

Policy 5.1

THE NUTRITION POLICY

Goals

To comply with excellent standards in nutrition, and the serving of a healthy, nutritious and varied menu for babies and children, and to educate staff, parents and carers in these principles. To provide menus applicable to the child's developmental level. To involve parents, staff and children in menu preparation and review. To provide a variety of foods for the children to experience foods, and eating styles from different cultures.

Philosophy

Glandore Child Care Centre supports the philosophy that childhood is the time when eating patterns are formed and that when children learn to enjoy healthy foods at an early age, healthy eating becomes a habit.

Role that the Nutrition Policy plays in meeting the nutritional needs of the children in the childcare centre.

- Provides guidelines for quality control in the establishment
- Develops standards in food and nutrition which can then be used to encourage parents when necessary
- Complies with Community Services (Child Care) Regulations 1988, Regulation 71 "the licensee or permit holder shall ensure that the following particulars are readily available in writing to parents upon request – the child care service practice and policy regarding food, nutrition and the dietary needs of individual children".
- Comply with National Childcare Accreditation Council, Nutrition, Health and Safety Practices – centres providing good quality care will ensure that written nutrition, health and safety policies are developed with input from staff and parents and children.
- Ensures food provided in the centre complies with contemporary nutritional guidelines for Australian children.

People who are involved in the development of the Nutrition Policy

- Involve cook, and other staff in the policy development
- Involve parents by written communication and discuss with representatives on the Parent Committee
- Discuss menus and food preferences with children
- Liaise with Child Health and Nutrition experts
- Ensure all staff and parents/carers are aware of the policy once it is completed
- Incorporate advice from Start Right, Eat Right organisation.

How this policy and other nutrition information will be communicated to parents and staff

- Information about the Nutrition Policy is included in the Parent Handbook given to each parent on enrolment
- Policy is included in Staff Manual
- Parents and staff are invited to contribute to the reviews of the policy. Parents are notified through the newsletter, with notification of reviews, and are invited to contribute. Parents on the Accreditation Committee are also asked to review policies. Staff have a Policy Review folder in the staff room, with feedback sheets included.
- The weekly menu will be displayed in a prominent place for the staff and parents
- Parents will be informed at pick up, and in daily diaries, what foods their child/ren have eaten, and how much they ate.
- Recipes for food served at the centre are available for parents to take home
- Parents are given guidelines for 'special occasion' foods
- Nutrition-related education is kept in the Parent and Staff Libraries. Brochures are offered to parents several times a year. Links are available on our website.

The minimum training requirements for centre staff to ensure the maintenance of the standards outlined in this policy

- All food handlers within the centre will complete the Safe Food Handling Package – Bug Busters. New staff will be required to complete this program in their first month.
- At least the coordinator and the cook will complete the Start Right, Eat Right Training Course
- The coordinator and cook will train the rest of the staff on Good Nutrition for Children Training Course using the videos and information provided

Special Dietary Considerations

- The centre is “nut free”. No foods containing nuts will be served.
- The cook, and staff, will be informed of children who have special food requirements or food allergies.
- Parents will be asked to fill in forms if they require a special diet for their child. Parents of children who may have anaphylactic reactions to certain foods, will be asked to get a medical practitioner to fill in the Anaphylaxis Care and First Aid Plan forms. These forms will be displayed in the kitchen, the child’s room, and the office. (See following forms)
- Parents are asked not to bring in extra food for their children, as this food may not comply with our Nutrition Policy. It is not appropriate for children to consume “treat” food in front of others who do not have any. Also, parents may bring in food which could cause allergic reactions for some children.

THE EATING ENVIRONMENT

Goal

To provide a safe, positive and inviting eating environment that encourages the implementation of nutritional, family and multi-cultural values.

How the centre will create an environment where positive healthy eating habits and the transmission of family and multi-cultural values will be encouraged

- A wide choice of nutritional foods will be available to the children
- Meal times will be pleasant and relaxed, with staff encouraging discussions about families’ activities.
- Foods will be prepared and served in a variety of ways (eating utensils from other cultures, picnics, outdoor eating.
- Food will NOT be used as a form of punishment either by its provision or denial
- Alternative food such as sandwiches and fruit will always be available for children who cannot or will not eat the snack or meal that is offered, or are hungry.
- Hungry children will be offered extra serves at meals.
- Late snack is served to children who are in the centre after 5.00pm.
- Staff members will model appropriate behaviour by sitting with the children and sharing their meal
- Staff will only talk about the food being served in a positive manner
- Staff will discuss healthy food during meals, and discuss its cultural origins
- Staff calm children before meals, by singing food awareness songs, prior to the serving of meals.
- Recipes and food awareness activities will be encouraged through the weekly programme with a consideration for the cultural, nutritional and developmental values of the children.

Methods that will be used by the centre to increase the children’s awareness of food and nutrition

- Healthy food awareness, and nutrition activities, are in the curriculum and in the weekly program
- Encourage children to get hands on experience in food preparation, and cooking.
- Discuss the foods being served to them with the children
- Use height and weight activities to demonstrate physical growth
- Participation in excursions, where appropriate, to food preparation places, such as Bakeries, Supermarkets, Market etc
- Multicultural activities will also focus on foods from different countries, and these will be included in the menu.

