

NNS Food, Nutrition and Waste Free Policy

NQS

QA1	Standard	1.1	The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.
	Element	1.1.3	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child.
QA2	Standard	2.1	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
		2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
QA5	Standard	5.1	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
QA6	Standard	6.1	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.

Early Childhood Education and Care Services National Regulations (New South Wales Government, 2018)

Section	3(2)(a); 167–	Protection of children from harm or hazards
Regulations	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	78	Food and beverages
	90	Medical conditions policy
	91	Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

Early Years Learning Framework -EYLF

Learning Outcome 1	Children feel safe, secure and supported.
Learning Outcome 3	Children recognise and communicate their bodily needs (for example, thirst, hunger, rest, comfort, physical activity).
	Children are happy, healthy, safe and connected to others.
	Children show an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.
	Educators discuss health and safety issues with children and involve them in developing guidelines to keep the environment safe for all.
	Educators engage children in experiences, conversations and activities that promote healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.
	Educators model and reinforce health, nutrition and personal hygiene practices with children.
Principles	Secure, respectful, reciprocal relationships; Respect for diversity; Partnerships with families; Ongoing learning and reflective practice.
Practice	Holistic approaches; Intentional teaching; Learning environments.

Background/rationale:

Nutrition for Life: Healthy Eating Habits in Preschool and Beyond

The food we eat affects growth, development, appearance, behaviour, fitness, resistance to disease, feelings of wellbeing and the ability to learn. Healthy eating habits are developed in the early years and are carried through to adulthood. Good nutrition and healthy eating habits are therefore essential for young children and will empower children for the future (NSW Ministry of Health, 2013). The *National Quality Standard* requires preschools to provide healthy foods and drinks that meet the requirements for children according to the *Australian Dietary Guidelines* (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, 2017). This policy also addresses the *Early Childhood Education and Care Services National Regulations* and *Early Years Learning Framework* (see appendix).

At the Northern Nursery School (NNS) our aim is to work together with families to promote healthy eating habits for children that will last a lifetime. Together we have a unique opportunity to develop positive nutritional & environmental habits, this also includes being environmentally sustainable in our choices through reducing waste. Waste may be defined by packaging, uneaten food or unreal portion size for the preschooler aged 3-6 years.

Building knowledge in young children at the preschool occurs through discussion and collaboration so children understand how food can affect their health, both physically and emotionally. We work in partnership with their families so children can take responsibility in making choices that are beneficial to their health and wellbeing.

At NNS, we have taken the position not to allow food that is high in sugar, salt or saturated fats, or foods that have additives and artificial flavourings which can cause children to have behavioral problems, allergic reactions and build cravings (Morris, 2010). We have also decided not to allow sweet baked goods (including homemade) cakes, cupcakes, muffins, banana bread, muesli bars etc, as options for morning tea or lunch as these are discretionary and sometimes food that create preferences to eating sweet foods on a regular basis.

Research shows that if children at an early age get fed sweet foods it can have a significant role to play in their later life eating preferences, and therefore diet-related health outcomes. We are continually learning about factors that can drive and shape eating preference. Children tend to prefer foods high in sugar, salt and energy. Yet exploring healthy options, different food tastes, textures and flavors are exciting, and through regular repetitive exposure, children develop tastes for foods they would normally not choose to eat.

Our service recognises that the right to breastfeed is protected under federal and state legislation, and we will meet our legal obligations. NNS is a breastfeeding friendly organisation.

