



### Nutrition & Beverage Policy

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#### Aim

At Sutherland Presbyterian Church Preschool we aim to provide children with access to information that can allow them to make healthy choices when it comes to food and nutrition through both planned and spontaneous opportunities through our routine and curriculum.

We take our role of providing nutritious and relaxing meal times seriously and ensure that children have access to healthy and well prepared foods and fresh water as they engage in the social aspect that meal times can provide.

#### Implementation

##### *Nutritional food:*

- As our families provide their own food from home we share information regularly with the families on the type of foods that are suitable for children to bring in and encourage a range of healthy options while still reflecting the cultural meals children would access at home.
- Information is provided through a range of means including on enrolment (in the Enrolment pack), verbally, online, newsletters and by sharing Munch and Move fact sheets with families.

##### *Mealtimes:*

- All mealtimes reflect the needs of the children and provide opportunities for the children to demonstrate agency and autonomy. Mealtimes commence when children communicate that they are hungry and then free flow until such time as everyone has eaten.
- The location of mealtimes vary depending on the day and where the children are settled, and may be in inside or outside environments. Children with more complex or messy meals are encouraged to sit at tables however children have a choice to sit at the table or on the floor in a picnic style. This supports children to develop the skills needed when transitioning to school as many school mealtimes are eaten in spaces without a table. Therefore, balancing food on laps while remaining responsible for all of your belongings is an important skill to develop.
- During mealtimes educators take the opportunity to build relationships with the children through casual conversations as the children eat. They encourage children to develop their awareness of healthy food choices by discussing what is being eaten and encouraging children to choose healthier foods first. Educators also encourage children to build resilience by attempting to open packings and containers first, before asking for assistance. The action of asking for assistance allows children to advocate for their own needs and build confidence in doing this.
- Educators often eat alongside the children during meal times, especially at morning tea, to role model healthy eating practices and socially acceptable mealtime behaviours.



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### ***Learning opportunities:***

- Children have many opportunities to engage with discussions and develop awareness of nutritional food options throughout the curriculum. This could be anything from role playing with food in the home corner, reading books about different foods and different ways foods are sourced and used, and cooking with foods.
- The preschool has a vegetable garden that allows children to be involved in the growing of herbs, fruits and vegetables. This not only connects children to the process of food production but also provides children with the opportunity to sample different foods fresh from the garden, building their knowledge of taste preferences.
- Through these spontaneous and planned opportunities children's interests and needs are used to form a basis for the experiences and the educators encourage children to be aware of their own food preferences and even encourage children to respect other's food preferences by recognising diversity.

### ***Beverages:***

- Children have access to their drink bottles filled with water during the day and are encouraged to drink from these through the day. Water bottles are refilled throughout the day if necessary to ensure children have access to water at all times.
- As we move between the inside and outside environments the esky of drink bottles moves with us to allow children easy access to their drinks.
- The preschool has spare bottles available for any child who may have forgotten their bottle.
- Children are encouraged to take agency over their own thirst needs as they become more settled in the environment and particularly those who are transitioning to school soon. The educators will also remind children to have a drink to rehydrate if necessary.

### ***Specific dietary considerations:***

- Children with allergies or intolerances to specific foods are asked to alert the service of this upon enrolment.
- The service has a nut-free policy and reminds families to not bring in items that contain nuts.
- As children are bringing in their own foods from home the responsibility falls on the family to ensure that dietary requirements are met. Educators will monitor the contents of lunch boxes and alert any concerns to the family.
- Families are encouraged to provide their children with foods that reflect meals eaten at home to allow for cultural sensitivities to be respected while allowing the children to feel a sense of familiarity during mealtimes.

### **Procedures:**

#### ***Hygiene and food safety practices:***

- Reheating food:
  - Ensure food is in a microwave safe container
  - Wash hands before touching food containers, and ensure gloves are worn if coming into contact with the food
  - Heat food to a maximum of 60°C
  - Ensure food is a safe temperature for children to eat before giving it to the child



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- Refrigerating food:
  - All lunches are to be stored in the refrigerator
  - Products such as yoghurts or similar that are easily affected by heat are placed in the refrigerator to keep them cool for morning tea, especially in warmer weather
  - Refrigerator temperatures are checked daily in the morning and recorded on the Refrigerator Temperature Record form
  
- Cooking with children:
  - Ensure all participants have washed their hands with soap and water prior to the experience
  - Ensure educators are wearing gloves during the experience and follow appropriate glove use guidelines
  - Children should avoid direct contact with items such as raw eggs and if contact is made should wash their hands again immediately
  - No uncooked products containing raw eggs should be consumed by children
  
- Serving food:
  - Any tables being used for meals are wiped down prior to the meal
  - When eating on the ground a clean mat is placed down for children to sit on
  - Children and educators wash hands with soap and water prior to a meal
  - Any food dropped onto the floor is discarded and children are encouraged to not touch the dirty food as they have washed their hands
  - Educators wear gloves if touching a child's food directly otherwise are careful to only handle the packaging
  - New gloves are to be put on after touching food that has been on the floor to avoid cross contamination
  - Educators are to be mindful of children only eating the food they have brought in to avoid issues with dietary requirements.
  
- Storing foods:
  - Any food items or ingredients once opened will be recorded with the date that they were opened and stored in an airtight container in the appropriate storage area (cupboard, refrigerator, etc.)
  - Any food product removed from the original packaging must be stored in a container that states the name of the food product, the date opened and the expiry/best before date. Depending on dietary requirements labels may also list ingredients of concern e.g. "contains gluten"
  - Any foods products not to be consumed must be clearly labelled for the intended use e.g. for playdough use only. If removed from the original packaging the name of the food should also be present e.g. Flour.



## Source

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Staying Healthy in Child Care 5th Edition

<https://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/retail/childrens-servicesCompliance> evidence

## Compliance evidence

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2018) 77, 78, 79, 80, 90, 155, 156, 168

National Quality Standards 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2

Date of last review: Feb, 2018

Date of current review: 4th June, 2020 (new version of policy)

Date of next review: June, 2021

Approved by: Lisa Collins/ Barbara Black