



3.3 Food Nutrition, Management and Storage Policy

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Aims

The **Cootamundra Preschool** aims to:

1. Provide children with good food and nutritional information, consistent with the Australian national dietary guidelines for preschoolers, and as such to support families foster positive attitudes and knowledge in their children regarding sound food habits
2. Further the centre's general hygiene practices (see General Hygiene & Wellbeing Policy) by adopting safe food handling and storage procedures

Legislative Requirements

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Children (Education and Care National Law Application) Act 2010

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2001

Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991

Food Standard Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994

Imported Food Control Act 1992

Food Act 2003 (NSW)

Food Regulation 2010 (NSW)

Who Is Effected By This Policy?

Child

Staff

Families

Management

Relevant Early Childhood Professional Standards

Early Childhood Code of Ethics: 1-1, 1-2, II-1, II-4, II-5, VI-1

Early Years Learning Framework: Outcomes 1.1 Principles – 1, 2

Education & Care Services Australian National Regulations: 77, 78, 168(2a,i)

National Quality Framework: Quality areas – 1.2.1, 1.2.3, 2.1.3, 3.1.2, 5.1.2, 6.1.2, 7.1.1, 7.1.3

Sources/References

Better Health Channel (retrieved January 2012) www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Childrens Services Regulations 2004

Children's Services Regulation Amendment 2010

Food Standards Australia & New Zealand (FSANZ) Factsheets (retrieved January 2012):

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au>

Healthy Kids (retrieved January 2012) www.healthykids.gov.au

NSW Health – Munch and Move (retrieved January 2012) www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

NSW Food Authority (retrieved January 2012) www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au

Tamsay, S. (2006). Food Safety Fact Sheet: National Childcare Accreditation Council (retrieved January 2012)

http://www.ncac.gov.au/factsheets/qias_factsheet_3.pdf

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Procedures

1. Providing children with good food and nutritional information

The Cootamundra Preschool recognizes the importance of healthy eating for growth, development and wellbeing of young children. Our service is committed to implementing and embedding the healthy eating key messages outlined in the NSW Health's Munch and Move program into our curriculum and support the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood settings.

It is the centre's responsibility to help children and parents develop good food attitudes and habits. The centre has full day programs and on these days the children bring their lunch from home, along with snacks and drinks for a morning break.

National Healthy Eating Guidelines for 3-5 years:

- To achieve and maintain a healthy weight, be physically active and choose amounts of nutritious food and drinks to meet your energy needs. • Children and adolescents should eat sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally. They should be physically active every day and their growth should be checked regularly.
- 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 (reduced fat milks are not suitable for children under the age of 2 years) And drink plenty of water.
- Limit intake of foods high in saturated fat such as many biscuits, cakes, pastries, pies, processed meats, commercial burgers, pizza, fried foods, potato chips, crisps and other savoury snacks.
- Replace high fat foods which contain predominantly saturated fats such as butter, cream, cooking margarine, coconut and palm oil with foods which contain predominantly polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats such as oils, spreads, nut butters/pastes and avocado.
- Low fat diets are not suitable for children under the age of 2 years.
- Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added salt.
- Do not add salt to foods in cooking or at the table.
- Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added sugars such as confectionary, sugar-sweetened soft drinks and cordials, fruit drinks, vitamin waters, energy and sports drinks.

In order to achieve **Cootamundra Preschool** will:

1.1 Communicate with parents/guardians at the initial enrolment interview about their child's food needs. It is the parents' responsibility to report any unique needs regarding their child's dietary needs at that meeting. It is the Director's responsibility to be flexible and provide support for such children as is reasonable, at the same time clearly explaining the centre's policy regarding the kinds of nutritional foods and drink that should be sent with the children for snacks and meals. It is expected that 'unique needs' here also refers to influences such as health, cultural differences etc. Cootamundra Preschool discourage highly processed snack foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar, including: lollies, chocolates, sweet biscuits, chips and sugary cereal bars.

