



NUTRITION AND FOOD SAFETY POLICY

As per *Education and Care Services National Regulations* (Regulations) our Service 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 Service 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 acknowledge that the early childhood setting has an important role in supporting families in healthy eating.

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 NSW Health initiative *Munch & Move* and utilise the Australian Government’s *Get Up & Grow-Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood* and *Eat for Health* resources.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

| QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY | | |
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| 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 | |
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| 77 | Health, hygiene and safe food practices |
| S. 2A | Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children |
| S. 3A | Paramount consideration |

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| S. 166A | Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct [NSW] Offence relating to inappropriate conduct |
| 78 | Food and beverages |
| 79 | Service providing food and beverages |
| 80 | Weekly menu |
| 90 | Medical conditions policy |
| 91 | Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents |
| 160 | Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator |
| 162 | Health information to be kept in enrolment record |
| 168 | Education and care service must have policies and procedures |
| 170 | Policies and Procedures to be followed |
| 171 | Policies and procedures to be kept available |
| 172 | Notification of change to policies or procedures |

RELATED POLICIES

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| Administration of First Aid Policy Anaphylaxis Management Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy Enrolment Policy Excursions / Incursions Policy | Family Communication Policy Governance Policy Health and Safety Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Medical Conditions Policy Multicultural Policy |
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PURPOSE

Our Service is committed to supporting healthy eating and positive food practices for children, recognising the important role nutrition plays in children’s growth, development and wellbeing.

We work in partnership with families and align with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines* to promote healthy food and drink choices and foster lifelong healthy eating habits.

This policy outlines our commitment to:

- promoting nutritious and balanced food and drink choices
- creating positive, inclusive and culturally responsive mealtime environments



- supporting children to develop healthy relationships with food
- ensuring safe and hygienic food handling practices.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, approved provider, nominated supervisor, visitors, students, volunteers and management of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service ensures that the safety, health and wellbeing of children are the paramount consideration in all decision-making. This principle underpins all practices relating to nutrition, food safety, and mealtime environments ensuring that children are protected from harm and supported in their wellbeing at all times.

Our Service has a responsibility to help children to develop good food practices and approaches, by working with families and educators. Meal times will be offered 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 staff involved in food handling have the skills and knowledge to ensure food safety is a priority.

NUTRITION

Promote healthy food and drinks based on the Australian guide to healthy eating and the dietary guidelines for children and adolescents.

OUR SERVICE WILL:

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
- Role model healthy eating and activity throughout the day to all children and families.
- 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.



- Promote the six key 'Munch and Move' messages to promote healthy, active habits in children from a young age.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/ MANAGEMENT/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- ensure educators and 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 in both the indoor and outdoor environment
- require staff responsible for preparing, serving and supervising food for children with food allergies undertake the *All about Allergens for Cooks and Chefs* and *All about Allergens for Children's Education and Care (CEC)* online courses- [Food Allergy Aware Training](#)
- display a notice prominently in the main entrance of the Service stating that a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is being cared for or educated at the Service, and provide details of the allergen/s (Reg. 173(2)(f)) [note: this notice should not identify the child]
- ensure food and beverages are offered to children regularly during the day
- 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
- consult with families on enrolment to develop individual management plans, including completing *Medical Risk Minimisation Plans* for children with medical conditions involving food allergies, food intolerances and special dietary requirements as per *Medical Conditions Policy*
- 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.
- ensure that a notice is displayed prominently in the main entrance of the Service stating that a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is being cared for or educated at the Service, and provide details of the allergen/s (Reg. 173(2)(f)) [note: this notice should not identify the child]



EDUCATORS WILL:

- ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day in both the indoor and outdoor environment
- be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances, and special dietary requirements and consult with families and management to ensure individual *Medical Management Plans* are developed and implemented, including completing Medical Risk Minimisation Plans for children with medical conditions involving food as per *Medical Conditions Policy*
- ensure young children do not have access to foods that may cause choking
- actively supervise children during mealtimes to ensure safety and wellbeing
- ensure all children remain seated while eating and drinking
- ensure all children are always supervised children whilst eating and drinking
- participate in regular professional development to maintain and enhance knowledge about early childhood nutrition and food safety practices
- display nutritional information for families and keep them regularly updated
- consider the needs of various age groups at the service- meal times may be offered progressively or at different times
- provide age and developmentally appropriate utensils and furniture for each child
- ensure children are not force fed, coerced or pressured to eat food they do not want or choose to eat, recognising that such practices may constitute inappropriate conduct and pose a risk to children's safety, wellbeing and dignity
- promote healthy eating habits through intentional teaching and inclusion of nutrition in the educational program
- communicate with families about their child's food intake and discuss any concerns respectfully
- encourage families, where appropriate, to support consistent healthy eating practices at home
- 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 and teaching children to recognise the needs of their body
- 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
- not refer to foods as 'healthy' or 'unhealthy'



FOOD HYGIENE

Food poisoning is caused by bacteria, viruses, or other toxins being present in food and can cause extremely unpleasant symptoms such as diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and fevers. Children under five years of age are considered a high-risk group as their immune systems are still developing and they produce less of the stomach acid required to kill harmful bacteria than older children or adults (Foodsafety.gov. 2019).

