not share their food with other children
- > We provide information from health professionals to families and caregivers on the Healthy Eating Guidelines through a variety of media such as regular newsletters, policy development and review, information on enrolment, poster displays and the website.

## Guidelines for Children with specific Dietary Requirements

We liaise with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues (e.g., allergies, dietary requirements, diabetes, cultural and religious etc.). Please speak to staff regarding your child's individual needs.

## Allergy aware

It is a requirement that all food provided for your child does not contain nuts. At times, there are children enrolled who have an anaphylactic allergy to nuts, eggs, and egg products in particular. This means that there can be serious and even fatal consequences for these children if they come into contact with these ingredients. Parents and caregivers are asked to provide lunchbox foods that do not contain nuts. If there are children allergic to eggs, or egg products children are asked not to bring these. Products containing "traces of nuts" which are found on most packaged foods are generally fine unless there is a child with specific allergy to traces as well. In this case, notes will be sent out to parents reminding them of the more stringent requirements.

## Supporting information

Detail or link to supporting information here but only if it is useful to your readers. Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia, and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating, NQS, EYLF, Rite Bite

## Approvals

Status: Approved

Version: 0.1

Approved by: Vicki Angel | Director, Vale Park Preschool

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: Hilda Mansoori | Governing Council, Vale Park Preschool

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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Next review date: 18 August 2025 (must be 3 years from the approved date)

## Revision record

(List the revision record in order of most recent updates at the top)

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