



ECHUNGA
PRIMARY & PRESCHOOL

Nutrition and Food Safety Policy and Procedures

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Background

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements.

High quality sourced nutritional food is essential for the proper growth and development of children. Providing a balanced and nutritional diet assists children to develop healthy eating habits and practices that can set the foundation for a child's life.

Echunga preschool can play a significant role in helping children develop positive attitudes and habits for healthy eating. We also offer an ideal opportunity to offer intentional teaching in relating to food handling and hygiene.

Echunga preschool strives to meet the requirements of the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia and Australian Food Safety Standards and ensure that its educators are kept informed of the latest information.

We refer to the Rite Bite policy and the Heart Foundations Eat Smart Play Smart Program.

Policy statement

As part of our commitment to children's health, safety and wellbeing, we role-model food safety and hygiene practices, as well as supporting healthy food and beverage choices according to each child's needs.

We prioritise children's health, safety and wellbeing. This includes safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, as well as providing food and beverages that are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and chosen based on each child's dietary and medical requirements.

We promote a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating and physical activity. We support children and families' understanding about the importance of nutrition and food choices.

We value our families and their cultures, customs and religious traditions. We work with them to ensure that the food and beverages we provide to their children reflect their preferences.

We incorporate children's agency and decision-making into our educational program. We plan meal times and other food-related experiences that enable this.

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers, nominated supervisors and educators to ensure:

- adequate health and hygiene practices, as well as safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food (regulation 77)
- that children have access to safe drinking water at all times and food and beverages appropriate to each child's needs on a regular basis throughout the day (regulation 78)
- any food or beverages provided by preschool are nutritious and chosen based on each child's dietary requirements (accounting for their growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements) (regulation 79)

Echunga preschool considers nutrition to be a vital component in the healthy development of children.

We follow:

- Australian Government – Australian Dietary Guidelines eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines
- Australian Government – Food Standards Australia New Zealand foodstandards.gov.au
- Australian Government – Get up & grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood health.gov.au/resources/publications/staff-and-carer-book
- Australian Government – Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services

Parents will provide day to day healthy snack and lunch options for their child. Any food provided at Echunga preschool will be nutritious. Meal and snack times and activities, involving food preparation, will provide positive learning experiences for children, who will be encouraged to develop healthy eating habits.

Educators and families will work together to ensure that all children's dietary requirements are met.

Families will be encouraged to share healthy, traditional and cultural recipes to enrich the variety and enjoyment of food that meets children's nutritional needs.

Echunga Preschool aims to provide a healthy environment for food handling and hygiene at the service.

3. Relationship and Legislative Requirements

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
78	Food and beverages
79	Service providing food and beverages
80	Weekly menu
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment

Health and Safety – Nutrition and Food Safety Policy

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
170	Policies and Procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Control of Infectious Diseases Policy Enrolment Policy Excursions / Incursions Policy	Family Communication Policy Governance Policy Health and Safety Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Medical Conditions Policy Multicultural Policy
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Procedures

General

Where food is provided by Echunga Preschool

Echunga Preschool will:

- provide children with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products,
- ensure that food and beverages supplied take into account and respect the cultural, religious and health requirements of the children and families accessing the service.
- ensure children are encouraged to try new foods, but no child will be forced to eat something he/she does not like or which is inconsistent with his/her religious/cultural or dietary needs.
- food will not be used as a punishment or reward.
- discuss healthy eating and nutrition as part of the curriculum.
- ensure children and educators will wash hands before eating and observe the requirements of safe food handling.
- ensure that meal and snack times will be advertised and promoted as a time of social interaction.
- ensure that children will be encouraged to participate in meal/snack preparation and clean-up activities as part of the service's life skills focus (unless for health reasons that staff must prepare and serve food due to a health crisis, such as a pandemic).
- ensure that all hot foods and beverages for educators must be made and consumed away from children

Food brought from home:

Echunga Preschool will:

- provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and that are suitable for children's lunchboxes and after school snacks
- provide information to families on how to read the *Nutritional Information Panel* on food and drink labels
- encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious food provided
- discourage the provision of highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt, and/or sugar, and low in essential nutrients in children's lunchboxes. Examples of these foods include sweet biscuits, some muesli bars, breakfast bars, fruit filled bars, and chips.
- Food that should be limited and not be encouraged to be brought to the preschool service include confectionary (lollies, sweets, chocolate), deep fried foods (chicken nuggets, fish fingers) and sugary drinks (cordial, soft drinks and energy drinks).

