

McKellar Stewart Kindergarten.

Healthy Food and Nutrition Policy.

At McKellar Stewart Kindergarten we promote safe, healthy eating habits in line with the *Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools* which relates to the DECD 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: maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health.
2. Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning activities.

Therefore:

- staff at this preschool 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 preschool.

Curriculum

Our preschool curriculum incorporates powerful messages about health, nutrition and food safety:

- 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
- Encourages children to be independent in managing food and food choices.
- integrates learning about food and nutrition across the EYLF curriculum and in particular developing the learning outcome: 'Children have a strong sense of wellbeing'

The Learning Environment

Children at our Kindergarten:

- have fresh, clean filtered water available at all times to top up drink bottles.
- Learn about the importance of drinking water from their bottles at regular intervals throughout the day.
- learn about the importance of healthy meals, and snacks as part of the curriculum.
- will eat routinely at scheduled break times.
- eat in a positive, social environment with staff who support and monitor safe and healthy eating behaviours.
- use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods.

Our Kindergarten:

- 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
- 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
- has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home or provided at kindergarten:

Snack and lunch Times:

Parents and carers are encouraged to supply their children with food that

- is healthy and nutritious and has important minerals and vitamins for snack and lunch.
- encourages a taste for healthy foods and water only as a healthy drink.
- Red category 'Occasional foods' are not provided as a general rule.

Food safety

Our preschool:

- promotes and teaches food handling safety to children as part of the curriculum
- provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone.
- promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.
- Ensures children eat in a clean, relaxed environment while seated.

Food-related health support planning

Our preschool:

- liaises with families to ensure food safety for children with health support plans that are related to food.
- Signed health forms with emergency procedures are up to date and available to all staff.
- Parents are informed to not provide food types when we have a child with a severe food allergy.
- Staff are trained and aware of children's health needs regarding food allergies and intake.
- Ensures children's food is stored in a cool clean cupboard in an air-conditioned room in summer.
- Informs families at enrolment about food safety standards for food provision for their child and recommends lunch box coolers for summer and hot food be provided in thermally insulated containers.
- Uneaten food is only returned to children's bags after afternoon snack at approx. 3pm.

Working with families and health services.

Our preschool:

- 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 of promoting healthy food habits* through
 - o newsletters
 - o policy development/ review
 - o information on enrolment
 - o pamphlet/ poster displays

References / Sources: These publications are available for borrowing from our parent library.

- o *Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools* *
- o *The Eat Well SA DECS Healthy Eating Guidelines 2004.*
- o *The CSIRO Wellbeing plan for Kids 2009* *

National Quality Standard QA2

- 2.1 Each child's health is promoted.
- 2.1.1 Each child's health needs are supported.
- 2.2.1 Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child.

EYLF

- Children recognise and communicate their bodily needs (for example, thirst, hunger, rest, comfort, physical activity).
- Children are happy, healthy, safe and connected to others.
- Children show an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.

National Regulations

- 77 Health, hygiene and safe food practices
- 78 Food and beverages
- 162 Health information to be kept in enrolment record
- 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures

Last reviewed 2021

