



Lyrebird Preschool

NUTRITION POLICY

Reference: Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 78-80, 168

AIMS:

- To ensure children and parents are given support and education regarding nutrition and food safety that are consistent with national dietary guidelines for children, state regulations, food safety principles and that are appropriate for their age, cultural background, religion or medical needs.

EXPLANATION:

A regular, adequate and well-balanced diet combined with fresh air and exercise will maximise children's chances of normal growth and development and minimize the risk of illness.

Safe Food Storage temperatures are 5°C or colder, or 60°C or hotter. Potentially hazardous food needs to be kept at these temperatures to prevent food-poisoning bacteria, which may be present in the food, from multiplying to dangerous levels. These bacteria can grow at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C, which is known as the temperature danger zone. The fastest rate of growth is at around 37°C, the temperature of the human body.

The Food Safety Standards also require you to have a thermometer if you prepare, handle or sell potentially hazardous food. This will enable you to check that safe temperatures are being maintained.

REFERENCES:

Get Up and Grow – Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

Health and Safety in Children's Centres, Model Policies and Practices, 2003.

Caring For Children, Food and Nutrition, 2004.

Food safety Fact Sheets, Food Standards Australia New Zealand. Available at

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au> , NSW Food Authority, "Safe Food Tips" and "Safe Lunches for Kids."

Strategies and Procedures

1. Provide positive eating environments by:

- Sitting in social groups with a staff member positively encouraging children to eat something from their lunch box (children will not be forced to eat food.)
- Discussing the nutritional value of food and the health benefits of good nutrition
- Discussing individual likes and dislikes food groups etc.

2. Develop food and food safety awareness through:

- Activities such as cooking, tasting and smelling.
- Providing families with information about minimum amounts of food and nutritional standards required for different ages of children.
- Provide information (through newsletters / display boards and verbally) to families to assist and encourage them to provide meals and snacks that meet current standards and recommendations in relation to nutritional requirements, are appropriate to the child's age, cultural and religious background and that are transported to the centre within safe temperatures (less than 5°C or over 60°C for hot foods).
- Providing information to families outlining the centre's policies and approaches taken to meet the nutritional needs of children through food brought from home, including special dietary needs, culture and religion.
- Providing families with the opportunity to notify staff if children have particular medical and / or cultural nutritional requirements.

3. Encourage family participation

- Our nutrition policy encourages healthy snacks such as fruit and savoury muffins, plain or fruit scones, pikelets and healthy fruit loaves. This is a great opportunity for parents to bake something healthy with their children to pack for Preschool.
- We will be including some healthy recipes on our website

Daily Practice:

1. Families are encouraged to pack all food in one labelled container. This container is unpacked from the child's bag on arrival at preschool and placed in the refrigerator in the appropriate room. (see attached fact sheet for a list of potentially hazardous foods) A notice informing families of hazardous foods will be on display in each classroom. (Refer to the attached fact sheets for information to share with families regarding transporting food and regarding temperature control of food.)
2. Children and staff will wash hands before handling food or eating meals or snacks. Staff will also wear gloves if handling children's food and use utensils if distributing shared foods such as birthday cakes or cooking.
3. For **MORNING TEA** we encourage the provision of foods such as fresh or dried or tinned fruit, cheese, raw vegetables, low or no salt crackers, yoghurts. These are to be placed in the child's lunch container with their name clearly marked. For **LUNCH** we encourage healthy, nutritious food such as sandwiches, wraps, rolls, rice cakes, cruskits with healthy fillings and additional foods such as those recommended for morning tea. Please **AVOID** high sugar fillings such as jams, honey etc.
4. If left overs are supplied for your child's lunch, they will be served cold to avoid the dangers of contamination from incorrect re-heating of food.
5. To protect children from the risk of dental disease and obesity related illness, we **DO NOT ALLOW** treats such as chips, sweet biscuits, cakes, fruit roll-ups and 'stick type' foods, muesli bars of any kind, sugary breakfast cereals, chocolate and high sugar content yoghurts, custards and dairy desserts. Such treat foods should be left for home and kept to a minimum in children's diets.
6. Due to known causes of peanut allergy (anaphylaxis) and the possibility of choking, **whole nuts of any kind are not to be included** in children's lunchboxes. * If a child with known food allergies attends the centre any banned foods will be made known to all families. (refer to the medication policy and individual asthma and anaphylaxis management plans for further detail.)

7. Children will have access to water at all times either via water jug / esky and cups provided by preschool or via named water bottles brought from home. Juices and flavoured water / cordials are NOT PERMITTED. Milk will be provided during the afternoon play session. Staff will be aware of adequate fluid intake for children and the need to increase fluid intake in circumstances such as hot weather, after exercise and when children are unwell.
8. Centre staff will respect and accommodate individual nutritional requirements.
9. Parents will be notified when their child is not eating well, either verbally or in writing and by leaving left-overs and scraps in lunchboxes to show parents and carers what has been eaten.
10. Children will place their lunchboxes back in the fridge after meal times.
11. Children will have access to their lunch boxes during the late care session. If children do not have any food left they will be offered nutritious snacks such as cheese, crackers or sultanas during the late care session.

What foods are potentially hazardous?

Foods normally considered to be potentially hazardous are:

- raw meats, cooked meats and food containing meat, such as casseroles, curries, lasagne and meat pies;
 - dairy products and foods containing dairy products, such as milk, cream, custard and dairy-based desserts;
 - seafood (excluding live seafood) and food containing seafood, such as seafood salad;
 - processed fruits and vegetables, such as prepared salads and ready-to-eat fruit packs;
 - cooked rice and pasta;
 - processed foods containing eggs, beans, nuts or other protein-rich food, such as quiche and soya bean products; and
 - foods that contain any of the above foods, such as sandwiches, rice salads and pasta salads.
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- Families will continue to be encouraged to transport foods to preschool in a labeled container that contains an ice-brick.
 - Families will be required to place potentially hazardous foods directly into the fridge in each classroom. The whole lunchbox container will be placed directly into the fridge.

Foods Encouraged and Discouraged at Preschool

Yes Foods	No Foods
All types of fruit: fresh, dried, tinned	Muesli bars or breakfast bars
Raw vegies and salads	Chips
Cracker and crisp breads	Chocolate or chocolate bars
Rice or corn cakes	Sweet biscuits
Sandwiches, wraps and rolls with healthy fillings	Lollies
Left over e.g. casseroles or pasta dishes to be enjoyed cold	Roll ups, fruit sticks
Yoghurts, custards (plain)	Sweet dairy desserts e.g. Yogo, chocolate desserts and chocolate custards.
Fruit savoury or vegetable muffins	Sweet cake, iced or plain
Scones plain or fruit	Nuts
Healthy fruit loaf or raisin bread	Fruit juice, cordial or soft drink
Cheese or dips such as hummus and tzatziki	Chocolate chip or iced muffins
Popcorn	Sweet popcorn
Baked beans	Sweet or coated breakfast cereals
Arrowroot and shredded wheat biscuits	
Pikelets	
Crackers and dips e.g. Le Snacks	