



NUTRITION, FOOD & DIETARY REQUIREMENTS POLICY

Introduction

Research has shown that one in five Preschool age children are either overweight or obese. By the time children in NSW reach kindergarten, almost 18% are either overweight or obese. The 2007 *National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey* found that the dietary patterns of many Australian children are less than optimal with high consumption of salt and saturated fat, and low consumption of fruit and vegetables. Early childhood educators can role model healthy eating and encourage young children to make healthier food choices contributing to the prevention of weight problems in children, allowing children to thrive physically, socially and intellectually, and in turn contribute to prevention of nutrition-related chronic diseases.

Normanhurst West Community Preschool takes a holistic approach providing foundations for the preparation of life including promoting health & wellbeing. Our Preschool provides physical movement opportunities in both indoor & outdoor learning programs.

Goals

The Preschool will:

- Role model healthy eating and activity throughout the day to all children and families;
- Promote the six key Munch and Move messages to promote healthy, active habits in children from a young age; and
- Support families in educating their children about healthy food and beverage choices.

Strategies

Professional development of staff

- All educators will attend Munch and Move professional development training or receive similar training and information;
- All educators will have access to the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings; and

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- All children have access to safe drinking water at all times;
- All children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day;
- Food and beverages are provided when a child is not provided with food from home and that they are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and take into account each child's individual dietary requirements, growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements;
- The Preschool displays a list of food and beverages that are provided by the Preschool when a child is not provided with food from home.
- Educators and staff are aware of the need to implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the Preschool.
- All staff implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children;

- All dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to; and
- All staff are aware of dietary requirements of individual children.
- An up to date Health Care form summary of children's dietary/health requirements is kept in health care folder, medications folder and in the emergency bag.

The Educators will:

- Promote healthy eating through role modelling and eating with the children;
- Children are encouraged to make healthy food choices;
- All mealtimes are positive, relaxed and social;
- Children are encouraged to try new foods, and their food likes and dislikes are respected;
- Children are positively involved in meal times;
- Best practices are adhered to around safe storage of provided food;
- Adequate health and hygiene practices are implemented and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children are adhered to;
- Adhere to the Anaphylaxis and Allergic Reaction Policy and other dietary requirements of the children ie. the Preschool shall remain a "nut free" Preschool;
- Ensure all children have access to healthy snack options if they are hungry, in addition to foods provided from home;

The Educators will also manage our nut exclusion policy by:

- Staff supervising eating at morning tea and lunch time;
- Children encouraged to NOT share food;
- Children being encouraged to wash hands after eating;
- Staff participating in training in understanding and dealing with Anaphylaxis (severe allergic reactions) as the need arises;
- Students bringing food that contains nuts or nut products will not be permitted to not consume the food at Preschool.

Families will:

- Provide foods that do NOT contain nuts. Food items that are prohibited from the Preschool include, but are not limited to, the following items:
 - Peanuts and all other tree nuts (brazil, macadamia, cashews, hazelnuts, almonds, walnuts, pine nuts and pecan nuts).
 - Any hazelnut spreads or dippers eg. Nutella;
 - Peanut butter;
 - Any foods containing peanuts and nuts;
 - Satay chicken, any peanut sauces or peanut oils.
- Understand that if their child is sent to Preschool with food containing nuts, the food will be confiscated immediately, the child will be provided with an alternate food and the nut product will be returned at the end of the day with verbal or written notification;
- Provide their child with appropriate food for morning tea and lunch;
- Store lunches in the Preschool fridge;
- Provide permission by signing a food storage and safety permission form if lunches are to be left out of the fridge;
- Understand that due to staffing limits, food will only be reheated if a volunteer parent is available to do this;
- Notify the Preschool of any dietary requirements as soon as they are known, and complete the Health Care Form where appropriate;
- Provide a bottle of water for drinking throughout the day.

Christmas, Easter, Birthdays, & Occasional Treats

Parents are encouraged to follow healthy food guidelines when providing food for children on a daily basis. www.makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au/food

Birthdays may be celebrated at Normanhurst West Community Preschool. Parents may send small cup cakes (20) children. Cream cakes should be avoided. Children and families who do not celebrate birthdays will be respected.

'Treat' food is also made or shared at Preschool on other occasions, such as Easter. There are occasions when food is prepared by educators or parents as a way of introducing food from community cultures.

If families have special requirements or concerns about what food their child is allowed, they should speak with their child's teacher and/or the Director at the commencement of the Preschool year.

Supporting families

- The Preschool will provide families with up to date information on dietary requirements of young children to ensure optimal growth and development, and provide families with opportunities to discuss ways to maximise the health and well-being of their children.
- Parents are advised on suitable foods to pack for their children and notified when their children are not eating well.
- Dietary requirements will be supported.

Education and information

- Educators will engage children in learning experiences that are fun and enjoyable and incorporate key messages around healthy eating;
- Implemented learning experiences will be guided by the EYLF principles and incorporate the child's identity;
- Families will be provided with current information about recommended guidelines around dietary requirements, screen time and physical activity.

Supporting Documentation

- 2012 Staying Healthy In Childcare 5th Edition
- Healthy Kids NSW – www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au
- Nutrition Australia – www.nutritionaustralia.org
- Get up and Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings
- Munch & Move program & Resources
- www.makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au/food
- Food Standards Australia and New Zealand – www.foodstandards.gov.au

Refer to Other Policies

- Anaphylaxis and Allergic Reaction Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Preschool Forms - Health Care Form
- Preschool Forms Medical Conditions – Risk Minimisation Plan
- Preschool Forms – Food storage and safety permission form
- Preschool Forms - Medication Authorisation Record
- Preschool Procedures - Food Handling & Hygiene
- Preschool Procedures - Food Storage
- Preschool Display - NWCPS Foods
- Preschool Display – Daily Routine

Policy Availability

This Food, Nutrition, Beverages & Dietary Requirements Policy will be readily accessible to all staff, families and visitors. A hard copy is located at the sign in desk and a copy is accessible through our website www.nwcps.org

Review

Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the Food, Nutrition & Dietary Requirements policy annually. Updated information will be incorporated as needed. Families will be invited to provide feedback at each review period.

Review History:

April 2008	Policy created
February 2013	Policy reviewed to reflect National Regulations of 2011
February 2014	Policy reviewed to reflect current practice and National Regulations of 2014.
October 2016	Policy name changed from Nutrition, Food, Beverages and Dietary Requirements. New name Nutrition, Food and Dietary Requirements. Nut Awareness policy obsolete and included into this policy.
February 2017	Policy reviewed and food storage and safety permission form introduced.

Evaluation

The Preschool supports appropriate and healthy food and beverages for all children and meal times will be relaxed and model healthy eating. Dietary requirements and the identity of children will be reflected in our practices.

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Review Dates:

- April 2008: Policy created
- February 2017 Policy reviewed and waiver form introduced

Legislation:

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2014: 77, 78, 79, 80

Education & Care Services National Law Application Act 2010

Links to National Quality Standards: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2