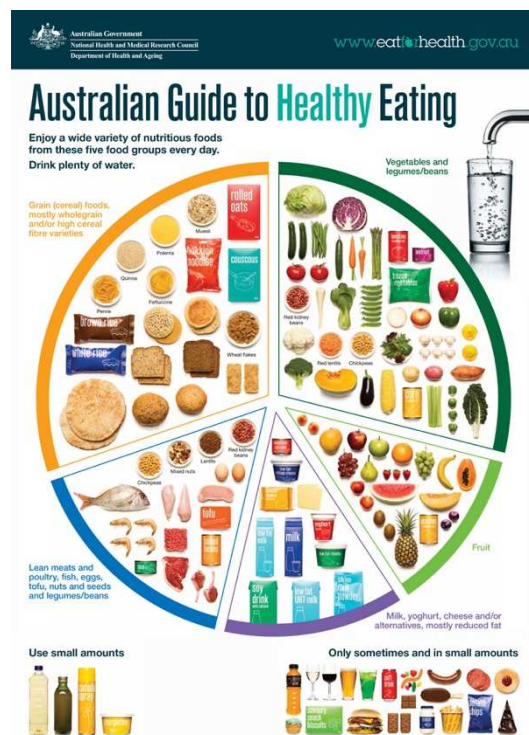
Waste Free Morning Tea and Lunch – Nude Food

NNS is committed to promoting good health for both our children and for our planet. We strive to make sustainable and environmentally friendly choices as part of our policies at the preschool. Morning tea and lunch at preschool are waste free. By reducing the amount of packaging we use, looking to see if the packaging can be recycled, we are significantly reducing the amount of waste going into landfill. A waste free morning tea and lunch is much better for our planet and may provide the additional benefit of saving families money.

Healthy Eating Guidelines (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013)

1. To achieve and maintain a healthy weight, be physically active and choose amounts of nutritious food and drinks to meet your energy needs.
2. Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five groups every day:
 - Plenty of vegetables, including different types and colours, and legumes/beans
 - Fruit
 - Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties, such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley
 - Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans
 - Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives, mostly reduced fat
 - And drink plenty of water.
3. Limit intake of foods containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugars and alcohol
4. Encourage, support and promote breastfeeding
5. Care for your food and store it safely

Definitions



Healthy eating: Healthy eating is eating a wide variety of foods from the five food groups each day. These are:

- fruit
- vegetables and legumes/beans
- grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain
- milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives
- lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds and legumes/beans.

Healthy eating also means eating in a way that is socially, culturally and developmentally appropriate, having regular meals and snacks and eating food to satisfy hunger, appetite and energy needs.

Source: *Nutrition Australia Victorian Division* www.nutritionaustralia.org.

Nutrition: the process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth.

Source: *Oxford Dictionaries* www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/nutrition.

Discretionary choices: 'Discretionary choices' are foods and drinks that are high in saturated fat, added sugar and salt or a combination of these. They typically have very little nutritional value and are often processed and packaged. Examples of these foods are chocolate, confectionary, jelly, sweet biscuits, high fat savoury biscuits, chips, doughnuts, high sugar/high fat cakes and slices, cream, ice cream, hot chips and other deep-fried foods and pastry-based foods (pies, sausage rolls and pasties), fast food and takeaway foods, soft drinks, fruit drinks, cordial, sports drinks, energy drinks and flavoured mineral water.

Source: *NHRMC (2017)* <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/food-essentials/discretionary-food-and-drink-choices>

Nude food: Nude Food is food without excess packaging. This reduces the amount of 'stuff' that needs to go in bins to be sent to landfill.

Source: *Green Industries SA* <http://www.wow.sa.gov.au/nude-food.html>

The policy

This policy will be made available to the staff, current and prospective NNS families on the NNS website. A hard copy is stored in the office and on request copies are provided to families.

This policy will be circulated and communicated to families and staff.

- Staff: included in the staff orientation manual and signed by all new staff
- Families: A copy of this policy will be provided to families when a place is formally offered to their child at the NNS. Parents will need to sign that they will respect and adhere to this policy on the Child's Enrolment Form in accepting the place for their child.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by NNS management committee governance portfolio with input from staff and families.

Procedure

Aim 1: To support and assist in children receiving a safe and nutritional diet.