Food Supply

- Our service encourages families to provide food and beverages for their child that complies with the Australian Dietary Guidelines to their children for consumption at the service.
- Our service focuses on a supply of fresh fruit and vegetables that are sourced locally wherever possible.

Allergy Awareness and Dietary Needs

- Educators will work closely with families to accommodate their needs and requirements as best as they can. Educators will ensure a communication plan and risk minimisation plan is in place for each child with an allergy, intolerance to food or because of cultural/religious requirements.
- If a child has specific dietary need, a discussion with the Principal and educators will need to take place to help accommodate their needs.

Fresh Drinking Water

- Fresh drinking water will be available to children every day.
- Educators will encourage children to drink water regularly throughout the day.
- Families will ensure they provide a drink bottle filled with water for their child.

Food on Excursions

- Families should ensure that their children have a refillable drink bottle, a packed healthy recess and lunch for all excursions.

Cooking at Preschool

- We love cooking at preschool, and we like to try healthy snacks, recipes from around the world as well as our favourite family recipes. Educators and families are encouraged to share their recipes and food experiences.
- Cooking can help develop children's knowledge and skills regarding healthy eating habits. Cooking is a great, fun activity and provides opportunities for children to be exposed to new foods, sharing of recipes and cooking skills. During any cooking experience, educators will be vigilant to ensure that the experience remains safe, and relevant food hygiene practices are adhered to.

Celebrations and special treats

- It is recognised that, on occasion, food and beverages supplied at the service may diverge from the Right Bite guidelines for special purposes / celebrations. Families will be advised of such occasions.
- Where we do use, cook with or provide special treats we will advertise these through Seesaw.

Food Safety and Hygiene

- Educators will not heat, reheat, cook in the oven or microwave or give boiling water from the kettle for two minute or noodles/soup-in-a-cup to children. This is for various safety reasons. The only time that food will be cooked or heated is when it is a planned experience at the service.
- Echunga OSHC follows Food Standards Australia New Zealand requirements, and encourages educators and children to follow the good hygiene practices by washing their hands well with soap and running water and dry on a single use towel before preparing and eating food.
- Educators will ensure that all food surfaces will be hygienically cleaned before and after cooking and eating preparation and activities.
- Food is prepared and stored hygienically following the Food Standards Australia New Zealand.
- Food poisoning is caused by bacteria, viruses, or other toxins being present in food and can cause extremely unpleasant symptoms such as diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and fevers. (Foodsafety.gov, 2019). We will strictly adhere to food hygiene standards to prevent the risk of food poisoning.

Personal hygiene for food handlers

Echunga OSHC will ensure:

- clean clothing is worn by food handlers (such as an apron or appropriate jacket)
- long hair is tied back or covered with a net (hairspray may be used for fringes to secure hair).
- hand and wrist jewellery are not worn while preparing food (e.g. rings and bracelets)
- nails are kept short and clean and no nail polish is worn (as it can chip into food and hide dirt under the nails)
- strict hand-washing hygiene is adhered to, including washing hands each time they return to the kitchen before continuing with food preparation duties
- wounds or cuts are covered with a brightly coloured, waterproof dressing (that will easily be seen if it falls off), and gloves will be worn over any dressings
- staff who are not well will not prepare or handle food

Food handling –Preparing, serving and cleaning up

- Posters on food safety shall be displayed in the room.
- Educators will tie long hair back their hair when preparing food and when appropriate.
- Gloves shall be worn when educators have cuts, scrapes or band-aids.
- Educators will use food safe cutting boards:
 - green for vegetables and fruits
 - red for meats
 - yellow for dairy
 - blue for bread, toast etc.

