

Our Centre recognises the importance of healthy eating to the growth and development of young children and is committed to supporting the healthy food and drink choices of children in their care. It is acknowledged that the early childhood setting has an important role in supporting families in healthy eating. Our Centre therefore recognises the importance of supporting families to provide healthy food and drink to their children.

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) Services are required by legislation to ensure the provision of healthy foods and drinks that meet the requirements for children according to the *Australian Dietary Guidelines*. It is essential that our Centre partners with families to provide education about nutrition, and promote healthy eating habits for young children to positively influence their health and wellbeing. Dietary and healthy eating habits formed in the early years are shown to continue into adulthood and can reduce the risk factors associated with adult chronic conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Our Centre recognises the importance of healthy eating for the growth, development and wellbeing of young children and is committed to promoting and supporting healthy food and drink choices for children in our care. This policy affirms our position on the provision of healthy food and drink while children are in our care and the promotion and education of healthy choices for optimum nutrition

Promote healthy food and drinks based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents.

Our centre has a responsibility to help children to develop good food practices and approaches, by working with families and educators.

All food prepared by the Centre will endeavour to be consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines and provide children with 50% of the recommended dietary intake for all nutrients. Food will be served at various times throughout the day to cater for all children's nutritional needs. Meal times reflect a relaxed and pleasant environment where educators engage in meaningful conversations with children. When possible, educators will role model healthy eating behaviour, by sharing a small amount of the food on offer with the children. This assists in creating a positive and enjoyable eating environment.

Food will be prepared in accordance with the Food Safety Program. All kitchens and food preparation areas shall comply with Food Standards Australia and New Zealand. (FSANZ)

Our Centre will:

Where food is provided by the centre:

- Provide children with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, lean meats and alternatives.
- Plan and display the centre menu that is based on sound menu planning principles and meets the daily nutritional needs of children whilst in care.
- Plan healthy snacks on the menu to complement what is served at mealtimes and ensure the snacks are substantial enough to meet the energy and nutrient needs of children.
- Vary the meals and snacks on the menu to keep children interested and to introduce children to a range of healthy food ideas.
- The centre ensures that meals and/or snack times are conducted in safe, clean, positive environments that promote meaningful interactions between children and other persons.
- The centre has an additional duty of care to ensure that children are provided with a recommended level of nutrition during the hours of the centre's operation.
- The centre's Coordination and educator understand that there is a requirement to implement and adhere to the centre's Healthy Eating Policy and ensure a consistent level of practice.



- The centre endeavors to meet individual and family needs however, the health and safety of children who are in care may, at times, come into conflict with cultural or family beliefs. The centre reserves the right to promote the nutritional needs of children in care at all times.

Management/Nominated Supervisor/Educators will:

- Ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day in both the indoor and outdoor environment.
- Be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances and special diets and consult with families to develop individual management plans.
- Ensure young children do not have access to foods that may cause choking.
- Ensure all children remain seated while eating and drinking.
- Ensure all children are always supervised children while eating and drinking.
- Encourage and provide opportunities for cooking staff and educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about early childhood nutrition.
- Educators will 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>.
- Ensure the weekly menu must be displayed in an accessible and prominent area for parents to view.
- Display nutritional information for families and keep them regularly updated.
- Ensure the weekly menu is accurate and describes the food and beverages provided each day of the week.
- Ensure food is presented attractively
- Ensure infants are fed individually by educators
- Ensure age and developmentally appropriate utensils and furniture will be provided for each child.
- Not allow food to be used as a form of punishment or to be used as a reward or bribe.
- Not allow the children to be force fed without being required to eat food they do not like or more than they want to eat.
- Encourage toddlers to be independent and develop social skills at meal times.
- Establish healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into our program.
- Talk to families about their child’s food intake and voice any concerns about their child’s eating.
- Encourage parents to the best of our ability to continue our healthy eating message in their homes.
- Ensure fridge and freezer temperatures are taken daily, working in compliance with the National Food Authority.

Encourage and support breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of solid foods

Our Centre will:

- Provide a suitable place within the centre where mothers can breastfeed their babies or express breast milk.
- Support mothers to continue breastfeeding until babies are at least 12 months of age while offering appropriate complementary foods from around 6 months of age.
- Ensure the safe handling of breast milk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding.
- In consultation with families, offer cooled pre-boiled water as an additional drink from around 6 months of age.
- Where breastfeeding is discontinued before 12 months of age, substitute with a commercial infant formula.
- Always bottle-feed babies by holding baby in a semi-upright position.
- Ensure appropriate foods (type and texture) are introduced around 6 months of age.
- Adjust the texture of foods offered between 6 and 12 months of age to match the baby’s developmental stage.
- Offer a variety of foods to babies from all the food groups.
- Always supervise babies while drinking and eating - ensuring safe bottle-feeding and eating practices at all times.

