

NUTRITION, FOOD AND BEVERAGES, DIETARY REQUIREMENTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Regulations 77-80, 82, 90-91, 160, 162, 168, 170-172

NUTRITION, FOOD AND BEVERAGES, DIETARY REQUIREMENT POLICY

Policy Statement:

As part of our commitment to children's health, safety, and wellbeing at Tenison Woods College Early Learning & Community Centre (ELCC), we prioritise food safety and hygiene practices and support healthy food and beverage choices tailored to each child's needs. Our approach to nutrition, food, and beverages is guided by evidence-based principles, and we work collaboratively with children, families, and educators to ensure a safe, nutritious, and culturally sensitive food environment.

Background:

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to establish policies and procedures regarding nutrition, food, and beverages and dietary requirements. This policy outlines our commitment to meeting these regulatory requirements while promoting the wellbeing of the children in our care.

National Quality Standards (NQS) Links

QUALITY AREA 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE		
1.1.3	Program learning opportunities	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
1.2.3	Child directed learning	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.
QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATION PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

Legislative requirements:

Regulation 77 - Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Practices

- *All nominated supervisors, staff members and volunteers have adequate health and hygiene practices and have all completed a federally approved food handling course, 'Do Food Safely' ensuring safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food.*
- *Responsible Person (Director) is trained as food handling supervisor and ensures all health, hygiene and safe food practices are followed in line with the Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code.*
- *All staff and volunteers aware of food handling standards and are ensuring these safe practices occur daily.*

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- All staff will wear blue gloves to serve food, washing their hands before and after the process and children to use tongs to take food from shared platters, washing their hands before and after the process.

Regulation 78 – Food and Beverages

- All children and staff will have access to safe drinking water at all times.
- Children are offered food and beverages throughout the day and a consistent supply will be readily available for children independent of adults.

Regulation 79 – Service Providing Food and Beverages

- The Centre will follow the ACECQA National Quality Standards (NQS) and Nutritional Australia guidelines when planning weekly menus.
- Meals and snacks will consist of fresh fruits, vegetables, and wholegrain carbohydrates, with occasional 'sometimes' category foods as part of a balanced nutrition plan.
- Meals will vary with at least one vegetarian option each week and all dietary, health and cultural requirements of children are catered for and taken into consideration at each meal.
- Children will be encouraged to try new foods, and their dietary preferences will be respected. No child will be forced to eat something they do not like or that conflicts with their cultural, religious, or dietary requirements.
- Educators will incorporate nutritional education into the program, following evidence-based guidelines such as the ACECQA National Quality Framework, 'Eat a Rainbow' program, and Nutrition Australia recommendations.
- Food and beverages will never be used as rewards or punishments.
- The Centre will ensure that all children who are hungry have access to food and beverages.

Regulation 80 – Weekly Menu

- All The Centre will follow the ACECQA National Quality Standard (NQS) and the Nutrition Australia guidelines when planning weekly menus.
- Families will receive a copy of the Centre's nutrition policy through the family information package and prominently displayed posters and pamphlets.
- Drinking water will be readily available, and milk will be provided during breakfast and snack times.
- The weekly menu is displayed in the foyer at all times, accurately explaining the food and beverages on offer each day.
- A digital copy of the meals of the day and what a child has eaten is sent to the families daily.

Regulation 82 – Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Environment

- All children are educated and cared for in an alcohol, tobacco and drug free environment.

Regulation 90 – Medical Conditions Policy

- All pre-existing medical conditions are recorded upon enrolment in the Centre and medical plans and medications given to the Centre by families.
- New medical conditions while at the Centre, are recorded and records updated, with families providing new medical plans and medications.
- All medical conditions are recorded and medications safely secured in the First Aid cupboard or fridge if required.
- All medications are to be given following the prescription or medical plan.
- If short-term medication is required, a 'Medication Record' must be filled in each time it is administered, specifically following the prescription. Families must sign the 'Medication Record' before the Centre administers the medication and each time it is, a staff member must witness the medication being administered. Eg, if given 4 times over 24 hours, it will be administered every 6 hours and given 6 hours after the family has administered it.
- When the Centre is made aware of a medical condition, a medical risk minimisation plan will be developed in consultation with families of children with specific health care needs, allergies, or relevant medical conditions to assess and minimise risks related to the child's condition and food safety. Families and the Director will sign the final copy and all relevant staff will be made aware of the medical condition and plan.
- All children with a medical or dietary condition will have a photo of themselves and the condition in relevant spaces in the Centre, the staff room, the kitchens' and their relevant room.

