



POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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NUTRITION & MENU PLANNING FOR OSHC SERVICES

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND/OR PURPOSE

Catholic Early Learning & Care is committed to ensuring the health, nutrition and wellbeing of all children in their care. Healthy eating and nutritious food play a significant role in determining the health, growth and development of children. Nutrition education is an important part of the program, promoting healthy eating habits. Services ensure that positive eating experiences are encouraged, through the provision of:

- Menus that are healthy, diverse and balanced.
- Menus which will expose the children to cuisine from different cultures.
- Nutritional food and snacks, in a happy and social environment.
- Activities that promote an understanding of healthy eating practices.
- Creating a 'safe' environment for children to try or experiment with foods without judgment.

Children are supported and supervised in eating and drinking safely, with all staff cognisant of potential choking hazards.

2. APPLICATION

This procedure applies to all Catholic Early Learning and Care Services in the Diocese of Cairns.

3. PROCEDURE

Choking Hazards

- Choking hazards for young children include anything smaller than a 20cent coin. This should be taken into consideration in the chopping, slicing and preparation of all foods. For further details of foods that pose a choking risk, see [Choking Prevention and Choking Risks](#).
- To reduce food choking risks, Educators will supervise children and ensure that they sit down while they're eating.
- Educators should be aware of children with medical or chronic conditions that make them more susceptible to choking risks.

Healthy & Safe Food Principles:

- Food and beverages are nutritious and adequate, prepared and stored in a safe and hygienic manner, complying with all laws and regulations, including the Food Act 2006
- Dietary requirements of all children are catered for:

- Consideration for each child's growth and development.
- Any cultural, religious or health requirements are provided for.
- Parents/Guardians are required to provide information compiled by health professionals if their child requires a special diet. This is required in the enrolment form and should be discussed with Nominated Supervisor, who will inform Educators.
- Nutrition procedures will be reviewed in consultation with families, children and educators.
- Nutrition and menu planning is based on information from recognised health authorities including Nutrition Australia, Heart Foundation and Queensland Health. In addition, information will be accessed from Australian Government Guidelines Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood, and/or [Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia](#).

Menus will be displayed that are accessible to parents/guardians and children. The menu will accurately describe food and beverage supplied.

- Educators will implement effective food safety practices to limit cross contamination.
- Health information from the Health Translation Database www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au is available if required.

Promoting Healthy Eating Habits:

Educators and parents/guardians will consult on a regular basis about their child's food interests, dietary requirements and eating habits.

- A dietary chart shall be placed in the kitchen area with a list of children who have special dietary requirements. This list will be updated as required.
- Hand hygiene will be encouraged prior to eating.
- Social interactions will be encouraged during meal and snack times. Educators will sit with children at mealtimes, discuss food being served, promote hygienic self-help practices, and use positive strategies to promote children's interest in foods and to encourage lifelong healthy eating habits.
- Educators will model and promote healthy and hygienic eating habits talking to children about safe food practices e.g. sitting while eating.
- Menu feedback will be sought from children. Ideas for new food experiences will be included in menu plans.
- Menus will reflect the multicultural nature of the community and provide children with a broader range of food experiences.
- Special occasions will be celebrated with culturally appropriate food.
- Children will be provided with autonomy and self-agency where practically possible EG – self select food from a platter.
- Children are encouraged to try foods but never forced to eat food they do not want.
- All educators involved in food preparation and serving food need to complete the **I'm Alert Food Safety Training** <http://www.imalert.com.au/foodsafety/training/welcome.php?sub=cairns>
- All educators involved in food preparation and serving food must complete and have on file a "Food Handler's Checklist" form annually.
- Food and nutrition activities are incorporated into children's planned learning experiences, through stories, visual displays, dramatic play and interactions with children.

Food Provided from Home (Vacation Care):

- Families will be encouraged to provide healthy food/snacks that meet dietary requirements.
- Food should be age appropriate, varied and satisfy a child's appetite and interest.
- Parents/guardians will be alerted to food excluded from the Service and information regarding food allergy and anaphylaxis will be displayed prominently at service.

As services do not provide children with access to heating devices, any potentially hazardous food in a lunch box needs to be kept at a safe temperature of below 5°C and cannot be reheated in service.

- Below are some simple tips to help ensure food is kept at a safe temperature until the time it will be consumed:
 - use insulated lunch boxes or cooler bags

- keep a frozen drink or freezer brick inside the lunch box
- if preparing lunches the night before, keep it in the fridge until leaving home
- Any perishable food such as meat, poultry or egg sandwiches, should be thrown out if not eaten that day.
- Alternatively, pack lunch options that do not need to be kept cool to stay safe, such as:
 - > sandwiches with fillings such as hard cheeses, pickles and some spreads (e.g. Vegemite or honey)
 - > canned meat or fish
 - > whole (uncut) fruit and vegetables.

Food Safety Tips

- Parents and guardians are reminded of a few simple food safety rules to prepare safe and healthy lunches and avoid the growth and contamination of food poisoning bacteria:
 - Wash and thoroughly dry hands before handling food. Children should be encouraged to always wash their hands before eating.
 - Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly.
 - Keep food preparation areas clean and dry.
 - Keep lunch boxes, utensils and reusable water bottles clean and dry.
- Further information on food safety is available on [Queensland Health](#) website.

