

D-1 NUTRITION, FOOD, BEVERAGES AND DIETARY REQUIREMENTS POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Our service aims to promote healthy lifestyles, good nutrition and the wellbeing of all children, educators and families via our procedures and policies. We also aim to support and provide adequately for children with food allergies and sensitivities, dietary requirements and restrictions including cultural, religious and any belief or ideology. Dietary information will be available to families to support their plans for healthy home meals.

PROCEDURE

Our service has a responsibility to help children to develop good food habits and attitudes. By working with families and educators, we aim to positively influence each child's general health and good nutrition. We recognize that these requirements do not apply to food or beverages provided by a parent or family member for consumption by their child at the service (as stated in National Regulations (R79(4)))

a) Where food is provided by the service

Our service will:

- Ensure children have access to and are encouraged to access safe drinking water at all times.
- Ensure children are offered foods and beverages throughout the day that are appropriate to their nutritional and specific dietary requirements based on advice from families provided in the enrolment record and if advised at other times in writing. Families will be reminded to keep this information up to date to ensure that staff are able to act on current relevant information.
- Provide children with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereals, dairy products, lean meats and high protein alternatives.
- Provide a weekly menu of food and beverages provided that are based on the Australian Dietary Guidelines to ensure food is nutritious and adequate in quantity.
- Ensure the weekly menu is prominently displayed and accurately describes the food and beverages being provided for each day of the week and each meal served to children.

- Select foods based on the individual needs of children including but not limited to likes, dislikes, growth and development, cultural needs, religious or health requirements.
- Support children who do not eat during routine mealtimes or children who are hungry to eat foods at other times, without compromising the need to maintain adequate supervision of the remainder of the group and whilst being mindful of children's pending food routines at home such as dinner time approaching etc.
- Ensure that our menu is based on publications currently supported by the government, including:
 - ✓ Eat Smart. Play Smart – A Manual for Out Of School Hours Care by Heart Foundation
 - ✓ The Australian Dietary Guidelines.
- Encourage families to provide food in line with these guidelines.
- Provide food that is hygienic and prepared, stored and handled in accordance with our Safe Food Handling policy.
- Ensure foods and beverages are not served too hot and have a reduced risk of choking.
- Ensure that all foods provided have a full list of ingredients available prior to serving.
- Present food attractively.

b) Where food is brought from home

Our service will:

- Provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and that are suitable for children's lunch boxes.
- Encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious foods provided.
- Discourage the provision of highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt and/or sugar and low in essential nutrients. Examples of these include sweet biscuits, some muesli bars, breakfast bars and fruit-filled bars and chips.
- Food items that should not be brought to the service include confectionary and sugary drinks including soft drinks and energy drinks.
- Ensure there is a full list of ingredients available for any food that is brought from home for other children to consume (such as party food or a birthday cake).

c) Promoting healthy living and nutrition

Our service will:

- Develop health and nutrition awareness and act to the best of our abilities on cross-cultural eating patterns and related food values.
- Make mealtimes relaxed and pleasant and timed to meet the needs of the children. Educators will engage children in a range of interesting experiences, conversations and routines.
- Discuss food and nutrition with the children.
- Not allow food to be withheld as a form of punishment nor for food to be used as a reward or bribe.
- Not require children to eat foods they don't like or to eat more than they wish to eat.
- Support healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into the programme.
- 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 at home.
- Ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times and role model healthy food and drink choices. This includes actively engaging children in conversations about the food and drink provided and discussions about healthy eating.
- Provide nutrition and food safety training opportunities for staff, including an awareness of other cultures and food habits.
- Be aware of children's food allergies and intolerances, dietary requirements, special diets and consult with families to develop individual management plans where required. Remind families to keep the service updated regarding dietary needs.
- Cater to children's individual dietary needs as far as possible or implement strategies to support children's nutrition where multiple or complex dietary requirements are identified.

d) Educators who breastfeed at the service

- The service recognizes the importance and benefits of breastfeeding and that many people return to work before they wish to wean their children. Requests for allowances to be made for educators to continue breastfeeding once they have returned to work at the service will

be treated sympathetically and reasonable efforts will be made to support the educator in her choice to continue breastfeeding.

- On return to work from parental leave, educators may seek to change their work arrangements. The returning staff member may meet with the Nominated Supervisor to try to work out an arrangement which suits the educator and supports the smooth running of the service.
- A quiet, private lockable space with a comfortable chair will be provided for those who need to breastfeed or express milk.
- If arrangements have been made for the educator's child to come to the service to breastfeed, the educator will ensure appropriate hygiene procedures are followed including the use of gloves, paper towel, handwashing facilities etc.
- Breastmilk that has been expressed will be refrigerated at 5°C or below.

CONSIDERATIONS

National Quality Standards

2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing

Education and Care Service National Regulations 2011

R77	Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Practices
R78	Food and Beverages
R79	Service Providing Food and Beverages
R80	Weekly Menu

Related Policies / Forms / Other sources

D-2 Safe Food Handling Policy
Tanderra Staff Code of Conduct
Australian Government Department of Education
My Time, Our Place – Framework for school age care Australia
Australian Dietary Guidelines
Food Standards Australia New Zealand
Food Allergy Aware – All about allergens

ENDORSEMENT AND REVIEWS

Date	Action
08.09.2020	Approved by SNCC Board
29.09.2023	Last Review Date
September 2026	Next Review Date