Our Service will strictly adhere to food hygiene standards to prevent the risk of food poisoning. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to provide an ice pack in children's lunchboxes. Where an ice pack is deemed necessary but hasn't been provided, lunchboxes will be placed in staff fridge.

During warmer weather, the risk of foodborne illnesses increases. Our Service will strictly adhere to food hygiene standards to prevent the risk of food poisoning including:

- emphasising hand hygiene for staff and children and encourage frequent hand washing before and after meals
- implementing food safety practices to minimise the risk of cross-contamination
- ensuring staff are aware of heightened increase in allergic reactions and maintain consistent allergen management
- consider the impact of the sun on food safety when eating meals outside

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 handling foods.
- ensure food is stored and served at safe temperatures (below 5°C or above 60°C), with consideration to the safe eating temperature requirements of children
- reheated food to be tested with food grade thermometer
- discourage children from handling other children's food and utensils

CREATING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Our Service 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
- respect each child's appetite and cues for hunger and satiety and not pressure or insist that a child eat
- be patient and supportive of children who are developing eating skills, including those who may be messy or slow eaters
- encourage children to try different foods without coercion or pressure
- ensure food is not used as a reward, bribe or withhold food for disciplinary purposes, recognising that such practices may constitute inappropriate conduct
- role-model and discuss safe food handling with children

SERVICE PROGRAM

Our Service will:

- foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the educational program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating
- encourage children to participate in a variety of 'hands-on' food preparation experiences
- 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.



COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES

Our Service will:

- provide a copy of the *Nutrition and Food Safety Policy* to all families upon orientation at the Service
- 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 Service 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 and learning experiences within the Service
- 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.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Nutrition and Food Safety Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management, and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days.

SOURCES

Australian Breast-Feeding Association Guidelines: <https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/>

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [*Guide to the National Quality Framework*](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [*Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements Policy Guidelines.*](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). [*Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.*](#) V2.0.

Australian Government Department of Health *Eat for Health- The Australian Dietary Guidelines* [*The Australian Dietary Guidelines*](#)

Food Act 2003

[Children \(Education and Care Services\) National Law \(NSW\)](#)

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)



Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
 Education and Care Services National Regulations (NSW) (2025) (NSW services only)
 Food Authority NSW. (2025). [Food safety requirements for children’s services in NSW.](#)
 Food Safety Standards (Australia only). (2025). [Food Safety Standards \(Chapter 3\)](#)
 Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). (2026)
 Food Standards Australia New Zealand. (2025). [Safe Food Australia – A guide to the food safety standard \(4th Ed.\)](#)
 National Health and Medical Research Council. Department of Health and Ageing. [Eat for Health. Infant Feeding Guidelines. \(2013\)](#)
 NSW Government. (2026). [Munch and Move](#)
 The Department of Health. Get Up & Grow: [Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood – Staff/Carers Book](#)

REVIEW

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| POLICY REVIEWED BY | Michelle Donadel | Nominated Supervisor/Director | 12.5.2026 |
| POLICY REVIEWED | May 2026 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | May 2027 |
| VERSION | VMAY2026 | | |
| MODIFICATIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy review • Purpose and Implementation sections rewritten to reduce duplication and strengthen alignment with required legislation • improved flow and consistency embedded child safety legislation amendments into policy including paramount consideration and inappropriate conduct • replaced some wording with more collaborative, inclusive and dignity focused wording • sources updated as required | | |
| POLICY REVIEWED | PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS | NEXT REVIEW DATE | |
| JULY/MAY 2023 | <p>JULY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • updates to the Food Safety Standards (effective Dec 2023) <p>MAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy maintenance - no major changes to policy • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • continuous improvement/reflection section added • Childcare Centre Desktop Related resources section added | MAY 2023 | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in 'Sources' | |
| MAY 2022 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> policy maintenance - no major changes to policy hyperlinks checked and repaired as required | MAY 2023 |
| OCTOBER 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy reviewed and included suggested guidelines from ACECQA Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements Policy Guidelines (August 2021) Additional sections added for AP, Management, NS and Educator and food handlers | MAY 2022 |
| MAY 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> minor editing inclusion of cultural or religious dietary practices sources checked for currency | MAY 2022 |
| MAY 2020 | <p>minor additions- discretionary foods, online shopping addition of health professional's information to ensure best practice sources checked for currency</p> | MAY 2021 |
| MAY 2019 | <p>Food hygiene section added, comprising of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Buying and transporting food - Storing food - Preparing and serving food - Cleaning - Personal hygiene for food handlers <p>Heading added to existing information – 'All staff handling food will:' New section added: Cooking with Children. Additional information inserted into existing points (highlighted) New source added</p> | MAY 2020 |
| MAY 2018 | <p>Minor grammatical changes made to content. (Not critical to its delivery)</p> | MAY 2019 |
| MAY 2017 | <p>Further research has been conducted, updating the rationale and terminology throughout the policy.</p> <p>Have incorporated embedding healthy eating and physical activity in the daily program</p> | MAY 2018 |



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| OCTOBER 2017/ FEBRUARY 2018 | Updated references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard Terminology update in opening statement | MAY 2018 |
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