



Bacchus Marsh
Grammar

ELC POLICY

Early Learning Centre Food, Nutrition and Beverage Policy

Approved by the School Principal 13 September 2024

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Food, Nutrition and Beverage Policy

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1 National Quality Standard

QA2	2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle - Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
QA6		Collaborative Partnerships with families and communities
QA7		Governance and Leadership

2 National Regulations

Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	78	Food and beverages
	90	Medical conditions policy
	91	Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

3 Early Years Learning Framework

LO3	Children recognise and communicate their bodily needs (for example, thirst, hunger, rest, comfort, physical activity).
	Children are happy, healthy, safe and connected to others.
	Children show an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.
	Educators promote continuity of children’s personal health and hygiene by sharing ownership of routines and schedules with children, families and the community.
	Educators discuss health and safety issues with children and involve them in developing guidelines to keep the environment safe for all.
	Educators engage children in experiences, conversations and routines that promote healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.
	Educators model and reinforce health, nutrition and personal hygiene practices with children.

4 Aim

- 4.1.1 Our service aims to promote good nutrition and healthy food habits and attitudes to all children and families at the service. We recognise that promoting healthy eating and oral health are complementary. We also aim to support children with food allergies, dietary requirements or restrictions, and specific cultural or religious practices.

5 Background

- 5.1.1 Oral health is essential for children’s overall health and wellbeing. Tooth decay is Australia’s most prevalent health problem despite being preventable. Therefore, early childhood education and care services play an important role in promoting young children’s oral health. This is a time when lifelong oral health behaviours are being formed.
- 5.1.2 Healthy eating and good nutrition have a major influence on children’s health and wellbeing and a direct impact on their growth and development. Having good nutrition at a young age is essential for healthy development of young children, as most children have formed lifelong habits by school age



- 5.1.3 Mealtimes provide a valuable opportunity to build an environment that enhances children's sense of being, becoming and belonging. We value the social development that mealtime provides, therefore we ensure that they are positive, relaxed and social and represent a family life atmosphere.
- 5.1.4 It is recognised that every member of the service impacts on children's health and contributes to creating an environment that promotes healthy eating and good oral health. All members of our service including educators, staff, children, and families will be supported to meet this policy and given a chance to provide input.

6 Related Policies

Additional Needs Policy

Enrolment Policy

Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy

Medical Conditions Policy

7 Implementation

- 7.1.1 Families are required to provide morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea and breakfast if required for their child. To ensure children's health and wellbeing, foods provided must be healthy, nutritious, be prepared in a way that is not likely to present a choking hazard, and be consistent with the:
- Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n55>
A Summary of the Guidelines is available at
http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/n55a_australian_dietary_guidelines_summary_book_0.pdf
- or
- Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012
http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/n56_infant_feeding_guidelines.pdf
A summary of the Infant Feeding Guidelines is available at
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n56>

8 Definitions

- 8.1.1 **Healthy eating:** Eating a wide variety of foods from the five food groups each day. These are:
- fruit
 - vegetables and legumes/beans
 - grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain
 - milk, yoghurt, cheese, and alternatives
 - lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans.
- 8.1.2 Healthy eating also means eating in a way that is socially and culturally appropriate, having regular meals and snacks and eating food to satisfy hunger, appetite and energy needs.
- 8.1.3 **Nutrition:** The process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth.
- 8.1.4 **'Discretionary'/'Sometimes'** food and drink: Discretionary/Sometimes food is high in fat, sugar and salt or a combination of these. They typically have very little nutritional value and are often processed and packaged. Examples of discretionary food include:
- chocolate, confectionery, jelly
 - sweet biscuits, high fat/salt savory biscuits, chips
 - high sugar/high fat cakes and slices
 - cream, ice cream
 - deep fried foods (e.g. hot chips) and pastry-based foods (pies, sausage rolls and pasties)
 - most fast food and takeaway foods

- some processed meats (e.g. sausages, frankfurts/hot dogs, salami, strasburg, devon, some commercial chicken nuggets and fish fingers)
 - soft drinks, fruit juice and fruit drinks, cordial, sports drinks, energy drinks, flavoured milk and flavoured mineral water.
- 8.1.5 **Oral health:** A standard of health of the oral and related tissues that enables an individual to eat, speak and socialise without active disease, discomfort or embarrassment and that contributes to general wellbeing.
- 8.1.6 Families must take care with foods that are normally stored in the fridge/freezer or must be cooked before being eaten.
- 8.1.7 The Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, volunteers and students will:
- ensure children have access to water (preferably tap) and offer them water regularly during the day
 - ensure children are offered their foods and beverages throughout the day that meet their nutritional and developmental needs and any specific dietary requirements. These requirements may be based on written advice from families (e.g. in the enrolment form) or as part of a child's medical management plan
 - ensure routines are flexible enough so that children who do not eat during routine meal or snack times, or who are hungry, are provided with food. Educators will not force children to eat food they do not like or more than they want
 - encourage families to provide healthy food for their children at home which is consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines., talk to families about their child's food intake and voice any concerns about their child's eating
 - ensure food is stored safely in line with procedures set out in the Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy
 - supervise children when they're eating or drinking
 - provide age and developmentally appropriate furniture for each child
 - Ensure that oral hygiene practices are promoted and undertaken where appropriate.
 - ensure mealtimes are relaxed, pleasant and timed to meet most children's needs.
 - integrate learning about food, nutrition, and oral health into the Curriculum and ensure diversity and culture is considered when discussing healthy eating practises.
 - never use food as a punishment, reward or as a bribe.
 - Celebrations and events promote healthy eating and discourage discretionary options.
 - encourage children to develop their sense of agency by feeding themselves independently and developing their social skills at mealtimes
 - model and reinforce healthy eating habits and food options with children during eating times.
 - Educators and staff are supported to consume healthy foods and drinks and maintain good oral health practices at work.
 - Healthy eating and oral health information and policy requirements are included in educator and staff orientation/induction.
 - Ensure that healthy eating and oral health information is provided to families, such as information about accessing local dental services and how to create healthy, nutritious meals.
 - When food is provided to staff and educators for meetings, celebrations and events, healthy food options are included, and discretionary/sometimes options are discouraged.
 - The Nominated Supervisor will ensure staff are trained in nutrition, food safety and other cultures' food customs if professional development in these areas is required. Educators and staff are supported to access professional development and resources to enable them to deliver healthy eating and oral health education.
 - Partnerships will be established with relevant organisations and health professionals to support healthy eating and oral health practices where appropriate.

9 Sources

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
 My Time, Our Place Framework for School Age Care
 National Quality Standard 2018
 Safe Food Australia, 2nd Edition. January 2001
 Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood 2009
 Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012
 Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013
 Eat for health: Dept Health and Ageing and NHMRC
 Food Standards Code
 Food Safety Standards www.foodstandards.gov.au
 Food Safety Standards for Australia 2001
 Food Standards Australia and New Zealand Act 1991
 Food Standards Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994
 Food Act 1984
 Department of Health Vic: Food Safety
 Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
 Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007
 Australian Breast Feeding Association Guidelines
 Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services
 Belonging, Being and Becoming. The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. Commonwealth of Australia, 2009
 Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework for all Children from Birth to Eight Years. Department of Education and Training, 2016

10 Authorisation

ELC Document Name	Food, Nutrition and Beverage Policy	
Name of Reviewer: Approved Provider	Principal Andrew Neal	Signature:
Name of Reviewer: Nominated Supervisor	Kerry Osborn	Signature:
Date Revised	September 2024	

11 History

Date	Amendment
February 2024	1. Reviewed
September 2024	2. Reviewed in consultation with IPC