

Namadgi School Preschool Unit Nutrition Policy

Development: 2013
Reviewed 2015: **Renewal Date:** 2017
Related Policies and Procedures:
(NF1) Special diets form
(HP1) Hygiene procedures

POLICY STATEMENT

Values: Namadgi Preschool actively promotes health and well being. Nutrition is taught through the curriculum and supported through our practices and programs.

Aims:

The aim of this Policy is to ensure the preschool provides an environment that supports good nutrition for its students, Educators and community.

- It will outline strategies to address areas in nutrition that the school community has identified as important.
- It will provide clear guidelines to all Educators and recommendations to community members.
- It is helpful in familiarising parents and students with the nutrition strategies operating in the school.
- It forms an operational basis for food provision in our community.

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

Eating a balanced diet is vital for good health and wellbeing. Food provides our bodies with the energy, protein, essential fats, vitamins and minerals to live, grow and function properly. We need a wide variety of different foods to provide the right amounts of nutrients for good health. Enjoyment of a healthy diet can also be one of the great cultural pleasures of life. The foods and dietary patterns that promote good nutrition are outlined in the Infant Feeding Guidelines and Australian Dietary Guidelines. An unhealthy diet increases the risk of many diet-related diseases.

According to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC www.nhmrc.gov.au), the major causes of death, illness and disability in which diet and nutrition play an important role include coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, atherosclerosis, obesity, some forms of cancer, Type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, dental caries, gall bladder disease, dementia and nutritional anaemias. The Infant Feeding Guidelines and Australian Dietary Guidelines (NHMRC) assist us to eat a healthy diet and help minimise our risk of developing diet-related diseases.

The prevalence of overweight and obesity among Australians has been steadily increasing for the past 30 years. In 2011–12, around 60% of Australian adults were classified as overweight or obese, and more than 25% of these fell into the obese category (ABS 2012). In 2007, around 25% of children aged 2–16 were overweight or obese, with 6% classified as obese (DoHA 2008).

A 2009 report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) predicts that there will be continued increases in overweight and obesity levels across all age groups during the next decade in Australia, to around 66% of the population (Sassi et al. 2009).

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

Children and Young people Act (2008)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
Education and Care Services National Law ACT (Act) 2011
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)
Human Rights Commission Act 2005 (ACT)

IMPLEMENTATION:

The preschool community has identified seven nutrition topics for inclusion in the Nutrition Policy. These are –

- Water consumption (Regulation 78)
- Nutrition education
- Oral health (Regulation 87, 88)
- Food from home (Regulations 77,78)
- Eating practices (Regulations 77, 78, 79, 80)
- Events coordination (Regulations 77, 78, 79, 80)
- Cultural and Religious Practices (Regulations 77, 78, 79, 80)

Water Consumption:

1. The consumption of water occurs throughout the day as required to promote hydration and good drinking practices. It is recommended that the water bottle be placed within each child's reach. Educators are encouraged to role model the drinking of water throughout the day. The delivery of water to children will be inclusive at all times.
2. Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle for their own use throughout the day. Sharing of water bottles is not appropriate or acceptable. Each bottle must be clearly named.
3. Only plain water is to be consumed during the day to minimise the risk of dental decay. Other drinks can be consumed during eating times. The consumption of high sugar, high caffeine drinks is not acceptable.
4. Water bottles may be placed in insulating material if desired to keep them cool. In addition, the Educators will ensure that the water bottles are located in a shaded position at all times.
5. Water consumption is encouraged especially after physical activity.
6. School Educators will have access to refrigerated water and water glasses as an alternative to other drinks.
7. Students will be assisted to attend to their toilet needs as required.
9. Educators are requested to act as role models. Encouraging students to consume water by their own example and keeping consumption of cold high sugar or cold caffeine drinks in concealed containers whilst in the company of the students.

Nutrition education program:

1. The school will support educators by providing opportunities for up-skilling in nutrition. Educators will be aware that they are acting as role models for the preschool community.

2. As nutrition is part of the curriculum it will be an integrated component of learning and teaching.
3. Teachers will use the NHMRC guidelines as their guiding document.
4. Community nutrition education will include articles and information in the newsletter and in poster/brochure format.
5. Nutrition education for students will be addressed through the preschool program.
6. The 'Slow Food' process is supported through the 'edible gardens' and regular cooking experiences.

