

# Only Early Learning Centre



## Food and Beverage Policy

Policy Number 16

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## Aim

Only Education aims to provide food and beverages, as well as food and nutrition education that is consistent with the national dietary guidelines for children and national infant feeding guidelines. The service will follow state regulation, food safety principles, national dietary guidelines that are appropriate to each child's age, cultural background and medical requirements. Only Education aims to minimise cross infection by ensuring that the Centre Chef and Educators maintain hygiene and safety in the food preparation area and when handling and serving food. To further ensure the safety of all children, educators and families, Only Education will monitor and maintain high quality food storage practices in order to minimise the risk of food borne illness.

## Who is affected by this policy

Children  
Educators  
Staff  
Management  
Visitors  
Families

## Food Guidelines

All educators at Only Education will ensure that the following guidelines are adhered to daily to assist children and families to develop positive food attitudes and habits.

- Present meals in an attractive manner
- Provide safe food
- Prohibit the use of foods as punishment, reward or bribe
- Prohibit any form of force feeding
- Establish healthy eating habits in the children by the incorporation of nutritional education into the program

## Centre Menu

- Provide a menu consistent with the Australasian dietary guidelines
- Develop an awareness of cross-cultural eating patterns and related food values
- The centre menu will always be on display and available for families to view each day
- The menu will be created using the Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning issued by the NSW Government. This planning checklist is attached to the back of this policy.
- Variety is important, children may not accept new foods immediately, so they will be introduced into the menu slowly
- The centre Menu will be changed once a year. There will be a Winter Menu and a Summer Menu.
- The Menu will be organized in a 4-week cycle
- A variety of textures will be used within the menu

- A variety of both raw and cooked food will be included in the menu including raw vegetables and salad
- The menu will include finger foods
- The menu will include items that the children can self-serve or help to make

## Dietary Requirements

Only Education will cater to the individual needs of children in relation to culture, vegetarianism, allergies and medical conditions.

**Where a family requests a special diet that does not fit into one of the above specifications or does not meet the Nutrition Guidelines set out by the NSW Government, the service will request a letter outlining the dietary request, the reasons for the requested diet and where the child's daily nutrition is sourced, from a Certified Dietician, or a Pediatrician.**

To effectively cater for children's dietary requirements Only Education will:

- Enquire about dietary requirements during the enrolment process
- Obtain detailed written information from the family about dietary requirements and if required, certification from a health professional
- Ensure that individual meals are prepared and provided for each child at the centre with a dietary requirement
- The centre Chef and Educators will read all food packaging before preparing food, bringing food into the classroom or service food to a child with a dietary requirement
- The centre Chef will ensure that substitutes are provided where possible
- The centre Chef will be aware of the possibility of cross-contamination in the kitchen when preparing meals
- Children with severe allergies or anaphylaxis will be highly supervised during meal times and should only be given food that has been checked and does not contain the offending allergen(s)
- Check in with families every 6 months to ensure the information is correct and valid

## Beverage Guidelines

In regard to serving beverages at the centre, Only Education will:

- Provide water and milk as the only beverages served throughout the day
- Provide water at all time to the children throughout the day, ensure that each child's water bottle follows them during the daily routine (outdoor, indoor)
- Ensure that educators and children always have access to safe drinking water
- Remind and encourage children to drink water regularly throughout the day
- Children aged two years and under will be served full cream milk to help meet their energy needs
- Reduced fat milk will be served to children over two years as long as their appetite is good and they are growing normally
- Children with lactose intolerance will be served soy milk instead of cow's milk

# Meal Times

Mealtimes provide an opportunity for children to practice social, language and self-help skills. Allowing children adequate time to enjoy their food, to make choices and interact with others helps to make mealtimes pleasant, relaxed experiences for both children and educators. Only Education educators will follow these guidelines to achieve this:

- Ensure meal times are relaxed, pleasant and timed to meet the needs of the children
- Discuss food and its nutritional value with the children
- Encourage independence and social skills at meal times
- Ensure that all children have washed and dried their hands prior to meal times
- Do not allow children to share individual eating or drinking utensils
- Not forcing the children to eat food they do not like or more than they want to eat
- Encourage educators to present themselves as role models. This means maintaining good personal nutrition and eating with the children at meal times.

