

NUTRITION and HEALTHY FOOD SUPPLY POLICY

At Hackney Kindergarten we promote healthy eating and teach children to make healthy food choices.

We believe that preschool is an important time for establishing lifelong healthy eating habits.

Healthy foods help children to learn, concentrate and build sustained energy for physical activity.

National Quality Standard 2.2

Regulation 168 (2) (a) (i)

Related Key Regulations: 77, 78, 79, 80

Note: Reg 79 and 80 do not apply to food and beverages provided by a parent.

Rationale

We believe healthy eating habits benefit the children in three ways:

- Short term: maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health.
- Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.
- Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and is vital for positive engagement in learning.

Therefore:

- Educators at this preschool model and encourage healthy eating behaviours
- Food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the **Right Bite** strategy for children at preschool.
- Parents are informed of specific restrictions when children with severe allergies attend to ensure the safety of all children.

This food policy has been established after consultation with staff and parents within the preschool community. It is based on the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia (NHMRC 2003) and the DECD 'Right Bite Policy'.

Curriculum

Our preschool's food and nutrition curriculum:

- is consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia, and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.
- includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health.
- includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food.
- integrates nutrition across the curriculum where possible.
- Is part of the Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standards.

The Learning environment

Children at our preschool:

- Have fresh, clean water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day.
- Are encouraged to bring a named drink bottle.
- Are encouraged to eat nutritious food regularly.
- Eat in a positive, social environment with educators who model healthy eating behaviours.
- Use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting & preparing nutritious foods.

Our preschool:

- Understands and promotes the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children.
- Teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum.
- Is a breastfeeding friendly site.

Food supply

Our preschool promotes the following guidelines for families for food brought from home:

FRUIT and VEGETABLE TIME:

Families are asked to supply only fruit or vegetables for fruit/vegetable time to:

- Provide children with important vitamins and minerals.
- Encourage a taste for healthy foods
- Encourage healthy food and drink choices.
- Ensure healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive.
- Encourage chewing which promotes muscle development.

We understand that at times Families may run out of fruit. A healthy sandwich (multigrain or wholemeal bread) with savoury filling or plain unsalted crackers are acceptable.

HEALTHY FOOD SUPPLY and NUTRITION POLICY (cont'd)

LUNCH TIME:

Parents are asked to supply healthy foods which follow the healthy eating guidelines.

- A healthy lunch box may include a sandwich, fruit, yoghurt, vegetable sticks etc. (When a child attending is severely allergic to a specific food Parents may be asked not to supply this food for lunch while at kindergarten to ensure the child's safety.) **Please do not include chocolate and other processed foods containing high amounts of sugar i.e. roll ups, muesli bars etc.**
- Parents are contacted if lunch is not provided and dry biscuits / bread will be supplied if necessary.
- **Please place a cool pack in your child's lunch box to ensure food is kept fresh or store the lunch box in the fridge.**
- Parents are asked to speak with staff if they are unsure or have concerns.

DRINKING WATER is promoted.

- Children are encouraged to bring their own water bottles.
- Filtered water and cups are provided at 2 drinking stations for children to independently serve themselves.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS AND BIRTHDAY GUIDELINES

- Our Kindergarten will ensure a healthy food supply for preschool activities, celebrations and events, limiting availability of high fat, high sugar or processed foods like chips, pastries, cakes, lollies and soft drinks.
- Parents are asked not to send Birthday cakes because of the number of children with allergies and the Healthy Food Policy. If families would like to celebrate their child's birthday with other children at kindergarten they are encouraged to give a sticker, bubbles, or share a fruit platter. This is not expected, it is each family's personal choice.

Food safety

Our preschool:

- Promotes and teaches food safety to children during food learning / cooking activities.
- Encourages staff to access training as appropriate to the Healthy Eating Guidelines.
- Provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- Promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.

Food-related health support planning

Our preschool:

- Liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues.

Working with Families, Health Services & Industry

Our preschool:

- Has invited parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our whole of site food and nutrition policy.
- Provides information to families and caregivers about the *Healthy Eating Guidelines* through a variety of media including:
 - newsletters
 - policy development / review
 - information on enrolment
 - pamphlet / poster displays
 - promotes the alignment of fundraising with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.

This policy will be shared with all new staff and families and is available on the website and in the Preschool Policies Folder. Children will be involved in discussions about appropriate behaviour.

This policy has been developed in consultation with the Governing Council, Staff and Families at this centre.

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly and modified as required to ensure continued relevance to the Hackney Kindergarten Community.

Date: March 2017