



St. Thomas School & Pre-School

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Food Handling/Nutrition Policy for Pre-schools

Rationale

This Pre-school promises safe, healthy eating habits in line with the Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian School and Pre-schools and relates to the DECS 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:

1. Short term: maximizes growth, development, activity levels and good health.
2. Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning activities. Therefore:
 - Staff at this Pre-school model and encourage healthy eating behaviours
 - Food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive, social environment for all children
 - Parents and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the Right Bite strategy for their children at Pre-school.
 - This food policy will be finalised in consultation with staff and parents within the Pre-school community.

Curriculum

Our Pre-school's food and nutrition curriculum:

- Is consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* and the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*.
- Includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health.
- Includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food.
- Incorporates EYLF, learning Outcome 3: Wellbeing, to encourage children to take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical

The Learning Environment

Children at our Pre-school:

- Have fresh, clean tap water available at all time and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day.
- Will eat routinely at scheduled break times,
- Eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- Use the (planned) Pre-school vegetable patch to learn about experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods.

Our Pre-school

- Provides rewards/encouragements that are not related to food or drink
- Understands and promotes the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children
- Teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum
- Is a breastfeeding friendly site.

Food Supply

Our Pre-school:

- Encourages healthy food and drink choices for children in line with the *Right Bite* strategy
- Encourages food choices which are representative of the foods of the Pre-school community.
- Ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- Ensures a healthy food supply for Pre-school activities and events in line with the *Right Bite* strategy.
- Displays nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating.
- Has the following guideline for families for food brought from home or provided by staff within the Pre-school time.
- On an occasional basis, the centre will provide food that has been produced through food related activities involving the children.

Fruit Time

- Parents and carers are encouraged to supply fruit and vegetables at fruit time to –
- Provide children with important minerals and vitamins
- Encourage a taste for healthy foods.

Food and drinks provided to children

- Parents and carers are encouraged to provide healthy food and drink choices in line with the Right Bite Strategy
- Staff will ensure that food provided to children by the Pre-school is in line with the Right Bite strategy.

Food Safety

Our Pre-school:

- Promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum
- Encourages staff to access training as appropriate to the *Right Bite Strategy*
- Provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- Promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.

The Pre-school staff is responsible for:

- Before handling food, washing hands according to the guidelines as provided in background information. If interrupted to wash hands again before continuing.
- Ensuring that hand basins are only used for washing hands and faces.
- Ensuring the provisions of soap and paper towels on a daily basis.
- Keeping the kitchen clean and tidy at all times.
- Disposing of any eating or drinking utensils that are chipped, broken or cracked and informing the committee of any items which need replacement.
- Restricting the food preparation areas for that purpose only.
- Cleaning all food contact surfaces, appliances and equipment after use.
- Including discussions on nutrition and food safety in the children's program to increase awareness and understanding of the reasons for good practice.
- Role modelling acceptable social behaviour at snack and meal times.
- Ensuring children have access to water whenever it is needed/requested.
- Removing hazardous food and offering children an alternative snack.
- Covering all wounds or cuts on hands or arms with wound strips or bandage.
- Providing guidelines to parents/guardians, regarding appropriate food for their child to bring to the centre. Eg. No nuts

Children and eating

- Encouraging and directing children to wash their hands before they eat or drink.
- Teaching children to turn away and cover their mouth when they cough or sneeze and then to wash their hands.
- Ensuring tables are wiped with appropriate cleaning materials prior to children using them for food consumption.
- Making sure children are sitting when they eat and drink.
- Washing and sanitising all dropped utensils prior to re-using.
- Discouraging children from sharing utensils and sharing food they have begun to eat.
- Promptly cleaning up and food or drink that is dropped indoors or outdoors.

Preparing food

- Using separate utensils, chopping boards and other equipment for raw and for ready-to-eat foods to avoid cross-contamination. If this is not possible, thoroughly wash and sanitise equipment between uses.

Handling food

- Using utensils such as tongs, spoons, and spatulas for cooked or ready-to eat foods. Raw food which will be cooked can be safely handled with bare clean hands.
- Washing hands before putting on gloves and putting on new gloves when changing from raw food to ready-to-eat food.
- Where required maintaining hot food at over 60° and cold food at below 5°.
- Ensuring any items in the fridge/freezer are covered with a lid, foil or plastic film.
- Using paper towels to clean up spills.

Involving children in cooking

- Ensuring adequate supervision is available for the planned experience.
- Ensuring long hair is tied up.
- Choosing age-appropriate cooking experiences with regard to size and texture of food.
- Respecting cultural and / or personal food differences.
- Ensuring children wash their hands before participating in the cooking experience.
- Only preparing foods that will be cooked before eating, for example biscuits, pizza, soup.
- Immediately cleaning up any food dropped on the floor.
- Catering for children who have special dietary requirements (including allergies) for health medical or cultural reasons.

Food brought from home for special occasions

- Ensuring food provided for celebrations is kept in a container or covered with foil or plastic wrap.
- Keeping food in the refrigerator until it is to be served.
- Providing details to families on safe food handling practices when providing food for special occasions.

Food-related Health Support Planning

Our Pre-school:

- Liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues.

Working with families, health services and industry

Our Pre-school:

- Invites parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our whole of site food and nutrition policy.
- Provides information to families and caregivers about the *Right Bite Strategy* through a variety of ways including
 - Newsletters
 - Policy development/review
 - Information on enrolment
 - Pamphlet/poster displays

Note: If your Pre-school has a child with a serious food allergy (e.g. nuts), a separate policy for the duration of that child's involvement with the Pre-school should be developed and communicated to parents and staff