



Health and Safety

Nutrition, Food and Beverages and Dietary Requirements

Reviewed: 23/07/2019 Next Review: August 2020

Education and care services regulation	Regulation 168 (2)(a) Education and care service must have policies/procedures
NSW Department of Education policy, procedure or guidelines	The following department policies and relevant documents can be accessed from the preschool section of the department's website ; Nutrition in Schools Policy PD/2011/0420/V01 – Implementation documents include healthy school canteen and sugary drinks fact sheet
National Quality Standard(s)	2.1.2: Health Practices and Procedures Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented 2.1.3: Healthy lifestyle Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child. 7.1.2: Management Systems Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
Preschool Handbook reference	Preschool Handbook (PDF 7.2MB) – Wellbeing page 34
School policy or procedure	

Introduction

Research has shown that one in five pre-schoolers 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. This will contribute 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.

Aim

Our preschool will:

- Role model healthy eating and activity throughout the day to all children and families;
- Have healthy eating materials available for families in order to support their understanding of healthy food choices.

Implementation

- All educators will have access to NSW Health '*Caring for Children, Nutrition and Fun Activities*'.
- A list of children and their reactive foods will be updated regularly and displayed so that it can be seen by all adults involved in the program. This is especially important when children with anaphylaxis are attending the preschool.

Provision of Food and Drinks at the Service

Oak Flats Public School Preschool will:

- Ensure that all children have access to safe drinking water at all times;
- Ensure that all children have access to food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day;
- Ensure that food and beverages provided by the families are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and take each child's individual dietary requirements, growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements into consideration;
- Ensure that 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 service.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:

- All children have access to safe drinking water at all times;
- All children have access to food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day;
- Educators and staff implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children; and
- As per the Medical Conditions Policy, the centre shall promote awareness of nut allergies and that all dietary requirements relating to other medical conditions are adhered to as appropriate e.g egg free when a child with egg allergy is enrolled.

Staff and educators will ensure that:

- Healthy eating is promoted through role modeling 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 mealtimes;
- They implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children; and
- The Preschool remains aware of nut allergies and that all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to as appropriate e.g egg free when a child with egg allergy is enrolled.

Supporting Families

- The service will have materials available 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 child/ren.

Education and Information

- Educators will engage children in conversations about healthy eating during mealtimes;
- 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.

Food and Nutrition

- When a child with a known food allergy enrolls, the preschool teacher will consult with the child's family and principal to develop a risk management plan to avoid exposure to known allergens.
- All preschool children will be exposed to healthy eating practices.
- The preschool will promote good nutrition and help children to develop good food habits. In addition, staff and children will discuss the relationship between nutrition, physical fitness and good health.
- Preschool educators will provide a positive and healthy eating environment. They will act as role models, maintain good personal nutrition, eat with children and encourage independence and social skills at meal times.
- The preschool will provide nutritional information to parents. This may be through posters, displays, library information, newsletters and correspondence. This can help encourage parents to send food to preschool that is nutritionally balanced.
- Food will not be used as a punishment or reward.
- Drinking water will be available to the children at all times.
- Special dietary needs (including allergens) will be displayed in food preparation areas.

Food preparation and handling

- Any area where food is prepared or stored will be kept clean and good hygiene and safety practices reinforced throughout all cooking activities. To reduce the risk of exposure to food allergens, staff in the preschools will follow the advice in *Anaphylaxis Procedures for Schools*.
- The following procedures are a good guide for staff when preparing and handling food:
 - wash and dry hands before and afterwards
 - do not handle food when ill
 - cover and seal any cuts or sores
 - wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly
 - replace cutting boards and washing-up cloths on a regular basis
 - use gloves when serving food
 - keep food covered until served