Provision of Drinking Water:

- Children must always have access to clean drinking water.
- Educators and children are made aware of the signs of dehydration.
- Families are required to provide a refillable water bottle.

Food Provided by the Service:

- OSHC services provide a nutritious snack for afternoon tea.
- OSHC services that offer Before School Care provide a light, nutritious breakfast.
- Individual needs will be considered in meal schedules and planned in the best interests of the children.
- Food provided will be varied, seasonally appropriate and the menu cycle will be rotated to ensure that children attending part time will have opportunities for experiencing a range of foods. Foods will offer different colours and texture.
- If the service offers a rotating menu, the menu rotation is a minimum of 4 weeks.
- The menu is reviewed every 3 – 4 months.
- Will provide opportunity for children to explore and experiment with textures, tastes and combinations in a safe and non-judgmental environment.

Foods and drinks that will be limited in the daily menu

Some foods and drinks will not be included in the daily menu on a regular basis. These items are generally highly processed, higher in saturated fat and added salt and/or sugar or a combination of these and typically have little nutritional value.

Examples of foods and drinks which will be limited are

- sweet drinks such as soft drinks, fruit juice and fruit drinks, cordial, sports drinks, sports waters, flavoured waters, flavoured mineral waters, iced teas and energy drinks
- confectionery, chocolate, jelly
- deep fried foods,
- pastry-based foods, such as pies, sausage rolls, pizza scrolls and pasties
- processed meats, such as sausages, frankfurts, hot dogs, salami, kabana, twiggy sticks, Strasburg, Devon
- chicken nuggets and fish fingers
- fast food and takeaway foods
- high fat and salt savoury snack foods, such as crisps, chips, biscuits
- ice creams and ice confections

- high sugar and high fat baked and packaged goods, such as cakes, muffins, sweet pastries, slices, biscuits and bars.

Outside School Hours Care

[The food and drink guidelines for Outside School Hours Care](#) outline healthy food and drinks for children that are in line with the [Australian Dietary Guidelines](#) and [the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating](#) (Vic Health Guidelines). **Services must ensure that menus provide a variety of nutritious foods from the below 5 food groups.**

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day.
Drink plenty of water.



Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties



Vegetables and legumes/beans

Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds and legumes/beans

Fruit

Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat

Use small amounts



Only sometimes and in small amounts



Australian guide to healthy eating

Breakfast

Breakfast must be planned and documented on the menu

Breakfast may include:

- Grain (cereal) Breakfast cereals should be low in added sugars
- Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives.
- Fruit

Afternoon tea

Afternoon tea must be planned and documented on the menu.

Afternoon tea will include:

Fruit and vegetables each day; in addition to a selection from the below foods.

- Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives.
- Grains foods such as bread, rice, pasta, crackers, flour-based products should be mostly wholemeal or wholegrain.
- Lean meat, poultry, pork, fish, eggs, legumes and alternatives.
- Dried fruit **should not** be provided every day.
- Baked items **must not** be provided every day.

Fats and Oils

- **Avoid** palm, cottonseed and coconut oils or oil blends that contain these, as well as cream, sour cream, butter, cophya, ghee and lard.

Food will not be used as a reward or punishment:

Using food as reward or punishment has negative consequences. Providing food based on performance or behaviour connects food to mood and may lead to unhealthy eating habits. Children will be provided with opportunity to try foods without judgment or punishment.

Professional Development:

- Educators will be familiarised with current nutrition resources. Outside health professionals will be utilised to share up to date information on subjects such as healthy eating, nutrition for under twos, young teens and oral health.
- The service will regularly access information on health and nutrition matters from recognised health authorities.

4. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against a person who is found to have breached the requirements contained within this document. Action taken will depend on the nature and circumstance of each breach and could include: an official warning and note on the individual's personnel file; a formal written and/or verbal apology; counselling; demotion; transfer; or suspension or dismissal for very serious matters.

5. ENQUIRIES

Catholic Early Learning and Care Director- admin@cclc.catholic.org.au

6. SEE ALSO

- Food Act 2006 [Food Act 2006](#)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- Regulation 78,79,80
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 [Education and Care Services National Law \(Queensland\)](#)
- The National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care 2018 [National Quality Standard | ACECQA](#)
- PANOSH
- Kidzbodz <http://www.kidzbodz.com.au/default.htm>
- <http://heas.health.vic.gov.au/early-childhood-services/policies-and-guidelines/sample-menu-OSHC>

- Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia [Australian dietary guidelines 1 - 5 | Eat For Health](#) http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/n34.pdf
- www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bf - breastfeeding and work
- www.nutritionaustralia.org
- Healthy Eating Book –Get Up and Grow [Get Up & Grow – Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood – Resource collection | Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing](#)
- Healthy Eating Pyramid [Australian guide to healthy eating | Eat For Health](#)
- Menu Planning Guidelines for Long Day Care [Menu planning guidelines for long day care | Healthy Eating Advisory Service](#)
- Menu Planning Checklist
- Food Handling and Preparation
- Infection Control
- Enrolment and Orientation
- National Quality Standards. 2.1, 2.2, 3.1.2,4.1.1, 6.1.6.2.7.1,2,7.3

7. APPROVAL

Al Forster.

Alison Forster
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 Catholic Early Learning and Care

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