Oral health:

1. Educators do not use food as rewards for children.
2. Children who wish to brush their teeth at preschool will be provided with a suitable area to undertake brushing.
3. The preschool will ensure that oral health service information is available to parents/carers.
4. Students will be discouraged from sharing saliva through drinks, kissing, food, lipsticks, lip balms or musical instruments
5. Students will not be permitted to walk or play with any items in their mouths.

Food provided from home:

1. It is recommended a variety of foods from the food groups make up the daily food consumption.
2. Information about nutritional options will be provided to families through a range of avenues. These may include –
 - Parent/carer handbook
 - Newsletter
 - Enrolment package
 - Brochures
 - Fridge flyers
3. Foods high in fat and sugar are not recommended for consumption at preschool. E.g. lollies, roll-ups, soft drinks, potato crisps etc
4. Chewing gum and bubble gum are not permitted unless negotiated with executive Educators.
5. Students who come to school without food from home will be provided with food. I.e: a sandwich or fruit.
6. It is recommended that families ensure that a portion of fresh raw fruit or vegetables is packed for their child every day.
7. At preschool events fresh fruit and vegetables will be offered as an alternative refreshment.

Eating practices:

1. The school will provide a pleasant eating environment. Students will have supervised eating times. The children will usually eat together to create a sense of shared community during this time. Educators will model and teach appropriate food manners and practices.
2. Students are encouraged to contribute ideas to enhance their eating area.
3. Students are encouraged to participate in recycling and composting activities at all times.
4. Families are encouraged to provide a wrapper free lunch to reduce waste.
5. Students will be encouraged to wash their hands prior to eating food.
6. A refrigerator, microwave and oven are available for Educators to prepare and store food for themselves.
7. It is recommended that student food be kept cool using cooling devices in bags year round eg. lunchbox ice bricks
8. Educators are encouraged to keep the Educators room and food preparation areas clean and clear at all times.

9. Consumption of hot liquids eg. coffee, tea, soup, is not permitted in the company of children. This includes the use of travel mugs or capped take away cups.

Events coordination:

Events at Namadgi Preschool may include the following activities ... Breakfasts, Parent/Carer Information Evenings/sessions, Whole School Celebrations, Fetes, Market Days, Professional Development days, P &C functions, Morning Teas, and Dances.

1. It is desirable that donated food has an attached ingredient list, upholding best food practice (No fresh cream, food that requires refrigeration or whole nut products can be accepted at any time. However, if prior arrangement is made, some foods requiring refrigeration can be accepted for specific purposes. For example, milk, sausages and ice cream for special events. In this case, it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure refrigeration is organised and occurs quickly).
2. During celebrations food high in fat, sugar or salt can be provided as long as healthier alternatives are also available. These celebrations should not occur any more than twice a month.
3. If a mealtime coincides with the event then an appropriate 'eating time' will be timetabled for participants.
4. Water should be available free of charge.
5. Specific allergies and dietary requirements can be managed through educators and the preschool community planning for inclusivity Eg. alternative gluten free food options can be provided for families to ensure their child who has a gluten allergy is included in classroom experiences.
6. Parents/carers are welcome to celebrate their child's birthday by sending something into the classroom. If a child has a food intolerance it is recommended that special treats be kept at the preschool as an alternative to the birthday cake.
7. For all preschool facilitated functions, that involves high risk foods eg meat based products, preparation and cooking must be on site to comply with food handling and safety laws.

Cultural and religious practices:

1. Educators will be inclusive of students who are eating particular foods or abstaining from food for cultural or religious reasons. For example Educators may find another place for students to go when other students are eating their food during Ramadan.
2. Educators will consider the dietary needs of all students before delivering food related activities so that our diverse culture of our preschool is acknowledged and students feel included. Eg. alternative Halal, vegetarian or gluten free food options can be provided by families to ensure their child who requires Halal or vegetarian food or gluten free food is included in classroom experiences. Families will be asked to complete a "Special Diets" form (NF1).