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- Educators will use the appropriate coloured cloth when cleaning up:
 - blue for washing dishes
 - yellow for tables
 - green for arts / crafts
- The service shall be monitored by a recognised Food safety authority (Mt. Barker District Council) and will participate in audits (including self audits) as requested.
- Drinking and eating utensils will be washed between uses in hot soapy water and left to air dry, then be put away.
- Tea towels will be cleaned regularly i.e. a clean towel for every day.
- Children are to use tongs during shared food times. This may be altered to staff serving food during pandemic times, to minimise cross contamination.
- Children and staff will wash and dry their hands (using soap, running water, and single use disposable towels or individual hand towels) before handling food or eating meals and snacks
- Educators or anyone preparing food shall ensure that a separate knife will be used for each spread and each gluten-free spread to prevent cross contamination.
- Educators shall ensure that oranges and kiwifruit shall be the last fruit to be cut up when making a fruit platter, due to allergies.
- If educators are feeling ill they must let the Director know. Educators feeling unwell will not prepare food for others to eat.
- We will ensure that all cooked food is cooked through and reaches 75 °C and is served promptly, or use a thermometer to ensure that hot food is maintained at above 60 °C until ready to serve.
- We will ensure that prepared cold food is stored in the refrigerator maintained at below 4 °C until ready to serve
- Children will be discouraged from handling other children's food and utensils
- Tongs will be used by all staff handling 'ready to eat' foods.
- Any cooked food that has been left in the 'danger zone' for two or more hours will be discarded and will not be reheated
- Cooked and ready-to-eat foods will be kept separate from raw foods
- Foods will be defrosted in the fridge or microwave
- We will wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under clean running water before preparation
- We will ensure unused washed fruit or vegetables are thoroughly dry before returning to storage
- Food that has been dropped on the floor is immediately discarded (chooks or compost)
- Kitchen utensils and equipment will be thoroughly cleaned between uses with different foods and/or between different tasks
- Educators will avoid cross-contamination by ensuring that separate knives and utensils are used for different foods

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- We will ensure that gloves are changed between handling different foods or changing tasks
- Educators preparing food for children with food allergies or intolerances are proficient at reading ingredient labels
- We will ensure that food allergies and intolerances are catered for by using separate easily identifiable cutting boards, utensils, and kitchen equipment (e.g., using a colour code, or food-safe permanent marker)
- Children with food allergies and/or intolerances will be served their meals and snacks individually on an easily identifiable plate (e.g. different colour), and that food is securely covered with plastic wrap until received by the child to prevent possible cross-contamination
- All educators and staff will be aware of children who have severe allergic reactions to certain foods as per ASCIA Action Plans
- Left-over food will be stored immediately in the fridge or thrown away (Chooks or Compost)

Buying and transporting food

Echunga Preschool Educators will:

- always check labels for the 'use by' and 'best before' dates, understanding that 'use by' dates apply to perishable foods that could potentially cause food poisoning if out of date, whilst 'best before' dates refer to food items with long shelf life, but quality could be compromised
- avoid buying food items in damaged, swollen, leaking or dented packaging
- always check eggs within cartons: Never buy dirty or cracked eggs
- never buy any food item if unsure about its quality
- ensure fresh meat, chicken, or fish products cannot leak on to other food items
- ensure chilled, frozen, and hot food items are kept out of the 'danger zone' (5 °C to 60 °C) on the trip back to the Service by:
 - not getting chilled frozen, or hot food items until the end of the shopping.
 - placing these items in an insulated shopping bag or cooler
 - immediately unpacking and storing these items upon the return to the Service

Hand washing

- Educators will follow hand washing procedures displayed in the room, washing hands with warm water and soap and then drying on a single use paper towel before/after preparing and/or eating foods.
- Educators will encourage children and all visitors to follow hand washing procedures and use throw away hand towels.

Cleaning

Echunga Preschool will:

- ensure that food preparation areas and surfaces are cleaned both before, after, and during any food preparation.
- ensure that all cooking and serving utensils are cleaned and sanitised after use
- ensure that all dishwashing sponges, brushes, and scourers are cleaned after each use and allowed to air dry.
- ensure the food storage area is clean, ventilated, dry, pest free, and not in direct sunlight
- ensure refrigerators and freezers are cleaned regularly and door seals checked and replaced if not in good repair.
- prevent pest infestations by cleaning spills as quickly as possible and ensuring rubbish and food scraps are disposed of frequently.
- ensure that floor mops are thoroughly cleaned and air dried after each use.
- replace any cleaning equipment that shows signs of wear or permanent soiling.

Communicating with families

Echunga Preschool will:

- provide a copy of the *Nutrition and Food Safety Policy* to all families upon orientation at the Service
- provide opportunities for families to contribute to the review and development of the policy
- communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within preschool and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home.
- communicate regularly with families and provide information and advice on appropriate food and drink to be included in children's lunchboxes. This information may be provided to families in a variety of ways including factsheets, newsletters, during orientation, information sessions and informal discussion.
- work closely with families to ensure children with allergies and alternative diets will have their needs and requirements met as best as they can. Educators will ensure a communication plan and risk minimisation plan is in place for each child with an allergy or intolerance to food.