## **Safety during Meal Times**

- Children are always seated whilst eating
- Mealtimes must be actively supervised by educators
- Eating should happen while children are calm not upset or crying
- Remind and encourage children to chew and not overfill their mouth
- Give children plenty of time to eat, do not hurry them
- When mealtimes are over, all food is removed. Do not allow children to leave the meal area with food in their hands or mouth

## **Setting up the Meal Time Environment**

The way in which the area used for meals is arranged can influence how pleasant and relaxed mealtimes will be for both children and their educators. The following guidelines will be followed by educators to achieve this:

- Arrange the area so that a small group of children and an adult can be seated comfortably at each table, in much the same way that a family might eat together at home
- Use the low high chairs and moving them close to the table helps younger children to feel part of the group and makes it easier for the adult or an older child at the table to help them with feeding

## **Infants**

- Mothers will be encouraged to visit the centre to breast feed (see breast feeding policy)
- If infants need extra fluid, cooled boiled water will be provided
- Provide a suitable range of food textures according to age and development of the infant
- All bottles will be rinsed but not sterilised after use and ensure all bottles, will be returned to the parents at the end of each day whether used or not. Parents should complete their own sterilisation procedure

## Introducing solid food to infants

- Work closely with parents when introducing solids
- When introducing infants to solid foods, parents and families will be asked to supply the centre with a list of foods that the infant has already tried at home. We will never introduce a new food to an infant that they have not already tried
- Allow infants to explore food during this time by touching, smelling and tasting foods
- Always show the child the food you are offering them
- Do not try to trick children in eating (ask them to open their mouth to quickly sneak food in)
- Make sure the texture is suitable and avoid foods that can be inhaled
- Gagging is common in infants, especially when new food textures are introduced. This is a protective mechanism and does not mean you need to avoid the food in the future
- Introduce food with a variety of colours and flavours

### Communication with Families

- Communicate with parents about their child's food intake
- Inform parents of children's nutritional needs through posters and information
- Encourage parents to follow up the healthy eating message at home
- Talk to families about their child's food intake and voice any concerns about their child's eating

## Food Preparation Personal Hygiene

During food preparation at the centre, staff will adhere to the following personal hygiene guidelines:

- Long hair is tied back or covered
- Limited jewelry is worn
- Adhere to the hand washing guidelines
- Gloves will be worn by educators preparing food in the classroom
- Chef will wear an apron to protect clothing
- Any wounds on the hands or arms will be completely covered with a waterproof band aid
- If an employee involved in food handling is ill, they will be removed from kitchen duty
- The person who is preparing and serving the food for the day, where possible, will not be responsible for changing nappes during that day
- Always wash hands thoroughly before preparing or serving food

## Food Preparation Safety

- Main kitchen staff will undertake a Food Handling Course
- When preparing dishes that contain meat, the juices must run clear before the meat is removed from the heat
- Thawed food will not be refrozen
- High risk food including dairy products or chicken will be kept at recommended temperatures – cold food below 5 degrees and hot food above 60 degrees Celsius
- Food will be covered with a lid, foil or plastic wrap, prior to serving

## Food Storage Standards for Dry Food

- Food must be stored in areas designed for food storage
- Dry foods will be stored in tightly sealed containers
- All food containers will be in good condition and will be washed before use
- Foods will never be stored with chemicals or clothing
- Canned food will be stored in a sealed container once opened
- Once opened and transferred to a container, all foods must be labelled with the date that it was opened and that used by date.
- Ensure that the storage area stay dry, clean and free from pests

## Food Storage Standards for Cold Food

- Food must be stored in areas designed for food storage
- Refrigerators and freezers are to have thermometers
- The operating temperatures of fridges will be documented daily
- Frozen food will be thawed in the bottom of the refrigerator or defrosted in a microwave oven
- Raw food will be stored separately and beneath cooked food
- All food containers will be in good condition and will be washed before use
- Foods will never be stored with chemicals or clothing
- All foods are covered, wrapped, dated and labelled
- Cold food will be kept below 5 degrees Celsius
- Frozen food will be kept below minus 18 degrees Celsius
- Only store cooked food once it has sufficiently cooled
- Each fridge will be cleaned out weekly

