



Nutrition, Safe Food Practices and Hygiene Policy

This Policy replaces and updates Nutrition Policy and incorporates Food Practices and Hygiene

1. Introduction

Dubbo and District Preschool Kindergarten Incorporated (includes both Dubbo and District preschool and Buninyong Preschool and will henceforth be referred to as Dubbo and District preschools) recognises the importance of healthy eating to the growth and development of young children and to their lifelong health outcomes. As part of our commitment to children's health, Safety, and wellbeing, we role model food safety and hygiene practices as well as supporting healthy food and beverage choices according to each child's needs. We are also committed to working with families and supporting them to introduce, encourage and guide their children in making healthy food and drink choices.

Our policy forms the parameters and structure of this commitment to children and families and meets the requirements of the Education and Care Services Regulations which require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to food and beverages, nutrition, and dietary requirements.

1.1 Relevant Legislation & Quality Framework

Early Childhood Education and Care Services National Regulations

Section 3(2)(a); 167– Protection of children from harm or hazards

Regulation 77 – Health, hygiene and safe food practices

Regulation 78 – Food and beverages

Regulation 79 – Service providing food and beverages.

Regulation 80 – Weekly menu

Regulation 90 and 91 – Medical conditions

National Quality Standard

Element 1.1.3

Standard 2.1 – *Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.*

Elements 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3

Element 2.2.1

Element 3.2.3

Element 4.2.2

Standard 5.1 *Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.*

Element 5.1.2

Standard 6.1 – *Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.*

Element 6.1.2, 6.1.3

Element 7.1.2



Element 7.2.1

1.2 Links to other Policies

Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy
Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy
Enrolment and Orientation Policy
Excursions Policy and Procedure
Incident, Injury, and Trauma Policy
Administration of First Aid Policy
Governance And Management Policy

2. Scope

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

3. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to create a safe and healthy environment for children while they learn about and consume healthy food at Preschool. We aim to uphold and model the following principles: -

- A. We prioritise children's health, safety and wellbeing. This includes safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, as well as encouraging food and beverages that are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and chosen based on each child's dietary and medical requirements.
- B. We promote a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating and physical activity. We support children and families' understanding about the importance of nutrition and food choices. We support breastfeeding within our service.
- C. We incorporate children's agency and decision-making into our educational program and plan mealtimes and other food-related experiences that enable this. We develop cooking experiences in accordance with the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings and the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.
- D. We promote healthy food by encouraging and supporting children, families and staff in learning about healthy food and drink choices for their children to bring to school and communicate effectively with families about the provision of appropriate healthy food for children whilst they are attending the Preschool.
- E. We value our families and their cultures, customs and religious traditions. We work with them to ensure that the food and beverages we provide for their children reflect their preferences.

4. Our principles in practice



4.1 We prioritise children's health, safety, and wellbeing by: -

- Providing information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and suitable for children's lunchboxes.
- Ensuring that water is readily available (both indoors and outdoors) for children to consume throughout the day and is the main drink. Plain milk is acceptable only at mealtimes and in addition to food.
- Being aware and considerate of children with food allergies, food intolerances and special dietary requirements and consult with families to develop and implement individual management plans.
- Ensuring that all staff handling food have been trained in Basic Food Handling and a certified Food Safety Supervisor is available to supervise and monitor the safe handling of food.
- Developing cooking experiences in accordance with the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings and the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.
- Ensuring all children remain seated while eating.
- Always supervising children while eating and drinking.
- Promoting good oral health through learning experiences and daily 'sip, swish and swallow' practice. Fostering awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices by providing a range of learning experiences that teach and encourage healthy eating.
- Encouraging children to participate in 'firsthand' food preparation experiences.
- Ensuring gloves are worn or tongs are used by all staff handling 'ready to eat' foods.
- Not heating food for children to eat
- Ensuring children and staff, wash and dry their hands (using soap, running water and sole use disposable towels) before and after handling food or eating meals and snacks or use hand sanitiser if handwashing facilities are unavailable.
- Preparing any food that is required onsite in accordance with the Food Safety Program. If we are required to provide meals, kitchens and food preparation areas shall comply with Food Standards Australia and New Zealand. (FSANZ
- Offering fruit/sandwich (if available) to support a healthier option when none has been provided and offer a sandwich if child has insufficient food and is hungry.
- Communicating with parents and carers that Ice-bricks are encouraged to support the safe temperature of foods in children's lunchboxes.
- Ensuring that children are discouraged from handling other children's food and utensils.
- Providing a playdough or other alternative 'cake' for candles to be blown out for a birthday celebration or using the child's own cupcake.

