# **NUTRITION, FOOD AND BEVERAGES, AND DIETARY REQUIREMENTS POLICY**

## POLICY STATEMENT:

Our Service is committed to promoting the health and well-being of every child in our care. We recognise that good nutrition is fundamental to a child's healthy growth and development. As such, we will provide nutritious, safe, and age-appropriate food and beverages that align with the latest Dietary Guidelines for Children and Young People in Australia, as well as the guidelines specified in the document published by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) found at the following link: www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/NutritionFoodBeveragesDietaryRequireGuidelines.pdf.

OUR APPROACH:

1. Menu Planning and Dietary Requirements:

- Our menu will be developed in adherence to the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents and the ACECQA guidelines. It will be displayed for families and children, providing a transparent overview of the food and drink being served.

- Individual dietary requirements, including allergies, cultural considerations, and health needs, will be taken into account in menu planning, and parents will be informed if they are required to supply specific foods for their children.

2. Nutritious Food and Beverages:

- All food and beverages provided at the Service will prioritise nutrition and quality, aiming to support the overall health of each child.

- We will consider children's likes and dislikes while ensuring that the served food meets their dietary needs and cultural preferences.

3. Hygiene and Food Preparation:

- Our Service will maintain the highest standards of hygiene throughout all food preparation processes to ensure the safety and well-being of the children.

- Containers will be properly cleaned and stored to prevent any contamination.

4. Supporting Healthy Eating Habits:

- Educators will model and reinforce healthy eating practices, acting as positive role models for the children.

- We will encourage parents to share family recipes and traditions, contributing to the variety and enjoyment of food for the children and promoting respect and understanding of cultural diversity.

5. Education and Awareness:

- Ongoing education about healthy eating habits will be provided through activities, notices, posters, and information sheets for parents.

- Children will have the opportunity to participate in cooking activities, which will foster life skills and an understanding of food preparation and safety.

6. Collaboration and Participation:

- We will seek opportunities to involve children in learning about growing their own food, and when possible, incorporate homegrown produce into our menu planning.

- Children and parents will be encouraged to share their family and cultural traditions, ideas, and recipes, contributing to a diverse and inclusive menu.

## PROCEDURE:

1. Menu Display and Communication:

- The menu, based on the Australian Dietary Guidelines and ACECQA guidelines, will be displayed for families and children to access.

2. Individual Needs and Allergies:

- Parents will be asked to provide information about their child's individual dietary requirements and allergies to ensure proper consideration in menu planning.

3. Meal Provision and Fresh Drinking Water:

- Food and beverages consistent with the menu will be provided during regular care hours, and fresh drinking water will be readily available to children and Educators at all times.

4. Holiday Care and Snacks:

- During holiday care, parents will be requested to provide their child's lunch and drinks, with morning and afternoon tea provided by the Service.

5. Seating During Meals:

- Children will be encouraged to be seated while eating to promote a relaxed and enjoyable mealtime environment.

6. Educator Professional Development:

- Educators will be encouraged to attend regular professional development sessions on nutrition and food safety practices, and any necessary changes to practice will be documented.

## CONSIDERATIONS:

In implementing this policy, we will abide by the following regulations, guidelines, and standards:

- National Regulation 78: Food and Beverages

- National Regulation 79: Service providing Food and Beverage

- National Regulation 80: Weekly Menu

- National Quality Standard 2.2 Element 2.2.1: "Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the Service are nutritious and appropriate for each child."

- Australian Dietary Guidelines for children and adolescents

- National Food Standards Code (FSANZ)

- NRG@OOSH (Network of Community Activities)

- Service Hygiene policy

**Citations:**

* Education and Care Services National Law (ECSNL)
* Education and Care Services National Regulations (ECSNR)

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