

Cummins Area School Preschool and Rural Care Healthy Eating Policy

Summary

Cummins Area School Preschool and Rural Care promote safe, healthy eating habits in line with the *Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools* and relates to the DECD wellbeing strategy.

We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in three ways:

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

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS: Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Standard 2.1.3 Healthy lifestyle: Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing.

Table 1 - Document details

Publication date:	Term 2, 2017
Managed by:	Coordinator: Prue McPharlin
Presented to Staff:	17 May 2017
Presented to Parent Committee:	15 May 2017
Review date:	Term 1, 2018

Table 2 - Revision record

Date	Revision description
Term 2, 2017	Updated to include change in leadership, change of format

1. Title

- Healthy Eating Policy

2. Purpose

- The Purpose of the Healthy Eating Policy is to promote and educate healthy lifestyles amongst families and children. The Healthy Eating Policy ensures that the health and wellbeing of children is safeguarded and promoted, in line with the National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care.

3. Scope

- The Healthy Eating Policy applies to all staff and programs within the Cummins Area School Preschool and Rural Care.

4. Objectives

- The good health and wellbeing of all children within the centre are promoted, in partnership with families, to ensure healthy growth and development, positive mental health and helping to prevent disease.
- Lifelong healthy eating habits in children are supported, in partnership with families, for appropriate nutrition to improve cognitive development, positive behaviours, greater attention span, and increased attendance.
- Our centre will provide opportunities for children and families to experience a range of healthy foods and to learn about food choices from educators and other children.

5. Policy detail

5.1 All food and drink supplied during centre activities should comply with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHRMC) Dietary Guidelines and/or the Right Bite Food and Drink Spectrum. Foods that do not comply may be offered as part of a special event (no more than twice per term). Copies of these guidelines are to be made available with this policy and throughout the centre.

5.2 All adults and children are expected to use effective hand washing techniques when handling or consuming food. Hand soap and accessible facilities are made available throughout the centre.

Adults are to use safe food handling techniques, including:

- washing and drying hands before handling food and frequently during work
- keeping benches clean
- avoiding cross contamination of cooked and raw foods

5.3 Cummins Preschool and Rural Care will support the frequent drinking of fresh, clean tap water. Water is to be available for adults and children at all times.

- 5.4 Cummins Preschool and Rural Care will foster positive communication and relationships with families to support healthy eating outcomes for children and families. Families will be provided with opportunities to learn about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in young children including education about the NHRMC Dietary Guidelines for Children and the Right Bite Food and Drink Spectrum.
- 5.5 Children will be given learning opportunities throughout the centre to develop practical food skills related to growing, selection, storage, preparation, cooking and serving food.
- 5.6 Children will be encouraged to eat snacks and lunch in a supervised social setting to enhance positive food experiences and reduce the risks of choking.
- 5.7 Cummins Preschool and Rural Care will work with health professionals and services to ensure that educators have up-to-date information about relevant food and nutrition issues and community programs.
- 5.8 Wherever possible, healthy eating learning programs should be inclusive of the socio-economic, cultural and spiritual perspectives of the Cummins community.
- 5.9 Children will be educated about healthy food choices (refer to the Right Bite Food and Drink Spectrum).
- 5.10 Where a child has specific food-related health issues, such as diabetes, anaphylaxis or cystic fibrosis, a health care plan should be completed (as per Health Support Planning Guidelines). Specific accommodations may be made for these children. Adults, including staff with similar health care requirements, should discuss their needs with the coordinator, where required.
- 5.11 If an adult or child has a severe allergy, the Coordinator may choose to restrict particular foods from the centre. All families accessing the centre will be notified of any restrictions. To reduce the risk to children who have been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis, nuts, nut-based products or items in which nuts are an ingredient are strongly discouraged from being brought into the centre, including in lunch boxes or shared food (refer to Allergy & Anaphylaxis Management policy).
- 5.12 For children with additional needs, where food is a central part of a behaviour, sensory or communication plan, this should be clearly documented as part of the child's learning plan and/or negotiated education plan. Staff will also work closely with the family and other services to, where possible, introduce healthier alternatives to the child.
- 5.13 Cummins Preschool and Rural Care is a breastfeeding friendly environment. All staff are to be aware of the importance of breastfeeding.

6. Staff responsibilities

- Staff and visiting professionals should, at all times, adhere to this policy, and be aware of their role as models for the broader community.
- Staff are responsible for the implementation of the policy and for ensuring visiting professionals are aware of policy details.
- All staff are to encourage the consumption of foods compliant with the Right Bite Food and Drink Spectrum and the NHRMC Dietary Guidelines.

7. Monitoring, evaluation and review

- The Coordinator will monitor the implementation of the policy and be responsible for ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities.
- The Coordinator and staff, will also be responsible for ensuring families are aware of, and adhere to, the policy at all times.

8. Supporting documents

- Eat Well SA Schools and Preschools Healthy Eating Guidelines (DECS, 2008)
- National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (Council of Australian Governments, December 2009)
- Belonging, Being and Becoming – Early Learning Framework for Australia (Australian Government of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments, 2009)
- Nutrition in Child Care – a NCAC Factsheet for Families (National Childcare Accreditation Council, Australian Government, 2008)
- Food for Health: Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia – A guide to healthy eating (National Health and Medical Research Council, Department of Health and Ageing)
- Right Bite: Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian schools and preschools (DECS and SA Health 2008)
- Get Up and Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood – Director/Coordinator Book (Department of Health and Ageing, 2009)

Appendix

- Right Bite Food and Drink Spectrum
- Australian Guide to Healthy Eating