NNS/staff will:

- Provide parents with information and resources through current literature on appropriate healthy foods for children between 3 and 6 years old.
- Provide families with healthy lunch box suggestions such as www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au. Young children have smaller stomachs than adults, so they need to eat every few hours to keep up their energy levels and get the right amount of nutrients. Snacks based on fruit and vegetables, dairy products and whole grains are the healthiest choices.
- Fridges are provided in each room to ensure children's food is stored at a safe temperature (below 5 degrees).
- Good hygiene practices are discussed with children. Children wash hands before all meals and food preparation.
- Staff ensure safe food handling practices are adopted at all times e.g. Washing hands before helping children with their food, eating surfaces are cleaned with warm soapy water or vinegar and wiped dry.
- Emergency food will be available if, in unforeseen circumstances, a child does not have any lunch. NNS will ring parents to let them know.
- The director will talk with families if food does not support our healthy eating guidelines in the 'Food Policy. Inappropriate food can affect children's behavior, health and concentration, which affects their learning and relationships with other children.

- The staff at NNS recognise they are role models and are required to bring foods and drinks that are in line with the service's nutrition and healthy eating policy

Families will ensure:

- Fresh fruit / vegetables and other nutritious food for morning tea which is similar to 'crunch and sip' are provided. Not only does this encourage healthy eating, but it assists children in preparing for school routines.
- Children are to bring drink bottles containing WATER ONLY which is available at all times and teachers will encourage children to drink water throughout the day.
- Children are not to bring discretionary choice foods such as lollies, chocolate, chips, cakes, sweet baked goods (muffins, cupcakes, sweet biscuits), muesli bars, highly artificially flavoured and processed foods and other items listed as "Not for preschool" on our list of Healthy Eating Ideas (see below), in children's morning tea and lunch boxes. Parents will be notified and reminded that they have agreed to abide by this policy and not to include these foods for morning tea or lunch at preschool.
- Baked goods must be savoury. Sweet baked goods (regardless of nutritional content or baked at home) are not allowed. The rationale behind this choice is to promote healthy eating habits for **all** children that will last a lifetime.
- Processed foods and foods that are high in fat, sugar and / or salt are discouraged – please source the Australian Government, department of Health and Ageing Publications 'Get Up and Grow' – 'Healthy Eating' and 'Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013'. www.health.gov.au

They engage in discussions about healthy food choices with their child and talk to them about our food and waste free policy so they understand the reasons behind its implementation.

Allergies – Risk minimization

- We are a **NUT FREE** preschool and need to ensure that our families support this by not sending in any foods containing nuts. If a child attends the preschool and has a severe diagnosed allergy to any other foods, these will also be excluded for as long as the child is attending the preschool.
- When children are not allowed certain foods due to allergies or for other reasons, parents will be required to provide as much information as possible about suitable and safe foods for their child. (A current Anaphylactic Management Plan signed by a doctor is required for allergies).
- Potential allergy food with anaphylactic responses (e.g. eggs, sesame seeds). Families will be notified at the start of the preschool year and as otherwise required, if there are any children with specific anaphylactic allergies in attendance.
 - Eggs: Eggs and products containing eggs are usually okay but if there are any children with allergies to eggs attending the preschool, egg in its raw form, hardboiled or in quiche like foods, **MUST NOT** be brought into the preschool.
 - Sesame seeds: Hummus and other foods containing sesame seeds (including tahini) are usually okay unless there are children with allergies to sesame seeds attending, in which case such foods **MUST NOT** be brought into the preschool.
- Children eat their own food at mealtimes and do not share other children's food for the reasons of allergies and cross infection.
- Parents and staff need to be aware that although NNS aims to follow an allergen avoidance framework designed to reduce risk of inadvertent exposure as far as practicable, it is never possible to achieve a completely allergen-free environment in any service that is open to the general community.