Regulation 91 – Medical Conditions Policy to be Provided to Parents

- All families are given access to our Medical Conditions Policy.
- When the service is made aware of a medical condition, families are directed to our Medical Conditions Policy.

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Regulation 160 – Child Enrolment Records to be Kept by Approved Provider

- All enrolment records include the child's full name, date of birth and address. The name, address and contact details of known parents of the child and any person who is an emergency contact.
- The enrolment form must also identify any authorised nominee person(s) who has been given permission by the parent/carer to collect the child from the service, any person who is authorised to consent to medical treatment or authorise administration of medication or any person who is authorised to transport the child.
- The Centre will have on its enrolment form, the child's gender, languages at home, cultural background of child and parents, any cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional needs.

Regulation 168 – Education and Care Services Must Have Policies and Procedures

- Our Centre has policies and procedures as set out in sub regulation 2 in Regulation 168.

Regulation 170 – Policies and Procedures to be Followed

- Nominated Supervisors, staff members and volunteers have an understanding of all policies and procedures and ensure they are followed at the service.

Regulation 171 – Policies and Procedures to be Kept Available

- Digital copies of our policies and procedures are available via a QR code in our foyer, in our digital PowerQIP and in our handbook. A hard copy of our policies and procedures can be found in the ELCC Office.

Regulation 172 – Notification of Change of Policies and Procedures

- All families are notified and sent updated policies and procedures.
- If a change to policy is planned, significantly affecting families, they will be given 14 days' notice.

Principles to Inform Policy:

Our policy is guided by the following principles:

- We prioritise children's health, safety, and wellbeing, including safe practices for handling, preparing & storing food.
- We promote a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating and physical activity, and educate children and families about the importance of nutrition and food choices.
- We provide nutritious, age-appropriate, and balanced food and beverages that support children's growth and development.
- We respect the diverse cultural, religious, and dietary preferences of our families and work collaboratively to provide food and beverages that align with their values.
- We adhere to the Australian Food Safety Standards and maintain strict food preparation and handling practices.
- We incorporate children's agency and decision-making into our educational program, allowing them to feedback on meal-related experiences.

Key Terms:

- **ACECQA (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority):** The independent national authority that administers the National Quality Framework.
- **Dietary Requirements:** Food and beverages provided by the service must consider individual children's dietary requirements, including their growth and development needs and specific cultural, religious, or health requirements.
- **Food Safety:** Safe practices for handling, preparing, and storing food to minimise risks to children.
- **Risk Minimisation Plan:** A plan developed in consultation with families of children with specific health care needs, allergies, or relevant medical conditions to assess and minimise risks related to the child's condition and food safety.

Links to Other Policies and Procedures:

- The Administration of First Aid
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Dealing with Medical Conditions in Children
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Dealing with Infectious Diseases
- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Excursions
- Governance and Management

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Inductions and Ongoing Training

- Upon starting employment at the Early Learning & Community Centre, all employees are sent policies and procedures of the Centre and in the first week given an induction on specific topics relating to 'Nutrition, Food and Beverage and Dietary Requirements'.
- All staff must complete the federally approved 'Do Food Safely' from the Victorian Government and send the completed certificate to HR staff.
- All staff to complete cultural competency training by SBS in the first year of work at the ELCC.
- All staff given links to Nutrition Australia and shown resource links in ACECQA.
- In line with updates to Australia's Food Safety laws (Dec 2023), all staff are sent new requirements and procedures for food preparation and serving.

Policy Created/Reviewed:

This policy was created in January 2024 and will be reviewed every two years or as necessary to ensure compliance with regulations and alignment with best practices.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review:

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated as needed to ensure compliance with regulations and alignment with our service's philosophy and goals. The Director is responsible for conducting these reviews.

References

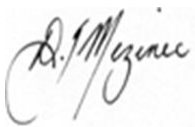
1. ACECQA National Quality Framework
2. National Health and Medical Research Council's Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents
3. Australian Food Safety Standards
4. Get Up and Grow – Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood – Australian Government – Department of Health and Ageing
5. Nutrition Australia Guidelines
6. Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy Guidelines for Prevention of Anaphylaxis in Schools, Childcare, and Childcare
7. 'Eat a Rainbow' Program - SA Health
8. Australian Government's Get Up and Grow Guidelines
9. Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code – Food Safety

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with regulatory requirements, but no less frequently than every two years.

