Nutrition and Food Handling Policy

Policy Statement:
Snack and meal times will provide positive learning experiences for children who will be encouraged to develop healthy eating habits. Parents/Guardians will be consulted and asked to share family and multicultural values and experiences to enrich the variety and enjoyment of food planned to meet each child’s nutritional needs.

Procedures:
Food is prepared, stored and served hygienically. The Centre will provide children with balanced snacks that are in line with the recommended daily nutritional needs of children. Snacks will be appetising and provide variety in colour, texture and taste, and water will always be readily available.

Snack and meal times will be treated as social occasions. Staff members will sit with the children and interact with them to encourage good eating habits and an appreciation of a variety of foods. Children will be encouraged to be independent, to help themselves wherever appropriate and to assist in preparation and cleaning up.

The snack menu will reflect a wide variety of cultures, and especially the cultural backgrounds of families and the local community. The snack menu will be varied and changed regularly. Wherever possible, fresh seasonally available produce which is free of preservatives and additives, and produced with minimal processing will be used. Menus will be planned with input from children, parents, and staff, and displayed in an area and position visible to parents.

During Vacation Care programs, where children bring their own packed lunches, the service may provide information about children’s dietary needs, and suggested menus for parents, to assist them in preparing nutritional lunches for their children.

Snack and meal times will be set to a regular schedule. Small nutritionally appropriate snacks will be available to children who are still hungry.

Children will be encouraged to try new food but will never be forced to eat. Their food likes and dislikes and the families’ religious and cultural beliefs will always be respected.

Where children are on special diets the parents/guardians will be asked to provide a list of suitable foods and their child's food preferences. Parents/Guardians will be advised of their child's food intake as appropriate.

The provision or denial of food will never be used as a form of punishment.

Children will be involved in planning, preparing and cooking snacks as part of the activity program. They will learn how to store, prepare and serve food hygienically as part of these activities.

The importance of good healthy food, hygienic and safe food handling and storage practices, will be discussed with children as part of their daily program. All children and staff will wash their hands prior to preparing, serving or eating food.
Information on nutrition, food handling and storage may be displayed at the centre and provided to parents/guardians.

Centre staff will be provided with ongoing professional development opportunities to refresh their knowledge of children’s dietary needs, food handling and hygiene practices.

**Sources:**
Nutrition Australia – [www.nutritionaustralia.org](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org)
Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) – [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)
OSHCQA Principles: 6.1; 6.2
Children & Community Services (Outside School Hours Care) Regulations 2006 – Regulations: 35; 83
Eat Smart Play Smart – A manual for out of school hours care – Heart Foundation
Staying Healthy in Childcare – National Health and Medical Research Council

**NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK**

*National Regulations: regulation 77*

*National Regulations: regulation 79*

If educators or approved providers are seeking advice about diet and nutrition for children, authorised officers may refer them to the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* (available at [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)), the *Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood resources* (available at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)) and/or the *Physical Activity and Nutrition Outside School Hours* (available at [www.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.health.qld.gov.au)) if they are seeking advice about diet and nutrition for children.

1. 2.17 The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that the nominated supervisor, staff members and volunteers at the service implement adequate health and hygiene practices and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food.

1. 2.18 The nominated supervisor of an education and care service must implement, and ensure that all staff members and volunteers implement, adequate health and hygiene practices and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food.

1. 2.19 A family day care educator must implement adequate health and hygiene practices and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food.

1. 2.20 The approved provider must ensure policies and procedures are in place in relation to health and safety (regulation 168).
National Regulations: regulation 80

2.32 The approved provider, nominated supervisor and family day care educator must ensure that where the service provides food and beverages (other than water), a weekly menu that accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by the service each day is displayed at a place that is accessible to parents.

Information for services

2.33 The menu should include sufficient detail to inform parents about what food and beverages will be offered.

Health, hygiene and safe food practices

National Regulations: regulation 77

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. 2.20 The approved provider must ensure policies and procedures are in place in relation to health and safety (regulation 168).

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (Nov 2010) – Element 2.2.1; Element 3.1.1; Element 3.1.2; Element 4.2.1; Element 6.1.2; Element 6.2.1

Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – Practice: Responsiveness to children; Intentional teaching; Cultural competence – Outcomes: 1, 2, 3

Framework for School Age Care in Australia – Practice: Collaboration with children; Intentionality; Cultural competence – Outcomes: 1, 2, 3

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