The Centre provides:

- Morning Tea at 8.30am
- A two course cooked lunch at 11.00am



- Afternoon tea at 3.00pm

A cook is employed to prepare and cook meals and maintain the kitchen facility. Educator is responsible for developing acceptable eating habits and social skills at the table and eating with the children.

The Coordinator in consultation with the cook will meet to ensure that guidelines are met. Menus will be reviewed monthly.

The weekly menu is displayed in the foyer for parent's information. A 6 weeks rotating menu and seasonable is reviewed monthly. Lunch is followed by a two-hour (approximately) period of rest or sleep during which time educator alternate lunch breaks.

Young babies sleep and feed on demand but are slowly moved to the above routine in preparation for a move to the 2-3year old room.

Storing, preparing and serving food in a hygienic manner promoting hygienic food practices.

Food Preparation and Food Hygiene Procedure

Our centre will follow appropriate food preparation hygiene techniques to meet the requirements of the Food Standards Australia New Zealand such as:

- Ensure gloves are (or food tongs) used by all staff handling 'ready to eat' foods
- Children and staff wash and dry their hands (using soap, warm running water and single use or disposable towels) before handling food or eating meals and snacks.
- Food is stored and served at safe temperatures i.e. below 5°C or above 60°C.
- Separate cutting boards are used for raw meat and chicken, fruit and vegetables and utensils and hands are washed before touching other foods.
- Cleaning food preparation area before, during and after use.
- Using colour-coded chopping boards in order to prevent cross contamination of raw food.
- Ensuring that individuals preparing food know, follow and adhere to the appropriate hygiene procedures. This includes:
 - Keeping their personal hygiene at a high level. For example, tying their hair back or keeping it under a net
 - Not wearing jewellery (wedding band excluded)
 - Covering cuts with a blue band aid and gloves and
 - Avoiding the contamination of one work area to another by using colour-coded wash cloths and having specific cleaning implements (for example gloves and scourers) for a specific area.
 - Avoiding the contamination of one work area to another by using the colour-coded wash cloths system and restricting the movement of contaminated items (such as gloves and cleaning implements) from one area to another.
- Clean children's dining tables with soap and water and dry before serving food.
- Ensuring food is always served in a hygienic way using tongs and gloves.
- Clean children's dining tables with soap and water and dry after meal times.
- Each child will be provided with their own clean drinking and eating utensils at each mealtime. These utensils will be washed after each use. Educators will actively encourage and monitor children so they do not to use drinking or eating utensils which have been used by another child or dropped on the floor.
- Providing families with current and relevant information about food preparation and hygiene.
- Showing and discussing with children the need for food hygiene in both planned and spontaneous experiences.
- Children will be discouraged from handling other children's food and utensils.
- Food-handling staff members attend relevant training courses and pass relevant information onto the rest of the staff.

Creating a positive learning environment

Our centre will:

- Ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided.



- Endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with educators and other children.
- Encourage older toddlers and preschoolers to assist to set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink - providing opportunities for them to develop independence and self-esteem.
- Respect each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats.
- Be patient with messy or slow eaters.
- Encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat.
- Do not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes.

Centre Program

Our Centre will:

- Foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating.
- Encourage children to participate in a variety of 'hands-on' food preparation experiences.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices.
- Embed the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in everyday activities and experiences

Communicating with families

Our Centre will:

- Provide a copy of the Nutrition Policy to all families upon orientation at the Centre.
- Families will be provided with opportunities to contribute to the review and development of the policy.
- Request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to the centre and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children's individual dietary needs are met.
- Communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the centre 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.

Food Safety and Temperature Control

We will, to the best of our ability, educate and promote safe food handling and hygiene in the children and families by:

- Provide food safety information from Safe Food Australia and NSW Food Authority.
- Encouraging parents to the best of our ability to continue our healthy eating message in their homes. This information will be provided upon enrolment and as new information becomes available.
- Encouraging educators to present themselves as role models. This means maintaining good personal nutrition and eating with the children at meal times.
- Providing nutrition and food safety training opportunities for all educator including an awareness of other cultures food habits.

