

2.24 NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Healthy eating is essential for children's good health, growth and development. Healthy eating in childhood means they will have less chance of developing chronic diseases like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity and some cancers. It will also mean they feel better, look better and enjoy life more.

To stay healthy and maintain a healthy weight, children need to be physically active and eat the right amount of nutrients to balance the energy they use.

Children should limit their intake of foods that contain saturated fat, added salt or added sugar. They should also be encouraged to choose water to drink.

PURPOSE

Lindfield Montessori School will:

- role model healthy eating and activity throughout the day to all children and families.
- promote healthy, active habits in children.
- support families in educating their children about healthy food choices.

STRATEGIES

Professional development of staff and educators

- Educators may attend Munch and Move professional development training or receive similar training if they wish to do so.
- All educators will have access to the Caring for Children Birth to 5 years (Food, Nutrition and Learning Experiences).
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/heal/Pages/caring-for-children-manual.aspx>

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Provision of food and drinks at the school

The provider will:

- ensure that all children have access to safe drinking water at all times.
- ensure that all children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day.
- ensure that educators and staff are aware of the need to implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the school.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:

- all children have access to safe drinking water at all times.
- all children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day, and/or the session they are attending.
- food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, in consideration of growth and developmental needs, any known food allergies and intolerances of specific children and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements.
- educators and staff implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparation and storing food to minimise risks to children.
- as per the Medical Conditions policy, the school shall remain a nut free service and that all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to.
- Families are provided with education about healthy snacks and lunches for children.

Staff and educators will ensure that:

- healthy eating is promoted through role modelling, including eating with the children.
- children are encouraged to make healthy food choices.
- meal times are supervised, positive, relaxed and social.
- children are encouraged to try new foods and their likes and dislikes respected.
- they implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise the risks to children.
- ensure that as per the Medical Conditions policy the school shall remain a nut free service and that all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to.

Supporting Families

- Educators and staff will support families in educating their children about healthy food choices.
- Educators will provide families with information about their child's intake of food and drinks throughout the day as the need arises.

Education and Information

- Educators will engage children in learning experiences that are fun and enjoyable and incorporate key messages around healthy eating.
- Implemented learning experiences will be guided by the EYLF principles and incorporate the child's identity.
- Current information about recommended guidelines around dietary requirements, screen time and physical activity are available on the website and will be available to families upon request.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every two years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with Regulation 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Relevant Legislation	Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011. Reg. 78-80 Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 Section 167
Related to NQS QA	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 6.1
Related Policies	Medical conditions, Child Health Statement, Nutrition, beverages, food (including handling safety), and dietary requirements
Sources & Further Reading	Community Early Learning Australia https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/healthy-eating-for-children

POLICY REVIEWED	MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
April 2021	Checked regulations, updated copy	2023
February 2025	Checked over copy and regulations	2027

