

# Elizabeth Park Preschool

## Nutrition and Food/Drink Policy

### Rationale

At Elizabeth Park Preschool, we aim to promote healthy eating habits in a safe, supportive environment for all children. Early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong healthy eating habits and this also builds on social skills, such as initiating conversations, asking questions and using manners. Healthy eating assists children with concentration, energy levels, regulated behaviour and maximises growth development. It can minimise the risk of diet related diseases later in life, helps to establish healthy eating patterns and supports oral muscle development and healthier teeth and gums.

### National Quality Standards

- Regulation 77 (Health and hygiene), 78 (Food and beverages) of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2018

### Quality Area 2: Children's health and Safety

At our preschool:

- Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child

Our policy is based on the *Australian Dietary Guidelines for children and adolescents* and *Department for Education's "Rite Bite Strategy."* This strategy emphasises the need for children to:

1. Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods.
2. Eat plenty of breads, cereals, vegetables and fruits.
3. Include dairy products such as milk, cheese and yoghurt in their diet.
4. Eat foods that are low in saturated fat.
5. Balance food intake with physical activity.
6. Eat only moderate amounts of foods containing sugar.
7. Choose low salt foods and use salt sparingly.
8. Be aware of and avoid foods that can cause adverse reactions (allergies) and not to share foods with others.

### The purpose of this policy is therefore to:

1. Educators can support children to develop healthy eating habits.
2. Promote children's understanding of how food affects health and the relationship between healthy eating and good health.
3. Ensure that food provided at the Preschool and food brought from home reflect the DECD "Rite Bite Strategy."
4. Support children who have health and cultural needs relating to special diet requirements.
5. Raise awareness of good nutrition principles.

### Nutrition Strategies

#### Snack Time Guidelines:

Please provide your child with a healthy snack such as:

- Fresh/dried fruits
- Vegetables
- Cheese, yoghurt
- Crackers, rice cakes

Our policy **does not** include items such as cakes, chips, lollies, chocolate, custard, sweet biscuits, cordial, soft drinks. If your child brings an inappropriate snack they will be asked to put it back in their bags to eat when they get home. Parents/Caregivers will be notified with a note stating an alternative healthy snack to be provided instead.

**We are a nut aware Preschool.** Each year at Preschool, we have a number of children who have severe allergies to nuts and/or foods containing nuts (this also includes Nutella and peanut butter). It is important for Parents/Caregivers to check food labels to ensure all foods are nut free.

### **Lunch Time Guidelines:**

Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to provide their child with a healthy lunch. For example:

- Sandwiches may contain fillings such as cheese, fresh vegetables, butter, vegemite. **No** Nutella or peanut butter.
- Cultural foods are acknowledged and accepted.
- Children are encouraged to drink water with their lunch.

### **Breakfast**

- Children in the AM group have access to the breakfast station that is set up and supervised by Educators each day. Children are encouraged to independently make their own toast or cereal.

### **Shared Fruit Wednesdays**

- Parent/Caregivers are invited to bring a piece of fruit or vegetable each Wednesday. This provides an opportunity for children to explore trying new fruits or vegetables in a social setting.

### **Drink Guidelines:**

- Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to provide their child with a named drink bottle of **water only**. We also provide a cup of water to children who do not have a drink bottle. We will refill drink bottles when they are almost empty.

### **Food safety in our Preschool**

- We provide hand washing facilities for all adults and children.
- Educators will abide by current Oral Eating Care Plans.
- We promote appropriate hand washing procedures with children.
- We promote healthy foods and healthy eating through the use of fresh produce from our garden and through cooking experiences.
- We do not have facilities to appropriately re-heat food.
- Educators will follow safe hygiene practices when handling food (washing hands, wearing food handling gloves).

This Policy has been developed in consultation with Elizabeth Park Preschool staff, families and Governing Council.

### **References:**

- Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2018.
- National Quality Standards, 2018.
- 'Australian Dietary Guidelines for children and adolescents', 2003,  
<https://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-family-toc~gug-family-guidelines>
- 'Rite bite, easy guide to healthy food and drink supply for South Australian Schools and Preschools', DECD, 2015.
- Department for Education policies and procedures available at: <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/department/policies>
- Anaphylaxis and severe allergy <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/schools-and-educators/health-safety-and-wellbeing/specific-conditions-and-needs/supporting-children-and-students-anaphylaxis-and-severe-allergies>

### **Policy review**

**Quality area 7: Leadership and service management**

### **Revision Record**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Approved date</b>	<b>Amendments</b>
1.1	Governing Council		
1.2			

**Created:** March 2023

**Reviewed:**

**Approved at Governing Council on (Date):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved by Principal:** Kath Best \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved by Governing Council Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

**To be reviewed:** 2025