The bacteria that commonly cause food poisoning grow rapidly between 5°C and 60°C; this is commonly referred to as the "temperature danger zone".

To keep food safe:

- All food for children brought from home will be immediately placed in the refrigerator provided in the centre. Children's food will be removed from insulated containers before placing in the refrigerator.
- Don't leave perishable foods in the temperature danger zone for longer than 2 hours.
- Keep cold food in a fridge, freezer, below 5°C until you are ready to cook or serve, e.g. if you are serving salads keep them in the fridge until ready to serve.



- Keep hot food in an oven or on a stove, above 60°C until you are ready to serve.
- Refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible, within 2 hours. If reheating leftovers, reheat to steaming hot. Heating food is not always recommended, however.
- Never defrost foods on the bench top. Foods should be defrosted overnight in the fridge or in the microwave.
- Use a thermometer to make sure your fridge is below 5°C. Don't overload refrigerators, as this reduces cooling efficiency.
- All foods (dry, cold and frozen) will be used by the FIFO rule (first in, first out). This will allow a rotation of food to make sure older stock is used first.
- Store dry foods in sealed, air-tight containers.
- Store food on shelving.
- Any food removed from its original container must be stored in a container with the used by date of the food written on it. The ingredients must also be listed with the date it was opened.
- Ensure the food storage area is well cleaned, ventilated, dry, pest free and not in direct sunlight.
- Prevent pests by cleaning spills as quickly as possible and removing garbage/waste frequently.
- All foods are wrapped, covered, dated (used by date and date it entered the Centre) and labelled.
- Store foods on shelves, never on the floor including play dough material.
- Store raw and cooked foods separately. NEVER store raw foods on top of cooked foods as juices may drip down and contaminate the cooked food.
- Store food once it has sufficiently cooled down. Foods cool quicker in smaller, shallow containers.
- Fridges and freezers need to be cleaned regularly and fridge door seals checked to be in good repair.
- The operating temperature of the fridge and freezer need to be checked regularly and a record kept of this.

Protecting food from contamination will be achieved by:

- Using containers with lids or by applying plastic film over each container. These materials will be suitable for food contact to ensure that they do not contain any chemicals that could leach into the food.
- Aluminium foil, plastic film and clean paper may be used and food will be completely covered.
- Food already in packaging may not need additional coverage. However, if additional coverage is required the above will apply.
- Previously used materials and newspaper will not be used.

Temperature Control

- When potentially hazardous foods are being transported they will be kept at or below 5 degrees Celsius for cold food, or above 60 degrees Celsius for hot food.
- If the journey is short, insulated containers may be used to keep the food cold/hot. If the journey is longer, ice bricks or heat packs will be used to maintain temperature requirements.
- Only pre-heated or pre-cooled good will be placed in insulated containers, which will have a lid to maintain temperatures.
- Insulated containers will be kept clean and in good working conditions at all times, will only be used for food and will be kept away from other items such as chemicals or fuel.
- Insulated containers will be filled as quickly as possible and closed as soon as they have been filled and kept closed until immediately before the food is needed or is placed in other temperature-controlled equipment at the destination.

Food Storage Procedure

In order to implement safe food storage practices to the highest possible standard, educators will access and amend their practices to the latest known information. This information will be passed onto families.

Educators will then implement these standards in the Centre by inspecting food items when first brought into the Centre to ensure they are in good order, for example, not in damaged packing, within their used by date period and at a correct temperature. Educators will then see that they are appropriately stored as per the following:

- All foods (dry, cold and frozen) will be used by the FIFO rule (first in, first out). This will allow a rotation of food to make sure older stock is used first.
- Store dry foods in sealed, air-tight containers.



- Store food on shelving.
- Any food removed from its original container must be stored in a container with the used by date of the food written on it. The ingredients must also be listed with the date it was opened.
- Ensure the food storage area is well cleaned, ventilated, dry, pest free and not in direct sunlight.
- Prevent pests by cleaning spills as quickly as possible and removing garbage/waste frequently.

For cold storage, the following applies:

- All foods are wrapped, covered, dated (used by date and date it entered the Centre) and labelled.
- Foods are stored at the correct temperature depending on the product. Cold foods need to be stored at less than 5 degrees (C) and frozen foods at minus 18 degrees (C).
- Store foods on shelves.
- Store raw and cooked foods separately. NEVER store raw foods on top of cooked foods as juices may drip down and contaminate the cooked food.
- Store food once it has sufficiently cooled down. Foods cool quicker in smaller, shallow containers.
- Fridges and freezers need to be cleaned regularly.
- The operating temperature of the fridge and freezer need to be checked regularly and a record kept of this.