4.2 We promote a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating and physical activity. We support children and families' understanding about the importance of nutrition and food choices by: -

- Encouraging and supporting breastfeeding mothers



- Providing opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices.
- Embedding the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in everyday activities and experiences.
- Encouraging and supporting children to eat fruits and vegetables.
- Helping educate families and children to choose healthy snacks over unhealthy snacks.
- Encouraging children and their families to turn off the television and devices and to be active each day.
- Following and supporting the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood settings as outlined in the Get up and Grow resources and implement the healthy eating key messages of Munch and Move.
- Ensuring that all educators have access to Munch and Move resources and guidelines and that Educators will role model healthy eating and drinking.
- Providing opportunities for all educators (over time) to attend Munch and Move professional development training or similar as available.
- Educators will discuss foods that are not healthy and how these can be eaten as ‘sometimes’ foods e.g., birthday/ celebration.
- Encouraging children to eat the more nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, such as vegetables, fruit, cheese, yoghurt, and sandwiches, before eating any less nutritious food provided.
- Discouraging the provision of highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt, and sugar and low in essential nutrients in children’s lunchboxes. Where appropriate we will provide information on healthier alternatives for sweet biscuits, muesli bars, breakfast bars, fruit-filled bars, and chips.

4.3 We incorporate children’s agency and decision-making into our educational program and plan mealtimes and other food-related experiences that enable this by: -

- Developing cooking experiences in accordance with the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings and the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.
- Encouraging a wide variety of healthy and nutritious food cooking experiences at preschool, including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, lean meats, and alternative protein sources.
- Use vegetables, fruit, and herbs from the preschool garden in cooking when available.
- Programming for regular healthy cooking experiences.

4.4 We promote healthy food by encouraging and supporting children, families and staff in learning about healthy food and drink choices for their children to bring to school and communicate effectively with families about the provision of appropriate healthy food for children whilst they are attending the Preschool by: -



- Making the Nutrition policy accessible to all families at the preschool.
- Not allowing children to bring foods that are highly discretionary i.e., chocolate bars, lollies, juice, and soft drink.
- Not allowing nuts (and other food as required) to be brought into the Centre that an enrolled child has an anaphylactic reaction to.
- Seeking the involvement from families in reviewing this policy and providing opportunities for families to contribute to the review and development of the policy.
- Providing families with regular information about serving sizes, healthy snack and lunch choices and advice on appropriate choices for lunchboxes in a variety of ways including newsletters, fact sheets, visual information, information sessions and informal discussion.
- Communicating with families about food and nutrition related experiences at preschool, including sharing recipes.
- Requesting that details of any food allergies and/or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to the preschool and work with families to develop a supportive and appropriate response so that a child's individual dietary needs are met.
- Encouraging water as the best choice and the only drink option encouraged whilst at preschool.
- Requesting written communication from a Parent or Carer of a child indicating individual medical/nutritional needs for children whose nutritional requirements /or additional needs fall outside this policy.

4.5 We value our families and their cultures, customs, and religious traditions. We collaborate with them to ensure that any of the food and beverages we provide to their children reflect their preferences. We do this by: -

- Ensuring educators sit with children at morning tea and lunch and actively engage children in conversations about food and drink to promote learning and social interaction. Sit at tables regularly.
- Endeavouring to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Creating a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have sufficient time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying social interactions with their peers and educators.
- Respecting each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats.
- Being patient with slow or messy eaters
- Encouraging children to try different foods but do not force them to eat.
- By not using food as a reward, bribe or withhold food for disciplinary purposes.

5. Parent and Carers



We value effective communication with parents and carers. When providing school snacks and lunch for children to bring to preschool, parents and carers are asked to send food that meets the guidelines outlined in this Policy. Further information about ideas for healthy lunches and snack for children can be obtained by clicking on the links in the resources below.

Parents and carers are also consulted when reviewing this Policy and are always welcome to make suggestions to improve it.

Key Resources

- NSW Health *Munch & Move* program resources available on the Healthy Kids website www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au
- *Caring for Children: Birth to 5 years (Food, Nutrition and Learning Experiences)*, NSW Ministry of Health, 2014
- *Infant Feeding Guidelines*, 2012, www.eatforhealth.gov.au
- *Australian Dietary Guidelines*, 2013, www.eatforhealth.gov.au
- *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th edition), 2013.
- NSW Food Authority information for children's services www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/retail/childrens-services
- Food Standards Australia, for information on food safety and food handling www.foodstandards.gov.au.
- Anaphylaxis Australia www.allergyfacts.org.au
- *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th edition), 2013.