



Nutrition and Food Safety Policy

As per Education and *Care Services National Law and Regulations*, our Preschool has a nutrition and food safety policy and procedures in place to ensure quality practices relating to nutrition, food and beverages and dietary requirements are followed at all times.

Our Preschool recognises the importance of safe food handling and healthy eating to promote the growth and development of young children and is committed to supporting the healthy food and drink choices of children in our care.

We are committed to implementing the healthy eating key messages outlined in the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. We support and promote the SA Health Foods standards (Food Act 2001) and the SA Right Bite Food and Drink Supply Strategy.

National Quality Standard (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
78	Food and beverages
79	Service providing food and beverages

Purpose

Our Preschool recognises the importance of healthy eating for the growth, development, and wellbeing of young children and is committed to promoting and supporting healthy food and drink choices for children in our care. This policy affirms our position on the provision of healthy food and drink while children are in our care and the promotion and education of healthy choices for optimum nutrition.

We believe in providing a positive eating environment that reflects dietary requirements, cultural and family values, and promotes lifelong learning for children.

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Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, visitors, and management of the Preschool.

Implementation

Our Preschool has a responsibility to help children to develop good food practices and approaches, by working with families and educators.

All food prepared by the Preschool or families will endeavour to be consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines. Food will be served at various times throughout the day to cater for all children's nutritional needs.

Mealtimes reflect a relaxed and pleasant environment where educators engage in meaningful conversations with children. This assists in creating a positive and enjoyable eating environment.

All kitchens and food preparation areas will comply with Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) and any relevant local jurisdictional requirements (i.e., local council registrations and inspections). All staff involved in the stages of food handling have the skills and knowledge to ensure food safety is a priority.

Nutrition

Where food is brought from home:

- provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and that are suitable for children's lunchboxes
- encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious food provided
- food items that should not be brought to the service are detailed and provided to families prior to enrolment. This includes any foods directly linked to medication needs.

Approved Provider/ Management/ Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations in relation to this policy and relevant procedures to ensure awareness of safe food handling practices while promoting healthy eating
- ensure new staff and educators are aware of food practices and procedures as outlined in this policy during induction and orientation
- ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day
- ensure food and beverages are offered to children regularly during the day

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- ensure enrolment forms include information relating to child's food preferences, allergies, intolerances, cultural or religious considerations or medical conditions which involve food or food practices
- ensure children's individual dietary requirements as per enrolment information or medical condition plans are communicated to all staff
- ensure any changes to children's individual dietary requirements are recorded and communicated to all staff
- encourage staff to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about early childhood nutrition and food safety practices

Educators/ Food Handlers will:

- ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day
- regular timetabled drink breaks with explicit instruction "10 sips"
- be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances, and special dietary requirements and consult with families and management to ensure individual management plans are developed and implemented
- ensure all children remain seated while eating and drinking
- ensure all children are always supervised whilst eating and drinking
- ensure age and developmentally appropriate utensils and furniture are provided for each child
- not allow food to be used as a form of punishment or to be used as a reward or bribe
- not allow the children to be force fed or being required to eat food they do not like or more than they want to eat
- establish healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into our program
- talk to families about their child's food intake and voice any concerns about their child's eating
- encourage parents to the best of our ability to continue our healthy eating message in their homes

Cleaning

Our Preschool will:

- ensure that food preparation areas and surfaces are cleaned both before, after, and during any food preparation
- ensure that all dishwashing sponges, brushes, and scourers are cleaned after each use
- prevent pest infestations by cleaning spills as quickly as possible and ensuring rubbish and food scraps are disposed of frequently
- ensure that floor mops are thoroughly cleaned and air dried after each use

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- replace any cleaning equipment that shows signs of wear or permanent soiling.

All staff handling food will:

- ensure children and staff wash and dry their hands (using soap, running water, and single use disposable towels or individual hand towels) before handling food or eating meals and snacks
- ensure gloves (and food tongs) are used by all staff when required.
- discourage children from handling other children's food and utensils

Creating a positive learning environment

Our Preschool will:

- ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role-model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided
- choose water as a preferred drink
- endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with educators and other children
- encourage children to assist to set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink, providing opportunities for them to develop independence and self-esteem while promoting children's agency and decision-making
- respect each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats.
- be patient with messy or slow eaters
- not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes

Service Program

Our Preschool will:

- foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating
- provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices
- embed the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in everyday activities and experiences.

Cooking with children

Cooking can help develop children's knowledge and skills regarding healthy eating habits. Cooking is a great, fun activity and provides opportunities for children to be exposed to new foods, sharing of recipes and cooking skills. On these occasions participating educators will be vigilant to ensure that the experience remains safe, and relevant food hygiene practices are adhered to.

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Communicating with families

Our Preschool will:

- a copy of the *Nutrition and Food Safety Policy* will be available to all families
- provide opportunities for families to contribute to the review and development of the policy
- request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to the Preschool and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children's individual dietary needs are met
- communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the Preschool and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home
- communicate regularly with families and provide information and advice on appropriate food and drink to be included in children's lunchboxes. This information may be provided to families in a variety of ways including factsheets, newsletters, during orientation, information sessions and informal discussion.

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Review

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Ngari Boehm	Nominated Supervisor - Principal	
POLICY REVIEWED	JAN 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JAN 2024
POLICY REVIEWED	MARCH 2024		MARCH 2025
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">policy maintenance - no major changes to policy		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">		

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