Precautions that will be taken to prevent a child from choking whilst at the centre

- All children to be supervised when eating
- Children must be sitting down quietly to eat
- Do not give foods that can break off into hard pieces such as raw carrots, celery sticks and apple pieces, to children under 2 years of age, unless they have been cooked, mashed or grated
- Avoid popcorn, nuts, hard lollies, corn chips or other similar foods
- Ensure sausages, and other meats are cut into small pieces and tough skins are removed
- Never force children to eat
- Discuss correct chewing of food with children
- Children are never to be left alone while eating

THE MENU

Goal

To provide the children with meals and snacks that are safe, appetising and consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Australian Children and Adolescents, and provides at least 50% of the Recommended Dietary Intake for children's daily nutrition requirements.

Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents

- Encourage and support breast-feeding (See Breast Feeding Policy)
- Children need appropriate food and physical activity to grow and develop normally. Growth should be checked regularly.
- Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods
- Eat plenty of breads and cereals, vegetables (including legumes) and fruits.
- Low fat diets are not suitable for young children. For older children, a diet low in fat and in particular, low in saturated fat, is appropriate.
- Encourage water as a drink.
- Eat only a moderate amount of sugars and foods containing added sugars.
- Choose low salt foods.

Guidelines for Planning the Menu

- Ensure that the food provides interest by presentation and by using a variety of colour and texture.
- Ensure that the nutritional requirements of the children are met (see Long Day Care Centre Menu Planning Checklist)
- Make menu planning a team effort, include parents and staff
- Plan the menu's meals and snacks at least 2 weeks in advance
- Change the menu every 3 months to ensure a variety of foods are being introduced to the children
- Include multi-cultural dishes
- Avoid complicated recipes with lots of preparation time

Eating opportunities for children outside of the main menu

- Water will be available for the children at all times
- A late afternoon snack will be available for children in the centre after 5.00pm
- Children are allowed to have second helpings
- Alternatives to the food being served are available to all children
- Extra food such as sandwiches and fruit are available at all times to hungry children.

Feeding Practices for Babies birth – 12 months

- We believe that breast feeding is best for babies, and support mothers to continue with this (See Breast Feeding Policy)
- Care must be taken in the correct storing/thawing/warming procedures for breast milk and formula (see Bottle Warming Policy, and Breast Feeding Policy)
- We follow the "Start Right Eat Right Guidelines for Fluids allowed for babies at the centre" listed below.
- We follow the "Start Right Eat Right Recommended schedule for introducing solids to infants" listed below.

Special Occasions

If a parent/carer wishes their child to celebrate their special occasion with a cake, the parent/carer must order a cake through the centre's kitchen 1 week in advance. A nutritious cake, such as a carrot, banana or sultana cake, will be provided by the centre on the requested day with appropriate decorations. In this way, the centre can ensure the nutritional value of the cake and ensure standards of hygienic preparation. It will also ensure that no nuts are in the preparation. A cost of \$5.00 will incur for the ingredients of the cake.

Foods supplied by the Centre for Multicultural celebrations or Theme Days will comply with our Nutrition Policy.

The Nutrition Policy does not apply to events held outside the normal Centre operating hours – such as the Christmas Concert. In this case, parents must be present to care for their own children, and are responsible for ensuring their child eats foods of which they approve. N

Nutritional requirements of a two week menu for a long day care centre

- Lean red meat is included on the menu at least 4 times per fortnight
- Lean white meat is included on the menu at least 3 times per fortnight
- Vegetarian meals are included on the menu at least 2 times per fortnight
- Vegetarian meals are based on eggs, cheese, tofu, or dried beans
- A fruit or vegetable high in vitamin C is served with each vegetarian meal
- The menu includes at least 1 serve of vegetables and fruit daily
- The menu offers each child 3 serves of full cream dairy foods per day
- The menu includes at least 2 serves of bread, cereal, rice or pasta per day
- High fibre varieties are included at least 4 times per fortnight
- Snacks are planned on the menu as part of the day's intake

References accessed June 2011

- Attendance by Staff at Start Right Eat Right training workshops
- Queensland Government (2006) All about Food
- Women's and Children's Hospital www.wch.sa.gov.au/services/az/other/nutrition/allergy.html
- *Caring for Children – Food Nutrition and Fun Activities*, NSW Dept of Health, 1998
- Start Right Eat Right Organisation review of Policy 2011
<http://www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/startrighteatright.htm>
- Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia
http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/file/publications/synopses/n34.pdf
- Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Allergy Unit www.sswahs.nsw.gov.au/RPA/Allergy/default.htm
- Better Health, Victorian Government,
www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Childcare_and_healthy_eating
- Dieticians Association of Australia <http://daa.asn.au>
- Nutrition Australia.org www.nutrition.org

Consultations with staff and parents May, June 2011

Policy will be displayed on the Glandore Childcare Centre Website www.glandorechildcarecentre.com.au and in the Glandore Child Care Centre Policies and Procedures Manual which is displayed in the main foyer of the building.

The Nutrition Policy will be reviewed Annually

Original Policy June 1998
Recent Updates Jan 2010, Jan 2011
Next Update June 2013

Updated June, 2011