



Policy Name: Nutrition

Links to National Quality Framework:

**Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 No 104
New South Wales –**

Education and Care Services National Regulations:

**National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age
Care:**

The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Belonging, Being & Becoming -

Policy Statement

Rainbow Preschool recognises the importance of healthy eating to the growth and development of young children and is committed to supporting the healthy food and drink choices of children in their care. This policy concerns the provision of healthy food and drink while children are in care and the promotion of normal growth and development. The service is committed to implementing the healthy eating key messages outlined in Munch & Move and to supporting the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings¹.

Further, Rainbow Preschool recognises the importance of supporting families in providing healthy food and drink to their children. It is acknowledged that the early childhood setting has an important role in supporting families in healthy eating.

This policy aims to:

- Encourage and support breastfeeding.
- Promote healthy food and drinks based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents.
- Provide food to children that has been stored, prepared and served in a safe and hygienic manner and promote hygienic food practices.
- Provide a positive eating environment which reflects cultural and family values.
- Promote lifelong learning for children, early childhood educators and families about healthy food and drink choices.

¹ Guidelines developed in 2009 by child health and early childhood professionals in collaboration with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. The Guidelines are listed in the *Get Up & Grow* resources and in the *Munch and Move* Resource Manual.



- Encourage communication with families about the provision of appropriate healthy food and drinks for children while they are attending the service.

Encourage and support breastfeeding

Rainbow Preschool will:

- Provide a suitable place within the service where mothers can breastfeed their babies or express breast milk.

Promote healthy food and drinks based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents.

Rainbow Preschool will:

- Provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and suitable for children's lunchboxes.
- Encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious food provided.
- Discourage the provision of highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt and sugar and low in essential nutrients in children's lunchboxes. Examples of these foods include lollies, chocolates, sweet biscuits, muesli bars, breakfast bars, fruit filled bars, chips, oven-baked crackers and corn chips.
- Ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day.
- Offer food and drink at regular and predictable intervals.
- Be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances and special dietary needs and consult with families to determine specific food related requirements and develop individual management plans.
- Minimise the risk of choking through provision of appropriate foods and supervision.

Provide options that allow for the food of the children to be stored, prepared and served in a safe and hygienic manner and promote hygienic food practices.

Rainbow Preschool:

- Ensures children and staff wash and dry their hands (using soap, warm running water and single use or disposable towels) before handling food or eating meals and snacks. Children's hand-washing practices are observed at all times.
- Discourages children from handling other children's food and utensils.
- Provides fridges in the classrooms and kitchen so that food can be stored at a temperature that will enhance the longevity.
- Ensure children do not share food due to individual children's special dietary requirements and allergies.



Provide a positive eating environment which reflects cultural and family values.

Rainbow Preschool will:

- Ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided.
- Endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with educators and other children.
- Encourage preschoolers to autonomously access their own food and drink to foster children's independence and self-esteem.
- Respect each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, educators do not insist he/she eats.
- Be patient with messy or slow eaters.
- Encourage children to try different / new foods but will not force them to eat.
- Not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes.

Promote lifelong learning for children, early childhood staff and families about healthy food and drink choices.

Rainbow Preschool will:

- Foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating.
- Encourage children to participate in a variety of 'hands-on' food preparation experiences.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices.
- Encourage an increasing knowledge of and respect for the natural environment through engaging children in experiences related to the process of growing food – from planting seeds to harvesting vegetables and preparing these foods for consumption.

Encourage communication with families about the provision of appropriate healthy food and drinks for children while they are attending the service.

Rainbow Preschool will:

- Provide a copy of the Nutrition Policy to all families upon orientation at the service. Families will be provided with opportunities to contribute to the review and development of the policy.
- Ensure educators take time to discuss mealtimes with families and that families are regularly informed about the quantity and types of food their child is eating.
- Communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the service and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home.



- Communicate regularly with families and provide information and advice on appropriate food and drink to be included in children's lunchboxes. This information may be provided to families in a variety of ways including newsletters, during orientation, information sessions and informal discussion.
- Celebrate special occasions with limited use of 'sometimes' foods, and with no special focus on food. Alternatives to using foods to celebrate are considered. On such special occasions, only food that is supplied and prepared by the staff of Rainbow Preschool will be on offer. Staff will inform parents/carers and seek permission for children to consume this food. This also enables educators to check allergy/intolerances or adhere to any special requests or dietary requirements and to ensure that parents/carers are aware of any extra food that may be consumed by their child whilst they are at preschool.

Further Sources:

<https://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/>

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources>

<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating>

Policy Created Date: June 2018

Policy Review Date: June 2020