

Healthy food supply and nutrition policy

National Quality Standard Area 2 | Children's health and safety

Children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health, safety, and wellbeing.

Purpose

Department preschools, children's centres, and kindergartens support healthy choices by promoting healthy eating and physical activity. Learning about healthy lifestyles in the children's everyday routines and experiences is encouraged at Modbury Kindergarten.

A strong sense of health and wellbeing supported by good nutrition and an active lifestyle provides children with confidence, energy and optimism that contributes to their ability to concentrate, co-operate, and learn.

Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition and physical fitness, is integral to wellbeing and self-confidence.

This policy applies to all staff at this site.

Food curriculum

Our food and nutrition curriculum...

- > Is consistent with the Australian 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.
- > Is integrated into our program and consistent with the Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standard.
- > Lunchtime is part of the curriculum and children are encouraged to talk about food and nutrition in a positive, relaxed, social eating environment where self-help skills are promoted.

The learning environment

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

1. Maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health
2. 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
4. Children should be eating crunchy foods (in line with advice from speech pathologists and dentists)
5. Use our garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting, and preparing nutritious food
6. Use progressive morning and afternoon snack to develop autonomy over their bodies and to recognise and respond to their bodily cues and needs.

Therefore...

- > Our staff model and encourage healthy eating behaviours
- > Food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children
- > Parents and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the Right Bite strategy for their children
- > Educators use visuals to remind children 3x during the day to eat
- > All children sit down together at 12pm to eat or engage in shared conversations as a ritual, educators use this opportunity to check all children have had an opportunity to eat.

Our site...

- > 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
- > Provides reminders visual and verbally to eat, wash hands and drink water

Food supply

Families are asked to provide healthy food for their child to eat. Lunches are stored outside in our shaded porch area with outdoor blinds; therefore, cool packs are required and are to be supplied by families. Educators are unable to reheat food. If children require warm food, families need to pack it in a thermos already heated. Please ensure that all lunch boxes, containers, and drink bottles are clearly named. If the weather is above 35 degrees before 11am educators will move lunchboxes into kitchen.

Morning/afternoon tea/Fruit and vegetable/Snack time

Generally, the less packaging in a lunch box the healthier it is for children. Fresh fruits, vegetables or a piece of cheese are recommended for fruit time. We understand that from time-to-time families may run out of fruit. A healthy sandwich (multigrain or wholemeal bread), with savoury filling, dried fruit, or plain unsalted crackers (e.g., Vita wheats) are acceptable. Children are encouraged to eat their fruit first.

This...

- > Provides children with important minerals and vitamins
- > Encourages a taste for healthy foods
- > Encourage healthy food and drink choices
- > Encourages chewing which promotes oral muscle development
- > Ensure healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive

Lunch time

The *Healthy eating guidelines* apply to lunchtime. We encourage healthy food and drink choices for children in line with the *SA Right Bite Food and Drink Supply Strategy*. Parents are encouraged to follow the above guidelines and speak with staff if they have any issues. A healthy lunch box might include a sandwich, wraps, sushi, rice crackers, fruit, yoghurt, cheese, vegie sticks etc. Please do not send chocolate, muesli bars, roll ups, Nutella, lollies, chocolate chip biscuits, buns, muffins, cakes, sweet slices, chips, crisps etc.

Water

Children have fresh, clean water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day. Children are also encouraged to bring their own named drink bottle, which is stored with lunchboxes on the shelf, accessible at all times of the day.

Special occasions and birthday guidelines

Please do not send cakes or other birthday food treats with your child. We will celebrate by singing happy

birthday.

Food safety

Our site...

- > Promotes and teaches food safety to children during food learning/cooking activities
- > Promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children
- > Cooks healthy options using produce from our kitchen garden
- > Provides recipes for families
- > Provides a space in the inside kitchen for lunchboxes when the weather is above 35 degrees (temperature is checked daily)
- > Does not reheat children's food

Food and drinks provided to children

- > Children will sit down to eat
- > Children will not share their food with other children
- > We invite health professionals to be involved in food and nutrition activities with the children
- > We provide information from health professionals to families and caregivers on the Healthy Eating Guidelines through a variety of media such as regular newsletters, policy development and review, information on enrolment, poster displays and the website

Guidelines for children with specific dietary requirements

We liaise with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues (e.g. allergies, dietary requirements, diabetes, cultural and religious etc). Please speak to staff regarding your child's individual needs.

Allergy aware

Modbury Kindergarten is an Allergy Aware Site and asks that if a child who has an anaphylaxis allergy is enrolled parents refrain from sending the allergen food, for their child's lunch or fruit time snack. At times there may also be children with severe allergies to other foods and we ask parents to be understanding when staff ask for certain foods not to be brought to Kindy. In this case, notes will be sent out to parents reminding them of the more stringent requirements.

Supporting information

- > **Australian dietary guidelines 1 - 5** | <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-dietary-guidelines-1-5>
- > **Australian guide to healthy eating** | <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating>
- > **National Quality Standard** | <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>
- > **Early Years Learning Framework** | <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/EYLF-2022-V2.0.pdf>
- > **SA Right Bite Food and Drink Supply Strategy** | <https://healthy-kids.com.au/school-canteens/canteen-guidelines/sa-right-bite/>

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Approved by: Michelle Muggleton | Governing Council, Modbury Kindergarten

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