



Healthy Food Supply, Nutrition and Food Safety Policy

Rationale

- Our Kindergarten promotes safe and healthy eating habits in line with the **Right Bite Health Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools** and the **Australian Dietary Guidelines** and relates to the Department for Education wellbeing strategy.

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

1. Short term: maximises growth, development, activity levels, and good health
2. Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life. Develops their own agency over their own body and when they are hungry or full and to listen to their body's signs.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning activities.

Therefore:

- Educators at the Kindergarten will 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 in line with the **Right Bite strategy and the Australian Dietary Guidelines** for their children at Kindergarten

This food policy has been established in consultation with Educators and Parents within our Kindergarten Community

Curriculum

Our Children's centre food and nutrition curriculum:

- Is consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia and the Right Bite Strategy
- Includes learning experiences that provide children with knowledge and attitudes to make positive healthy choices like "the eat the rainbow" program, planting in our garden and discussions at mealtimes.
- Is culturally sensitive and inclusive
- Includes opportunities for cooking and preparing healthy foods. If we cook with children, we will look at vegetarian options to support our community food preferences and cultural beliefs and recipes will align with the dietary guidelines.
- Displays nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating
- Is allergy friendly and as such is a nut aware Kindergarten. Families are informed of any other severe allergies according to current cohort of children. (please see managing medical conditions policy for further information)



Children at our Children's centre will:

- Be offered breakfast each day of weatbix and milk.
- Have fresh, clean tap water available at all times (typically individual drink bottles) and are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day
- Offered opportunities to eat across the day including breakfast, morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea. Afternoon tea is optional as sometimes children will still be full from lunch time.
- Eat in a positive, social environment with educators who model healthy eating behaviours and develop a sense of agency over their food choices and if they are hungry or full.

Food Supply

- Parents/caregivers are encouraged to provide a balanced lunch box using resources like the **Right Bite strategy and the Australian Dietary Guidelines** to help guide their lunch boxes. Items such as chocolate, lollies, fruit juices, flavoured milks will be sent home for children to have at home.
- Parents/caregivers to be aware of any food allergies – The site is a nut aware site so no nuts or nut products to be provided for children (e.g., no Nutella, peanut butter, nut muesli bars) On enrolment if there are additional allergies/children with anaphylaxis to other food products we will inform families of this.
- We look forward to celebrating your child's birthday. We have a special pretend cake that children can put candles on for their special day. We ask that due to the varying dietary requirements of children that you do not bring in anything
- Food cannot be heated at our site, so we encourage families to bring in a thermos if they would like to keep food warm and in the hot months icepacks to keep food cooler. Lunch boxes will be stored inside to help keep these cool in the warmer months.
- The site will always have bread, cheese, and spreads to make lunch and a range of snacks should a child forget their lunchbox.

The Director will:

- On enrolment work with families who have a child with food allergies to fill in the correct Department for Education paperwork.
- During transition visits and information sessions discuss what to pack in lunch boxes including that the site is a nut aware site, water is the only drink supplied and that we encourage families not to pack lollies and chocolate.
- Provide all the paperwork to the Kindergarten to be filed in an allergy buddy in the kitchen
- Provide the Kindergarten with a list of food related allergies
- Promote that the site welcomes breastfeeding parents

Educators will:

- Work with the advice from Dr Kyla a Paediatric Dietician that children are supported to eat what they would like at their mealtimes. Educators will not ask children to eat more or less but get them to think about what they have eaten and if this is enough to help their brains and bodies to work. We may also suggest to a child by highlighting what they have eaten e.g. "you have had a sandwich, a muffin and an apple – what are you saving for lunch? Do you think you have had enough?" Educators



will use such phrases as “have a look at how much you have eaten, is this enough food to make your brain work” or “you have eaten..... Have a think about if your tummy is full now”. Children will never be bribed to eat more or have to finish all their food before going off to play. If a child is taking a large amount of time to eat their food or eating all their food in one go educators will use strategies like:

- sending the child off to eat their food first
 - if all the children have finished and there is only one child left, educators may encourage that child to move to a spot so the educator can watch the child eating and also supervise play at the same time
 - if they have eaten a large amount of food already a timer maybe used, or children encouraged to pick one more thing to eat before putting away their lunch box.
 - Working with families on packing separate containers of food if a child is eating all the food in one mealtime or getting children to pick a certain number of items, they are eating for morning tea so that there is enough for lunch
- Children will be invited back for afternoon tea but are not required to come and sit for this mealtime as they may still be full from lunch.
 - Promote and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum
 - Provide adequate hand washing facilities for everyone and encourage correct hand washing procedures with children and educators
 - support children to sit down for their mealtimes
 - encourage children to feed themselves and be independent with their food choices
 - encourage children to dispose of their food scraps into the appropriate buckets for recycling and composting
 - supervise children whilst they are eating
 - Ensure children are reminded to drink sufficiently to avoid dehydration particularly in the warmer months
 - If children do bring in items such as flavoured milk, juice, lollies, chocolate or nut-based products, educators will not shame the child and will allow them to eat this the first time but will remind at pickup time that this food or drink is not for Kindergarten time. If a child has eaten a nut-based product, educators will check who has anaphylactic reactions to nuts and move children if required. The child who has eaten nuts will need to wash their hands afterwards and the table cleaned up asap to avoid children from touching this space.

For children with special eating requirements and /or special rights we will work with the family and if required an allied health team on a plan to suit that child's needs which may not always comply with this policy.

Working with Families, health services and community

Our Children's Centre provides information to families about health eating through:

- Newsletters
- Policy development/review
- Information on enrolment
- Pamphlet/poster displays



Darlington
Children's Centre
for Early Childhood
Development and Parenting

12a Kurrajong Place
SEACOMBE GARDENS SA 5047
Phone: 8296 2686
Fax: 8377 1569
Email: dl.3624.leaders@schools.sa.edu.au



Government
of South Australia

- Education sessions with our onsite Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapist (e.g., Foodie Fridays)

Approved by Educators and the Governing Council

To be reviewed : May 2027

Governing Council Chairperson: Alison Riddell

Kindergarten Director: Kim Cook

May 2024

R168(2)(a)(i) Nutrition, food and beverages and dietary requirements

National Quality Standards 2.2

Related key regulations: 77, 78, 79, 80

(please note regulation 79 and 80 do not apply to food and beverages provided by a parent)