1.2 Ensure that at meal/snack times, the children's food and drink is presented in a way that is attractive (e.g. tables have been cleared and sanitised, children are not crowded). Snack/meal times will be relaxed, pleasant, social and timed to meet the needs of the children. Staff will encourage children to eat the everyday foods before eating the sometimes foods. Children will be supervised while eating at all times.

1.3 Encourage staff to sometimes use meal/snack times to casually discuss the nutritional value of food and to talk about different kinds of food, thus using an informal teaching approach. Educators will sit and eat when the children are eating and role model healthy food and drink choices. Educators will also employ more over teaching strategies on these matters during the year as part of the centre's educational program, this may include encouraging children to try different food types and textures. Most discussions of this nature will incorporate appreciation of culturally diverse foods and any parents from culturally different backgrounds will be encouraged to participate. Cootamundra Preschool will use celebrations such as Birthdays, Mother's day, Father's Day and Christmas to celebrate diversity amongst families and children.

1.4 Centre staff will use the meal/snack routine to foster social and language skills in children and also, independence. Sometimes but not always this may be a specific, planned area of development for one or several individual children as part of the centre's educational program. At other times it will be a part of an informal educational strategy for the benefit of all

1.5 As decided by the Director, the centre will at different times provide information on food issues and nutrition for parents, either by posters, newsletters, individual discussion with parents etc

1.6 Prohibit the use of food as punishment, reward or bribe and any form of force feeding. If a child refuses to eat or eats very little, centre staff will encourage the child to eat. If this is unsuccessful, staff will not pressure the child further and will inform the parents at the end of the session

1.7 Provide safe drinking water to children and staff at all times, and ensure children have adequate fluid intake during the time they are at the centre

1.8 The Director will provide nutrition and food safety training opportunities for all staff including awareness of culturally diverse foods and preparation as necessary. This may not need to be in the form of formal training that is certified, it could be in the form of the Director providing staff with information and discussing it with them

2.1 The hygienic handling of food

The provision and monitoring of safe food handling and hygiene practices is of paramount importance to prevent contamination and the spread of infections and to comply with legislative requirements as noted above in this policy. Unlike childcare centres, this preschool does not cook children's lunches or snacks. The kitchen is used to sometimes prepare fruit for the children and to wash any utensils used in the preparation of this food. To this end the centre will:

2.1.1 Ensure the kitchen area is cleaned and the benches and chopping boards cleaned after food has been prepared and at the end of each day. Chopping boards will need to be washed in hot water with a neutral detergent and then if deemed necessary, sanitised (see 2.1.2). Only chemical sanitisers that are suitable for use in food premises will be used. If meat is ever cut up at the centre, there will be a 'meat only' chopping board of a different colour and a 'meat only knife. The floor will be swept daily and mopped.

2.1.2 Any adult preparing food for children in the kitchen will wash their hands before and after doing so (as per the centre's hand washing procedures in the 'General Hygiene & Wellbeing Policy') and use gloves while assisting with the children's food.

2.2 The storage of food

2.2.1 Food will only be stored in areas designed for food storage. Food therefore will never be stored with chemicals or cleaning equipment.

2.2.2 The fridge temperature should be below 5oC and should be checked regularly

2.2.3 Raw foods will only be kept on the bottom shelf of the fridge and all other food above it

2.2.4 The fridge will be cleaned and sanitised regularly

2.2.5 Canned food will be stored in a sealed container once opened

2.2.6 Dry foods will be stored in sealed containers, out of reach of children. If food has been removed from its original packaging and is stored this way, its label and use-by date must be noted on the container

2.2.7 The kitchen will be dry, clean, well ventilated, not in direct sunlight and free from pests and vermin. In rural areas where mice can be a major problem, commercial bait stations will be used. Mouse traps or poisons placed in open containers on the floor are prohibited

2.2.8 Garbage and food scraps will be disposed of regularly so they do not accumulate in the kitchen. The kitchen will be cleaned after each session

2.2.9 All staff will be informed about these procedures by the Director both formally (see the centre's 'Staffing policy' Point 2.2). Volunteer parent helpers in the kitchen will also be informed of these procedures by a staff member on the first day they commence these duties

The Director will ensure that this policy is maintained and implemented at all times.