Examples of healthy eating guidelines whilst at preschool below

Examples of healthy eating guidelines whilst at preschool

<p>Nutrition and Waste Free Policy</p> <p>Food should be primarily whole foods, unprocessed and natural foods</p> <p>Fresh fruit</p> <p>Fresh vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooked or raw e.g. carrots, celery, cucumber sticks, fresh beans, snow peas, capsicum, cooked corn, cherry tomatoes • Salads <p>Grains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pasta, rice, couscous • Sandwiches except peanut or other nut butters • Breads: no nuts or sesame seeds) wholemeal or wholegrain, rolls, lavosh wraps or pita bread. • Plain rice crackers, corn thins, plain popcorn (check ingredients to ensure low salt, no additives and flavours) <p>Proteins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat and Fish e.g. meatballs, chicken pieces, tuna • Boiled eggs* (allergies alert) <p>Dairy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoghurt** (low sugar and buy big and put into re-usable containers), • cheese <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baked items are to be savory only e.g. savoury muffins, scones • Rice paper rolls, Sushi • Dolmades, falafels • Dips– including guacamole, vegetable dips and hummus* (allergy alert) • Olives • Dried fruit such as raisins <p>Celebration Foods – NO NUTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy low or no sugar cakes with no additives/preservatives • Fresh fruit platters, kebabs, or watermelon cakes for example • Savoury plates • Ice blocks, natural fructose, no additives /artificial flavourings • Low sugar jelly • Plain air popped Popcorn <p>* Allergy alert – this will depend if enrolled children have an anaphylactic allergy ** Aim for low sugar content</p>	<p>Allergy *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food that includes nuts (bliss balls, nut spreads) • May extend to other foods such as eggs., sesame seeds, shellfish depending on children enrolled at NNS. These will vary from year-to-year and will be clearly communicated. • Sesame seeds: Crackers, hummus • Eggs: quiche, whole eggs, <p>Pre-packaged food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often contains nuts and we may have to send the food home with your child. • they may have artificial flavorings and additives. Six artificial food colourings that may have an adverse effect on activity and attention in children: 102, 104, 110, 122, 124, 129. <p>Additives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additives can be present in all processed foods including healthy choices such as bread, butter, yoghurt, juice or muesli bars • Don't buy products that include artificial food colourings 102, 104, 110, 122, 124 or 129 on their ingredient list. • Look for brands that use natural colours. • Avoid processed food as much as possible. • Check with the staff at NNS and also the ingredients on packaging and/or with vendors if uncertain. <p>Prohibited Everyday Foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt and / or sugar and low in essential nutrients. Examples of these foods include lollies, chocolates, sweet biscuits, muesli bars, breakfast bars, fruit filled bars, chips, oven-baked crackers, teddy biscuits, sweet buns, roll ups, fruit sticks, pretzels • Juice, jelly • Sweets, chocolate or cream biscuits • Ice-cream / frozen yoghurt • Sweet baked goods (including home-made) Cakes, cupcakes, muffins, banana bread (and other fruits)
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Aim 2: To provide a relaxed social environment where children can share family and cultural practices during mealtimes.

- Mealtimes are wonderful social experiences.
- Teachers and children talk together, discussing many things as well as good eating habits
- Parents are encouraged to contribute to a healthy cooking program e.g. sharing recipes, cooking with children and preparing food for special occasions, joining the children for lunch and birthdays.

Aim 3: To share information about food and nutrition with children.

- Reference will be made to healthy eating as outlined in *Healthy Eating Active Living Strategy (NSW Ministry of Health, 2013)* and the *Australian Dietary Guidelines (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013)*.
- Children will be encouraged to participate in cooking experiences and food preparation within the program.
- Food being eaten will be discussed, relating to its taste, texture, appearance and nutritional value.

Aim 4: As competent independent learners we encourage children to take responsibility for managing their own meals.

