



MAITLAND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Food Supply and Nutrition Policy

Staff at this Centre believe good nutrition within a caring and supportive environment is important for children's physical, intellectual and emotional development. Staff aim to promote nutritional eating habits in a safe, supportive environment for all children attending this Centre. We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in three ways:

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

This food policy has been established after consultation with staff and parents within the Maitland Children's Centre community.

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 NQS

The Learning environment

Children at our preschool:

- Have fresh, clean tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day
- Are encouraged to bring their own named water bottle
- Will eat routinely at scheduled break times
- Eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- Use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and 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 Centre:

- Encourages healthy food and drink choices for children in line with the *Right Bite* strategy (Eating more from the green area and less from the orange and red areas)
- Ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- Displays nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating
- Has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home:

FRUIT TIME:

Parents and carers are encouraged to supply fruit and vegetables at fruit time to:

- o Provide children with important minerals and vitamins
- o Encourage a taste for healthy foods.
- o Encourage chewing which promotes oral muscle development

Fresh fruits or vegetables are recommended for fruit time

FOODS UNSUITABLE FOR FRUIT TIME: include packaged foods, cakes, sweets, ALL NUT PRODUCTS, cordials, and sweetened fruit juices

LUNCH CARE PROGRAM

- Parents and carers are encouraged to provide healthy food and drink choices in line with the **Right Bite** strategy (sending food which is predominately in the green section) Please ask staff if you have any issues or are unsure.
 - A healthy lunchbox might include a sandwich/roll/wrap, fruit, yoghurt, vege sticks etc. Please limit the amount of packaged food (chocolate, muesli bars, roll ups etc)
 - Please ask staff if you are unsure.
- Our Centre will ensure a healthy food supply for preschool activities, celebrations and events, strictly limiting availability of high fat, high sugar or processed foods like chips, pastries, cakes, lollies, crisps etc to no more than twice per term, in accordance with the Healthy Eating Guidelines.
 - We will display nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating, and provide information updates in newsletters.

Food safety

Our Centre:

- Promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum
- 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.
- We cook healthy options, fortnightly and put out the sign 'What are we cooking today', for parents to see

Food-related health support planning

Our Centre:

- 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 food and nutrition policy
- Provides information to families from health professionals on the Healthy Eating Guidelines through such media as:
 - Newsletters
 - Policy development/review
 - Pamphlet/poster displays
- Promotes the alignment of fundraising with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.

Chairperson, Governing Council

Centre Director

Policy created date:
November 2012

Next Policy review date:
November 2015