Creating a positive learning environment

- Ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided.
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Encourage and support breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of solid foods



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- Support mothers to continue breastfeeding until babies are at least 12 months of age while offering appropriate complementary foods from around 6 months of age.
- Ensure the safe handling of breast milk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding.
- In consultation with families, offer cooled pre-boiled water as an additional drink from around 6 months of age.
- Where breastfeeding is discontinued before 12 months of age, substitute with a commercial infant formula.
- Always bottle-feed babies by holding baby in a semi-upright position.
- Ensure appropriate foods (type and texture) are introduced around 6 months of age.
- Adjust the texture of foods offered between 6 and 12 months of age to match the baby's developmental stage.
- Offer a variety of foods to babies from all the food groups.
- Always supervise babies while drinking and eating - ensuring safe bottle-feeding and eating practices at all times.

Cooking with Children

Children love to cook. Cooking is a safe and enjoyable activity for children in education and care centres, provided that you take a few simple precautions:

- Make sure children wash and dry their hands before and after the cooking class.
- Always be aware of the dangers of heat.
- Tie up any long hair.

To reduce the chances of germs being spread through food, it is recommended that children only prepare food that will be cooked afterwards—any germs in the food will be destroyed when the food is cooked. However, if the food will not be cooked, this risk can be lowered if children only prepare food to eat themselves.

If children have had vomiting or diarrhoea, they should not participate in cooking activities until they have been symptom-free for 48 hours. If the education and care centre has recently had, or is currently experiencing, an outbreak of gastrointestinal disease, do not hold children's cooking activities, and check with your local public health unit before resuming cooking activities. Foods suitable for cooking classes include cooked biscuits, fresh pasta, soups and pizza. These types of food will be cooked and exposed to high temperatures, killing any bacteria that may be in the food. Foods not suitable for cooking classes include fruit salad, biscuits or slices that do not need cooking, and jellies. These types of food are not cooked and therefore not exposed to high temperatures. Refrigeration does not kill germs.

Children's Birthday Cake

Birthdays are important milestones in the lives of children. Brunswick Crèche & Day Nursery encourages the recognition of each child's birthday. We want the day to be special for your child and be one that they will remember. If parents would like to celebrate their child's birthday at the centre, we ask that Parents bring an ice-cream cake purchased from a supermarket. A receipt will need to be given to the staff with the date and time of purchase.

Many children like to bring a cake to share with their friends on their birthday. Children love to blow out their candles while their friends are singing 'Happy birthday'.

To prevent the spread of germs when the child blows out the candles, parents should either: Provide a separate cupcake (with a candle if they wish) for the birthday child and enough cupcakes for all the other children. Provide a separate cupcake (with a candle if they wish) for the birthday child and a large cake that can be cut and shared.

Healthy eating and dental health

- Dental health should be considered by the centre when planning, providing or encouraging healthy eating choices.
- Children will be encouraged to rinse their mouth out with water (age appropriate) after lunch. Water & milk for drinking.



- Parent information regarding Dental care will be available in foyer. Free Dental Screenings provided through council, dates will be advertised.

Source: Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Standard, Food Standards Australia New Zealand, Safe Food Australia, 2nd Edition. January 2001, Caring For Children- Food, Nutrition and Fun Activities, 4th Edition 2006, Australian Guide for Healthy Eating, Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia incorporating the Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers Endorsed 10 April 2003, National Health and Medical Research Council. (2005). Staying Healthy in Child Care (5th Edition), Food Safety Standards for Australia 2001, Food Standards, Australia and New Zealand Act 1991, Food Standards Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994, Food Act 2003, Food Regulation 2004, Dental Association Australia, Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers, Australian Breast Feeding Association Guidelines

Date Implemented: 16/04/2012

Review Completed: 16/04/2019

Schedule for Review: 16/04/2020

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 Service National Regulations		
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	
Early Years Learning Framework		
Learning Outcome 3 - Children have a Strong Sense of Wellbeing		
Actively support children to learn hygiene practices.		
Promote continuity of children’s personal health and hygiene by sharing ownership of routines and schedules with children, families and the community.		
Discuss health and safety issues with children and involve them in developing guidelines to keep the environment safe for all.		
Model and reinforce health, nutrition and personal hygiene practices with children.		