- Staff will inform and encourage parents about suitable nutritious foods to bring to preschool and also about packaging (drink bottles and containers) to ensure maximum independence and school readiness and minimize waste in packaging.
- Through social interactions at mealtimes children model good eating habits and independence to their friends. Each child has access to their own drink bottles and water drinking fountains as needed throughout the day

Aim 5: Celebration food (including birthday celebrations) should reinforce the healthy eating message

- Staff and families at NNS spend time and effort promoting the healthy eating message via what is provided in the children's lunchboxes. Teachers and families are encouraged to select foods from the healthy eating list when providing food for celebrations and birthday parties.
- We encourage children to understand that some foods they can eat a lot of as they are of greater nutritional value and others can be eaten in small amounts and not as often, creating an awareness of a nutritious balanced diet and how it affects our bodies and minds.
- **Birthday cakes:** we welcome healthier ingredients cakes. Cakes have to be made with **NO NUTS and free from artificial flavorings and additives and minimal sugar if any.** Please check if we have children with egg or gluten allergies in your child's room.
- Staff and families can also bring in non-cake celebration food. Other ideas for celebration food include
 - Ice blocks with NO additives or artificial flavors at all
 - Fresh fruit e.g. fruit platters, watermelon 'cake', fruit kebabs, water melon ball with skewers of fruit attached or jelly in fruit cups.
- Children may also have other health conditions that required careful dietary management (coeliac disease, eczema, diabetes). To promote inclusion, please notify staff of ingredients (specifically gluten). Alternative food may be provided by families of children with allergies and/or intolerances to enable them to join in with celebrations. However, we would be grateful if you could consider including alternative options where possible so all children can feel included and part of the celebration".
- Children who have restricted diets are welcome to bring in foods (compliant with the food policy) to keep in our freezer to be eaten during a celebration.

Aim 6: Waste Free Morning Tea and Lunch – Nude Food

- Families are to pack their child's morning tea and lunch in reusable containers without the use of any additional wrapping (cling wrap / silver foil), reducing waste ("**Nude Food**").
- We encourage families to buy in bulk and where possible, only buy products with a recycling symbol. Buying in bulk not only saves resources but also saves money.
- We bring a compost bucket to every morning tea and lunch and ask children to use it to dispose of their compostable food scraps (children are also responsible for throwing their non-compostable rubbish into a regular bin). Children help empty the compost buckets into the compost bin at the end of each day and learn how to mix and use the wonderful soil they have created over time. The different types of rubbish we create is discussed, so children build an understanding about the choices we make in creating sustainable and environmental practices into our lives that protect the wellbeing of our world.

Sources

Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood

Food Safety Standards for Australia August 2015

Australia and New Zealand Food Standards Codes March 2016

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011, amended November 2016

Review

This policy has been reviewed based on the "checklist: What to include in a nutrition and healthy eating policy" (Healthy Eating Advisory Service)

The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families

Last reviewed: August 2018

Date for next review: 2020

References

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority. (2017). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*. Retrieved from Sydney: https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-03/Guide-to-the-NQF_0.pdf
- Department of Education and Training. (2009). *Belonging, Being & Becoming - The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. Retrieved from https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia_v5_docx.pdf
- Healthy Eating Advisory Service. Checklist: What to include in a nutrition and healthy eating policy. Retrieved from <http://heas.health.vic.gov.au/early-childhood-services/developing-healthy-eating-policy/checklist>
- Morris, T. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.healthyfoodguide.com.au/articles/2010/november/research-update-food-and-childrens-behaviour>
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). *Australian Dietary Guidelines*. Retrieved from <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/n55>
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2017). Discretionary food and drink choices. Retrieved from <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/food-essentials/discretionary-food-and-drink-choices>
- New South Wales Government. (2018). *Education and Care Services National Regulations*. Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653>
- NSW Ministry of Health. (2013). *NSW Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy: Preventing overweight and obesity in New South Wales 2013-2018*. Retrieved from <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/heal/Publications/nsw-healthy-eating-strategy.pdf>