Roles and responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Approved provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met• ensure adequate health and hygiene practices are followed, as well as safe premises, equipment and practices for handling, preparing and storing food, in line with Australian food safety standards and any jurisdictional requirements

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure children have access to safe drinking water at all times and are offered food and beverages appropriate to each child's needs on a regular basis throughout the day • ensure the food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and chosen based on each child's dietary requirements (accounting for their growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements) • display and make accessible to family members a weekly menu which accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by the service each day • ensure that child enrolment records include any special considerations for the child, such as cultural or religious dietary restrictions, as well as any health-related dietary restrictions • ensure risk minimisation plans are developed for children with medical conditions that can be impacted by food • ensure that healthy eating is promoted • take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements policy and procedures • ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection • notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or 2. significantly impact the service's education and care of children or 3. significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.
<p>Nominated supervisor / Principal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that regulatory obligations are met in relation to nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements • implement procedures for nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements • ensure adequate health and hygiene practices are followed, as well as safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, in line with Australian food safety standards and any jurisdictional requirements • ensure children have access to safe drinking water at all times and are offered food and beverages appropriate to each child's needs on a regular basis throughout the day • ensure the food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and chosen based on each child's dietary requirements (accounting for their growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements) • display and make accessible to family members a weekly menu which accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by the service each day

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that child enrolment records include any special considerations for the child, such as cultural or religious dietary restrictions, as well as any health-related dietary restrictions • for children with medical conditions that can be impacted by food, work with families to develop risk minimisation plans and ensure educators and staff implement these plans • consult with families on enrolment to develop individual management plans, including completing Risk Minimisation Plans for children with medical conditions involving food allergies, food intolerances and special dietary requirements as per <i>Medical Conditions Policy</i> • ensure children's individual dietary requirements as per enrolment information or medical condition plans are communicated to all staff and food handlers • ensure any changes to children's individual dietary requirements are recorded and communicated to all staff and food handlers • ensure all staff and food handlers attend basic safe food handling training, including an appropriate Food Safety and Food Hygiene Certificate • ensure that a system for ongoing communication is developed and maintained between families, educators, staff and cooks, so that all are aware of children's nutrition and any special dietary requirements • develop program planning that promotes healthy eating and knowledge of nutrition by children and families, and involves children in decision-making about healthy food and beverage choices.
Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement the Nutrition and Food Safety policy and procedures • handle, prepare and store food using safe practices, in line with Australian food safety standards and any jurisdictional requirements • ensure safeguards are in place to prevent children being provided the wrong food • ensure children remain seated while eating and drinking • ensure children have access to safe drinking water at all times and are offered food and beverages appropriate to each child's needs on a regular basis throughout the day • monitor children's food and beverage intake to ensure it is adequate and appropriate to each child's needs • be familiar with the individual needs and action plans for the children in your care with specific dietary requirements, and ensure those requirements are taken into consideration, including on excursions • maintain ongoing communication with families and other members of staff (including the Nominated Supervisor) about any changes to children's dietary requirements and ensure these changes are reflected in the mealtimes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement and reflect on program planning to: • promote healthy eating and knowledge of nutrition by children, e.g. eating with the children, conversations during mealtimes around food • promote healthy eating among families • involve children in decision-making about healthy food and beverage choices, e.g. having them assist with food preparation, when appropriate • maintain communication systems with management, educators, staff and families to ensure all changes with food preparation and provision of food are actioned • encourage and provide opportunities for staff and educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about childhood nutrition and food safety practices • be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances, and special dietary requirements and consult with families and management to ensure individual management plans are developed and implemented, including completing Risk Minimisation Plans for children with medical conditions involving food as per <i>Medical Conditions Policy</i> • supervise children whilst eating and drinking • participate in regular professional development to maintain and enhance knowledge about childhood nutrition and food safety practices • establish healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into our program
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the service is advised of their child's dietary requirements – relating to their child's growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements – at the time of enrolment, and that this information is kept up-to-date • should their children have a medical condition that can be impacted by food, work with the service to develop risk minimisation plans • read the service's weekly menu and provide any feedback • if providing food and beverages from home, ensure these are nutritious and plentiful and that they are in line with service requirements (e.g. that they do not contain allergens that could harm other children at the service for example foods containing nuts), noting that the service is not required to serve food (including heating or reheating) and beverages from home to children. • ensure that they pack a nutritious recess and lunch each day that their child attends • ensure that they pack a refillable drink bottle filled with water each time their child attends

Resources/References

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21. NCAC OSHCQA Factsheet #3 Food Safety at www.acecqa.gov.au (go to NCAC archive)
22. Nutrition Australia www.nutritionaustralia.org
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