

# Nutrition, Food, Beverage, and Dietary Requirements

## QA2 Health & Safety

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### **Policy Statement**

The Service recognises the contribution of healthy eating to the growth and development of young children and is committed to supporting the healthy food and beverage choices of each child in our care.

Children are provided with regular opportunities to eat nutritious foods, in order to maintain energy levels throughout the care session and have access to safe drinking water at all times.

The food and drinks provided by the Service consider the dietary requirements of children, including their health, growth, and development needs, as well as cultural requirements and children's likes and dislikes. Our menu choices are guided by the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.

### **Rationale**

Good nutrition, healthy eating practices and adequate hydration are essential to children's overall health, and support children to actively participate in the play and leisure experiences offered as part of our program.

Mealtimes are recognised as an important opportunity to come together to share food and thoughts just as Jesus engaged in social activities around eating, drinking, and sharing meals with his disciples and others. Mealtimes form an important part of our daily program as a faith-based service and will be treated as social occasions.

### **Procedures**

#### ***Mealtimes at OSHC***

Families are encouraged to ensure children attending the Service for before school care, on pupil free days or for vacation care, eat a healthy breakfast before arriving at the Service. Breakfast is provided to children who require it.


Children, who attend after school care, are provided with afternoon tea and a late snack if required.

During Vacation Care and on pupil free days the Service provides morning and afternoon tea. Families are required to supply children's lunches.

Mealtimes are considered progressive and cater to the varying needs of children. Each child's appetite is respected. Children, who are hungry between mealtimes, will have additional snacks provided. Children, who are not hungry or are satisfied with the amount they have eaten, are not required to eat more.

Children are encouraged to try new and different foods but are not required to eat foods they do not enjoy.

Mealtimes are a time of relaxation and socialisation. Educators sit with children to build on relationships and to model healthy eating practices and social and self-help



skills. Children are encouraged to be independent where appropriate and assisted when required.

***When food is provided by the Service the following will be undertaken:***

- Children are provided with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks, including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, and lean meats, in order to meet their energy and nutrient needs.
- A weekly menu is planned and displayed, describing all meals, snacks, and drinks to be provided. Families are welcome to request information about each menu item and the ingredients they contain.
- Children and families are provided with input to the menu, with emphasis on sharing recipes.
- Families are advised in advance of changes to the menu.
- Seasonable, fresh produce is used where possible.

***Where food is brought from home:***

- Information regarding the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and suitable for children's lunchboxes is provided to families.
- Families are encouraged to supply nutritious meals and snacks including a variety of foods from each of the food groups. Pre-packaged snack foods that are high in sugar, salt and fat are not recommended.
- Children will be encouraged to eat nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese, and yoghurt, before eating other foods.
- Families are encouraged to supply food in an insulated lunchbox with an icepack if required.
- Lunchboxes are stored in children's bags in a shaded or indoor area.

***Health, hygiene, and safe food practices***

All educators are required to complete relevant training in relation to safe food handling, preparation, and storage. Training is reviewed and renewed annually.

All food and beverages are stored, prepared, and served in a safe and hygienic manner. All food preparation facilities are always maintained in a safe and hygienic manner.

Children and educators wash and dry their hands (using soap, warm running water and single use or disposable towels) before handling food or eating meals and snacks.

Children are encouraged to remain seated while eating and drinking.

All educators are apprised of the needs of children with food allergies, food intolerances and special dietary needs and comply with individual management plans.

As a registered food preparation business, the Service complies with all requirements of the Food Act 2008 and is subject to routine food safety and hygiene assessments through the City of Stirling.

## References

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