



Elizabeth North Early Learning Centre

Policy Statement Healthy Eating and Nutrition

Elizabeth North Preschool Healthy Eating Policy

Rationale

This preschool promotes safe, healthy eating habits in line with the DECD Healthy Eating Guidelines and Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents. We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in three ways:

1. Short term: maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health.
2. Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning activities.

Therefore:

- staff at this preschool model and encourage healthy eating behaviours
- food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children
- parents and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the DECD Healthy Eating Guidelines for their children at preschool.

This food policy has been established after consultation with staff and parents within the preschool community.

Policy Statement

Based on the National Quality Framework and the DECD Healthy Eating Guidelines and Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents it is emphasized that there is a need to:

- Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods
- Eat foods that are low in saturated fat
- Balance food intake with physical activity
- Eat only a moderate amount of sugar and foods containing added sugars
- Choose low salt foods and use salt sparingly
- Food and drinks provided by the service must be nutritious and adequate in quantity, and take into account dietary requirements appropriate to each child's growth and developmental needs, and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements.

Curriculum

Our preschool's food and nutrition curriculum:

- is consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents
- includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health
- includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food
- integrates nutrition across the Early Years Learning framework where possible, relating to the learning outcome 3: 'Children have a strong sense of wellbeing'

The Learning environment

Children at our preschool:

- have fresh, clean filtered tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day
- will eat routinely at scheduled break times
- eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods.

Our preschool:

- provides rewards/encouragements that are not related to food or drink
- understands and promotes the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children
- teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum
- is a breastfeeding friendly site.

Food supply

Our preschool:

- encourages healthy food and drink choices for children in line with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents.
- ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- ensures a healthy food supply for preschool activities and events in line with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children.
- displays nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating
- has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home or provided by staff within preschool time:
 - parents and carers are encouraged to provide healthy food and drink choices in line with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents.
 - Parents and carers are encouraged to provide only water in a clear, clean water bottle.
 - Parents and carers are encouraged to supply fruit and vegetables at snack time to: provide children with important minerals and vitamins and encourage a taste for healthy foods.
 - staff will ensure that food provided to children by the preschool is in line with Healthy Eating policy.

Special Occasions / Birthdays

Our preschool:

- Acknowledges the recommendations of The National Heart Foundation that snack foods such as, cakes, biscuits, and takeaway foods are limited to once a week.
- However, we support families who wish to supply a birthday cake, the cake must adhere to the Healthy Eating Policy and must not contain nuts or alcohol.
- We acknowledge and celebrate children's birthdays with the tradition of singing happy birthday.
- When celebrating a special occasion or cultural event the food supplied to the children by the preschool will be in line with the Healthy Eating Policy and DECD Healthy Eating Guidelines.

Developed and accepted by the staff of Elizabeth North Preschool and the Governing Council: March 2020

Next Review Due: March 2022

Sources: Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority website
www.acecqa.gov.au
South Australian Department for Education and Child Development
<https://www.decd.sa.gov.au/doc/healthy-eating-guidelines>
Australian Dietary Guidelines
<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines>
Food Standards Australia New Zealand
www.foodstandards.gov.au

Reviewed: April 2022

Next review Due on: April 2024

*National Quality Standard
Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety
Standard 2.1 Each child's health and physical activity is promoted and supported
Element 2.1.3 Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.*