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.

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.

**Safe drinking water**

The service will ensure that the children have access to safe drinking water.

**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

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010(Vic) – Section 3(2)(a); 167
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Reg 75(i); 75(k)(i); 75(l); 89; 90; 91; 101(c)(iii)(B); 121
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