

Unley Kindergarten Policies and Procedures

Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines our commitment to children's health, safety, and wellbeing in relation to role-modelling food safety and hygiene practices, and encouraging healthy food and beverage choices based on each child's individual needs.

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.

Legislative requirements

Under [Regulation 168](#) (2) (a) (i) of the [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#), all preschools must have local policies and procedures for nutrition, food and drink and dietary requirements.

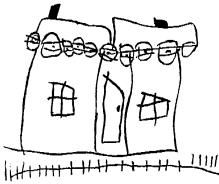
The national regulations require preschools to make sure:

- adequate health and hygiene practices, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food are implemented ([regulation 77](#))
- children have access to safe drinking water at all times, and are offered food and drinks regularly throughout the day ([regulation 78](#))

Under the National Quality Standard – Standard 2.1 Health, Element 2.1.3 Healthy Lifestyle, preschools are required to make sure healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child. Refer to the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#) for more information.

Guiding Principles

- We prioritise and promote children's health, safety, and wellbeing. This includes safe practices for food handling, preparation, and storage.
- We believe good nutrition and an active lifestyle support a strong sense of wellbeing, providing children with confidence and energy to concentrate, cooperate, and learn.
- We promote and role-model a healthy lifestyle, including nutritious eating and physical activity. Learning about healthy lifestyles is embedded in the curriculum and reflected in children's routines and experiences.
- We support children and families in understanding the importance of nutrition and food choices.
- We value the cultural, religious, and traditional food practices of our families and encourage families to provide healthy foods commonly eaten at home.
- We incorporate children's agency and decision-making into our educational program, including during mealtimes and food-related experiences.



Unley Kindergarten Policies and Procedures

PROCEDURES

Curriculum

In alignment with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents* and the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*, our nutrition curriculum:

- Reflects the learning outcomes and goals of the *Early Years Learning Framework* and the *National Quality Standard*.
- Empowers children to make healthy nutrition and lifestyle choices through learning experiences.
- Includes practical food experiences such as growing produce, preparing, and cooking healthy foods.
- Encourages shared mealtimes that support self-help skills and positive social interaction around food.

Food Supply

Families are asked to provide healthy food for their children, in line with national dietary guidelines.

- All lunch boxes, containers, and drink bottles must be clearly labelled.
- We encourage the use of reusable containers over single-use plastics as part of our sustainability program.
- To support independence, families are asked to ensure their child can open and close containers and unwrap items independently.
- Due to allergies, foods containing nuts (e.g. peanut butter, Nutella, nut bars) are not permitted. We are a nut-aware zone.

Snack Times

Snack times:

- Provide important nutrients
- Promote the development of oral muscles through chewing
- Encourage healthy eating habits

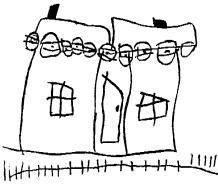
Suggested snacks include fresh fruit or vegetables, yoghurt, cheese, and crackers.

Children are supported to listen to their hunger cues and snack throughout the day when they are hungry, encouraging interoception and agency.

Lunch Program

Families are encouraged to:

- Pack healthy lunch boxes (e.g. sandwiches, wraps, sushi, rice crackers, fruit, yoghurt, cheese, veggie sticks).
- Avoid including high-sugar, low-nutritional items such as chocolate, chips, and roll-ups, as these can contribute to tooth decay and lack of nutrition.



Unley Kindergarten Policies and Procedures

Food Storage

- Snacks are kept in children's bags. Cold packs should be used when necessary.
- Named lunch boxes should be placed in the lunch trolley at the entrance. The trolley is moved inside by 9:30am to keep food out of direct sunlight.
- Lunches are stored indoors but not refrigerated. Families must provide appropriate food storage (e.g. insulated lunch boxes with cool packs).
- Educators cannot reheat food. Warm food should be sent in a thermos.
- After lunch, children return their lunch box to their bag.

Drinks

- Children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day.
- Filtered water and cups are available for those who forget their drink bottles.
- Cordial, flavoured milk, and fruit juice are discouraged due to high sugar content and the attraction of ants and wasps.

Food Safety

To maintain high standards of food safety and hygiene, the kindergarten:

- Incorporates food safety education into the curriculum
- Teaches and reinforces correct handwashing procedures
- Provides adequate handwashing facilities
- Does not reheat food

Birthdays

We celebrate birthdays with a song and a special birthday sticker for the child. We do not distribute sweets or birthday cakes to ensure consistency with health guidelines and allergy safety.

Allergy Awareness

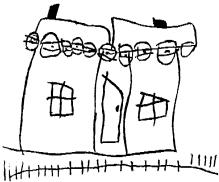
All food must be **nut-free** due to the risk of anaphylaxis. In some cases, families may be asked not to send additional allergens (e.g. egg or dairy), depending on enrolled children's needs.

Products labelled "may contain traces of nuts" are generally acceptable unless a child has a trace-specific allergy. If so, families will be notified with updated guidelines.

Food and Drinks Provided to Children

Educators must ensure that:

- Families are informed in advance of cooking experiences to allow for dietary planning
- All food is handled hygienically



Unley Kindergarten Policies and Procedures

- Food is culturally sensitive and inclusive
- Children are seated while eating
- Children do not share food

Food-Related Health Support Planning

The Director is responsible for ensuring that any child with a Health Support Plan has an associated risk and safety management plan in place.

Guidelines for Children with Specific Dietary Requirements

We work in partnership with families to provide appropriate food for children with:

- Allergies
- Dietary requirements
- Diabetes
- Cultural or religious food restrictions

Families should speak directly with staff to discuss their child's individual needs.

Supporting Information

- Australian Dietary Guidelines 1–5: www.eatforhealth.gov.au
- Australian Guide to Healthy Eating: [Australian Guide to Healthy Eating](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)
- National Quality Standard: www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard
- Early Years Learning Framework: www.acecqa.gov.au
- Nutrition and dietary requirements in preschool <https://edi.sa.edu.au/operations-and-management/school-preschool-and-fdc-admin/preschool-and-early-childhood-management/nutrition-and-dietary-requirements-in-preschool>
- Food safety <https://edi.sa.edu.au/hr/for-managers/health-and-safety/creating-a-safe-workplace/food-safety>
- Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services (Section 3.3 Food Safety)
- Oral Eating and Drinking Procedure <https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/shared/oral-eating-drinking-procedure.pdf>
- Anaphylaxis and Allergies Procedure <https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/shared/anaphylaxis-and-allergies-procedure.pdf>

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