



BLUE GUM

Early Learning & Child Care Centre

Food, Nutrition and Beverage Policy

NQS

QA2	2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle - Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
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National Regulations

Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	78	Food and beverages
	79	Service providing food and beverages
	80	Weekly menu
	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

EYLF

LO3	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 promote continuity of children's personal health and hygiene by sharing ownership of routines and schedules with children, families and the community.
	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 routines that promote healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.
	Educators model and reinforce health, nutrition and personal hygiene practices with children.

Aim

Our service aims to promote good nutrition and healthy food habits and attitudes to all children and families at the service. We also aim to support and provide for children with food allergies, dietary requirements, or restrictions, and specific cultural or religious practices.

Related Policies

Additional Needs Policy

Enrolment Policy
Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy
Medical Conditions Policy

The Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, volunteers, and students will:

- Ensure children have access to water and offer them water regularly during the day.
- Ensure children are offered foods and beverages throughout the day that meet their nutritional and developmental needs and any specific dietary requirements. These requirements may be based on written advice from families (eg in the enrolment form) or as part of a child's medical management plan.
- Provide foods that take into account each child's likes, dislikes, culture and religion. Families will be reminded to update this information regularly or when necessary.
- Ensure routines are flexible enough so that children who do not eat during routine meal or snack times, or who are hungry, are provided with food. Educators will not force children to eat food they do not like or more than they want.
- Ensure food is consistent with the Government's Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013 and Infant Feeding Guidelines. The Guidelines and Summaries are available on the NHMRC website <https://nhmrc.gov.au/>
- Follow the guidelines for serving different types of food and the serving sizes in the Guidelines and may use the Australian Government "eat for health" calculator <http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/eat-health-calculators>.
- Encourage families to provide healthy food for their children at home, which is consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines, talk to families about their child's food intake and voice any concerns about their child's eating
- Provide food that is safe and prepared hygienically by following the relevant procedures set out in the Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy.
- Provide food and beverages that minimise the risk of children choking.
- Provide families with daily information about their child's food and beverage intake and related experiences.
- Feed babies individually. **Educators are to ensure that they read the labels of the child's milk container and bottles before preparing to feed a child their milk.**
- Provide age and developmentally appropriate utensils and furniture for each child.
- Ensure mealtimes are relaxed, pleasant, and timed to meet most children's needs.
- Integrate learning about food and nutrition into the Curriculum.
- Never use food as a punishment, reward or as a bribe.
- Encourage toddlers and young children to develop their sense of agency by feeding themselves independently and developing their social skills at mealtimes.
- Model and reinforce healthy eating habits and food options with children during eating times.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure staff receive training in nutrition, food safety and other cultures' food customs if professional development in these areas is required.

Breastfeeding, Breast Milk and Bottle Warming

Healthy lifestyles and good nutrition for each child is paramount. We encourage all families to continue breast feeding their child until at least 12 months in line with recommendations by recognised authorities and will feed children breast milk supplied by their families.

Educators and mothers who breastfeed at the Service

We support mothers who wish to breastfeed at the service by providing a quiet, relaxing place with a comfortable chair for mothers to breastfeed or express milk. Educators will take into account mothers' preferences for privacy.

All reasonable efforts will also be made to support educators who continue breastfeeding their child when they (return to) work at the service. For example, an educator returning from maternity leave may have a meeting with the Nominated Supervisor to discuss:

- More flexible work arrangements
- The provision of lactation breaks for the educator to express milk or breastfeed her child. Educator to child ratios will not be compromised during these breaks.

Breast Milk Procedure

Breast milk that has been expressed should be brought to the service in a clean sterile container labelled with the date of expression and the child's name. We encourage families to transport milk to the service in cooler bags and eskies. Educators will:

- Put the breastmilk in the fridge as soon as families arrive at the Service
- Refrigerate the milk at 4° Celsius until it is required
- Warm and/or thaw breastmilk by standing the container/bottle in a container of warm water
- Test the temperature of the milk before giving it to the child
- Consult individual families for instructions if they do not have enough breastmilk to meet the child's needs that day
- Return any unused breastmilk to families when they collect their child. Educators will not store unused milk at the service.

Safe Storage and Heating of Babies Bottles

Our service will use microwaves to heat Infant Formula/Cow's Milk

Microwave Instructions

We recognise that microwaves are an efficient and safe way to heat infant formula and cow's milk. We will not heat breast milk in the microwave as it may destroy some of the breast milk's properties.

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For Infant Formula Or Cow's Milk, The Service Will Always:

- Transfer the milk into a Pyrex jug to minimise the risk of uneven heating. Once the milk is poured into the bottle we will shake the bottle directly after microwaving the milk.
- Heat a minimum of 120mls of formula/cow's milk in the jug to ensure it does not overheat.
- Only heat formula/cow's milk that has been adequately refrigerated.
- Always leave bottle outside the microwave.
- Not use microwave ovens with wattage over 700W.
- For a 120ml size bottle – use high setting and heat for less than 30 seconds.
- For a 240ml size bottle – use high setting and heat for less than 45 seconds.
- Follow specific manufacturer instructions provided with the microwave.
- Check the temperature of the formula/milk on the inside of the wrist before giving to the child to ensure contents are at a safe temperature

Bottle Warmers

Our service will use bottle warmers that have a thermostat control to heat Infant Formula/Cow's Milk/Breast Milk.

- The service will use the bottle warmer as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- Educators will ensure that bottle warmers are inaccessible to children at all times.

Procedure for Giving a Bottle

- Educators are to ensure that they read the labels of the baby's milk container and bottles before preparing to feed a baby their milk.
- Once you are certain that it is the baby's bottle and milk ensure that the baby is comfortable and proceed to hold and feed them.
- Ensure independent babies/ child who feeds themselves are stationary and lying down while taking their bottles. Always supervise any baby/child who is feeding themselves a bottle. Pick up any discarded bottles immediately, and place in the sink for washing.
- Within a one-hour time frame a baby/child can be offered the same bottle that they were previously feeding and not finished. After this time the milk will need to be discarded. Do NOT place the milk back into the refrigerator.
- When offering a bottle back to a baby/child that they have not finished, double check the labelling of the bottle to ensure that it is the correct baby's/ child's bottle.
- Under no circumstances leave a baby/ child alone with their bottle in the cot.

Sources

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012

Early Years Learning Framework

National Quality Standard

Food Standards Australia New Zealand

Safe Food Australia, 2nd Edition. January 2001

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

Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012

Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013

Eat for health: Dept Health and Ageing and NHMRC

Food Safety Standards for Australia 2001

Food Standards Australia and New Zealand Act 1991

Food Standards Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994

Food Act 2008

Food Regulation 2009

Department of Health: Food Regulation

Occupational Health and Safety Act 1984

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 1996

Dental Association Australia

Australian Breast Feeding Association Guidelines

Start Right Eat Right Dept Health SA

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually.

The review will be conducted by:

- Management

- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Last reviewed: January 2024 Date for next review: January 2025