

Oakbank Kindergarten

Nutrition Policy

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Oakbank Kindergarten promotes safe, healthy eating habits in line with the *Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools* and the DfE Wellbeing strategy. We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits. We ensure that:

Educators model and encourage healthy eating behaviours

Food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children, always under adult supervision

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the *Right Bite* strategy for their children at kindergarten

The following quote comes from *Eat Well SA Schools and Preschools Healthy Eating Guidelines*:

“A diet rich in fruit and vegetables is beneficial to health, particularly in reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes and some forms of cancer.”

Providing healthy food also helps in developing children’s speech skills. The chewing action is necessary to exercise and strengthen the muscles needed for the complex movements of speech. Very fine coordination of the tongue, lips, jaw and palate is necessary for the production of the many different sounds we make when talking. Hard, crunchy foods are better than soft mushy foods.

CURRICULUM

Our Kindergarten’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 e.g. growing vegetables, puzzles, posters etc.

Includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food and trying new foods

Incorporates links with community organisations e.g. Olive Branch Cafe

Integrates nutrition across the curriculum where possible, relating to the Developmental Learning Outcome: ‘Children have a strong sense of wellbeing’

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THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Children at our kindergarten:

Bring their own drink bottles with water, have filtered tap water available at all times to refill with and are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day

Always follow hand washing procedures prior to eating. Alternatives e.g. hand sanitiser may be used on excursions

Recycle their food scraps to promote sustainability

Eat together at a scheduled time for morning snack and lunch. Children choose whether they require an afternoon snack and independently access their food.

We encourage snack foods to be only fruit and vegetables or cheese and crackers.

Eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours

Use the kindergarten garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting, preparing and tasting nutritious foods

FOOD SUPPLY

Our Kindergarten:



Provides families with information on our food policy at enrolment

Encourages healthy food and drink choices for children in line with the *Right Bite* strategy

Ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive

Acknowledges family food choices e.g. vegan. Alternatives for these children will be discussed with parents prior to cooking experiences

Ensures a healthy food supply for preschool activities and events in line with the *Right Bite* strategy.

Displays nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating

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 i.e.

Green – foods which are the healthiest choices – Choose plenty

Amber – foods which are more processed with some added salt, sugar and/or fat- Select carefully

Red – foods which are highly processed, energy dense and nutrient poor – Occasionally

Staff will ensure that food provided to children by the kindergarten is in line with the *Right Bite* strategy

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Educators will ensure that we have no more than two red foods per term as part of the curriculum

Please supply your child with enough food for a whole day

Please supply a water bottle for your child whilst at Kindergarten. Water is the recommended and only drink for children at Kindergarten. Bottles will be refilled with filtered water if required

Children can access their lunch boxes if hungry as long as they are seated when eating

Please do not send lollies, chocolates or sugary drinks including cordial. A reminder note will be provided to parents and these foods will be returned via your child's lunchbox

The following ideas for families for food brought from home are as follows. It is recommended that they are provided daily with:

2 serves of breads and cereals eg. one sandwich

2 serves of vegetables

1 serve of fruit

1 - 2 serves of dairy

1 serve of lean meat or meat substitutes for vegetarians such as legumes

Fruit Time:

Fresh fruits	Dried fruit
Vegetables (eg. carrot sticks)	Cheese
Crackers	

These foods provide children with important minerals and vitamins and encourage a taste for healthy foods.

Lunch Time:

Wholegrain sandwiches or wraps with fresh fillings e.g. salad	Vegetable sticks with dip or hommus
Savoury slices e.g. zucchini	Wholegrain biscuits and crispbreads
Cold 'leftovers' (e.g. home-made pizza)	Home-made fruit muffins/ scones
Yoghurt	Cheese
Unsweetened fruit bars	Fruit (including dried fruit)
Hard boiled eggs	Ricecakes

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Parents are asked to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer brick or frozen water and in accordance with food safety guidelines; refer www.sahealth.sa.gov.au. During hot weather children will place their lunchboxes in a basket inside.

Children with healthy lunch boxes model healthy eating for their peers.

Some children are limited in their food choices and this will be discussed with parents on enrolment and strategies worked out to support them and encourage them to try new things. They will be encouraged to eat the healthiest options in their lunch box first.

FOOD SAFETY

Our Kindergarten:

Promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum

Provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone

Explicitly teaches and promotes correct hand washing procedures with children and staff. Posters provide visual cues.

Offers food-related health support planning

Our Kindergarten liaises with families to ensure that food brought to kindergarten by children will not pose a risk to children with food related health support plans. Children whose parents have identified that their child has an allergy or specific dietary requirement e.g. diabetes will be required to provide a Health Care Plan from their primary health provider. This is placed on the office noticeboard for educators to be aware of. This will be referred to when cooking and when doing other specific activities.



ALLERGY AWARE ZONE

Oakbank Kindergarten is a nut free zone due to potential allergies of children and staff which can produce anaphylactic reactions. Parents are informed of this on enrolment. Nuts and traces of nuts are widely used in processed foods and labels need to be read carefully to ascertain if the foods are nut free. Peanut butter, Nutella and commercially produced muesli bars with nuts are not to be brought to Kindergarten.

If food containing nuts is brought to kindergarten it will be placed in the kitchen until home time and parents will be reminded of our nut policy verbally or via a note in their child's lunch box.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We welcome children to bring something to share with their friends to celebrate their birthdays that is nutritious. Examples include:

1. Cheese, vegetable and biscuit platter
2. Fruit skewers
3. Low sugar muffins

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4. Toasties

Please always let staff know that you are bringing food in so that they can plan for anyone that has a food allergy.

WORKING WITH FAMILIES, HEALTH SERVICES AND INDUSTRY

Our Kindergarten:

Is a breast feeding friendly environment

Invites parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our 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

promotes the alignment of fundraising with the *Right Bite Strategy*

We thank parents and care providers for helping us to adhere to the centre's "good food, good health" policy, by providing the freshest and healthiest lunches available. Good nutrition plays a vitally important role in the overall growth and development of your child.

REFERENCES:

Rite Bite Policy – Rite Bite Easy Guide to Healthy Food and Drinks Supply for SA Schools and Preschools

Rite Bite Manual – Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for SA Schools and Preschools

Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

Eat Well SA Schools and Preschools Healthy Eating Guidelines

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