### Employee Behaviours required when storing food

- Inspect food items when they are received to ensure they are in appropriate condition and a within their use by date and of the correct temperature
- Ensure that dry, cold or frozen foods are stored by the first in first out rule. Ensure that each time a new delivery of stock arrives the food is rotated accordingly

## Cooking with children

Cooking with children can be an enjoyable activity that allows them to learn about food and become interested in what they eat. The following simple precautions will help to ensure safe cooking experiences:

- Children will wash and dry their hands before and after cooking
- Children with long hair will have it tied back during experiences
- Ensure the area used to conduct experiences is safe
- Children will be highly supervised during all cooking experiences
- Children will not be able to lick the bowl or utensils used when cooking
- When children are obviously unwell, they will not be allowed to handle food

Use this checklist to plan each two-week cycle of your service menu. The number of serves recommended is the minimum required to meet the nutritional needs of children when one main meal and two midmeals are provided.

## Main Meals

### Beef/Lamb/Kangaroo

- Lean red meat is included on the menu at least **6** times per fortnight

### Chicken/ Fish/ Pork/ Veal/ Non-Meat Meals

- A variety of lean white meat/non -meat meals are included on the menu up to **4** times per fortnight
- Non-meat meals are based on eggs, cheese, tofu or legumes

- Raw vegetables or fruit high in vitamin C are served with the non-meat meal

#### Raw vegetables and fruit high in vitamin C include



*citrus fruit tomato cauliflower broccoli*



*kiwi fruit capsicum rockmelon*

### Iron Containing Foods

- On each day that a red meat meal is served, at least **1** other iron containing food is included on the menu
- On each day that a white meat or non-meat meal is served, at least **2** other iron containing foods are included on the menu

#### Other iron containing foods:



*wholemeal bread breakfast cereal dried fruit Milo™*

## Vegetables and Fruit

- The menu includes at least **2** serves of vegetables daily
- The menu includes at least **1** serve of fruit daily

*\*A variety of vegetables and fruit throughout the menu is important.*

## Dairy Foods

- The menu includes a total of **1** serve of dairy foods daily

Serving milk at morning and afternoon tea may be an easy and reliable way to meet this requirement.



*milk yoghurt cheese custard*

*\*Cream, sour cream and butter are not substitutes for milk, yoghurt and cheese*

*\*\*Choose reduced fat dairy food for children aged 2 years and over*

## Breads, Cereals, Rice and Pasta

- The menu includes at least **2** serves of bread, cereal, rice or pasta foods daily
- High fibre varieties e.g. multigrain, wholemeal, high fibre white are included daily

**Other breads include:** *Pita, lavash, Turkish, Lebanese, fruit bread, scones, etc.*

## Morning and Afternoon Tea (Midmeals)

- Midmeals are planned on the menu as part of the total day's intake
- Milk, cheese, yoghurt or custard is included if necessary to meet the recommended daily serve
- Bread/cereal based foods are included if necessary to meet the recommended daily number of serves
- Vegetables and fruit are included if necessary to meet the recommended daily number of serves

The above material has been reproduced with the permission of the NSW Ministry of Health, from *Caring for Children – Birth to 5 years (Food, Nutrition and Learning Experiences)*, 2014. For further information on this resource please visit [www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au)



SHPN (CPH) 170278 © NSW Health





## Sources

### **Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010**

167 - Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

### **Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011**

77 Health, hygiene and safe food practices

78 Food and Beverages

79 Service providing food and beverages

80 Weekly Menu

### **National Quality Standards 2018**

2.1.3 Healthy Lifestyle

### **Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991**

### **Food Safety Act 1989**

### **Food Act 2003**

Healthy Kids [www.healthykids.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.gov.au) January 2018

Better Health Chanel [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) January 2018

NSW Health [www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au) January 2018

NSW Food Authority [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) January 2018

### **Review**

The policy will be reviewed annually. Review will be conducted by management, employees, parents and any interested parties.

**Reviewed By:** Alex Jury    **Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018

**Reviewed By:** Alex Jury    **Date:** 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019

**Approved By:** Kelly Williams

**Date for Next Review:** 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020