Reviewed by David Meziniec
Tenison Woods College Principal

Reviewed by Fran Scanlon
Early Learning & Community Centre Director



Signed:
Dated: 31.7.24

Signed:
Dated: 16.7.24

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NUTRITION, FOOD AND BEVERAGE, DIETARY REQUIREMENTS PROCEDURE

Procedure Statement:

As outlined in our Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements Policy, we are committed to children's health, safety, and wellbeing at Tenison Woods College Early Learning & Community Centre (ELCC), we prioritise food safety and hygiene practices and support healthy food and beverage choices tailored to each child's needs. Our approach to nutrition, food, and beverages is guided by evidence-based principles, and we work collaboratively with children, families, and educators to ensure a safe, nutritious, and culturally sensitive food environment. Our procedure guidelines ensure our community understand and follow through with practices as stated in the ELCC policy. The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to establish policies and procedures regarding nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements. This procedure outlines our commitment to meeting these regulatory requirements while promoting the wellbeing of the children in our care.

Procedures

Sugarloaf café and ELCC

- The Director will ensure there is a close working relationship with the café manager and the cook in charge of the ELCC
- Meetings will occur each month
- The Director will facilitate training for ELCC and Sugarloaf staff to ensure high level of preparation and knowledge.
- All dietary, cultural and allergy requirements are addressed and communicated clearly with all Sugarloaf and ELCC staff.

Menu Planning and Nutritious Offerings

- The Centre will plan menus and food offerings in the Centre following NQS, Nutrition Australia, Get Up and Grow, Eat a Rainbow and the Australian guide to healthy eating.
- The Centre has a membership to Food Foundations, by Nutrition Australia that provides guidance on menu planning, ideas, quantities and best practice in early years for menu design and with up-to-date Australian guidelines
- Meals and snacks will consist of fresh fruits, vegetables, and wholegrain carbohydrates, with occasional 'sometimes' category foods as part of a balanced nutrition plan.
- Menus are regularly reviewed, with families, staff and children asked for input of ideas. Nutrition Australia will also be consulted for new ideas. The menus are changed each season or when required.
- The Menu will reflect the menu review completed by Nutrition Australia in July 2024, with the correct amounts of foods and ingredients to ensure the children are receiving the correct amounts of foods each day.
- Drinking water will be readily available, and milk will be provided during breakfast and snack times.
- Families will receive updated menus through the newsletter and have access to the nutrition, food and beverage policy and procedure through a QR code in the foyer or a hard copy can be viewed in the office
- All foods offered encourage independent eating. This is a developmental goal teaching independence and self-sufficiency. Children will be encouraged to eat as much or as little as they like.

The menu

- The menu will be always displayed in the foyer.
- The menu is on a four-week rotation.
- Each day the rooms will send through to families a list of what the children have eaten daily.
- Any changes in menus will be communicated through the list sent through by rooms.
- If a permanent change to the menu, the Director will send this through to all families in an email and via Seesaw.

Meal Schedule

- Breakfast will be available between 7.00am and 8.00am.

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- Morning tea, featuring a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and crackers, will be served between 9.30am and 10.30am.
- Lunch will be provided from 12.00pm to 1.00pm
- Afternoon tea will be served between 2.30pm and 3.30pm.
- A late afternoon/evening snack will be provided between 4.30pm and 5.30pm.

Respect for Children's Allergies and Dietary Requirements

- Children will be encouraged to try new foods, and their dietary preferences will be respected. No child will be forced to eat something they do not like or that conflicts with their cultural, religious, or dietary requirements.
- Parents or carers will notify the Centre of specific dietary preferences and/or allergies. These will be placed on their information on Spike and in their risk minimisation medical plan (if requiring medication). All dietary preference and allergies will be displayed in rooms and kitchens with a photo of the child, so it is clear to all staff.
- Each day the administrative staff will send an updated list of dietary and cultural requirements to the Sugarloaf, ensuring any dietary/cultural requirements casual days that children have picked up
- The Centre will ensure that all children who are hungry have access to food and beverages.
- There will be a fruit bowl readily available for the children in the Centre to have independent access too.

Food Handling and Hygiene

- Food and beverages will be prepared, stored, and served in compliance with the Australian Food Safety Standards.
- All supplier details will be displayed in the kitchen areas.
- Food receipts will be collected as food is delivered from our supermarket supplier and documentation completed.
- Temperature of hot and cold foods and beverages will be taken upon delivery to the ELCC with a temperature probe. These will be recorded.
- Fridge temperature will be checked at close and opening daily and recorded by the staff.
- Cleaning and sanitising record will be kept and updated daily.
- All cleaning and temperature records will be kept for three months.
- All staff and children will be required to wash their hands before eating, and safe food handling practices will be followed.
- Educators will undergo Food Handling Training to ensure proper practices are maintained.
- ELCC Director is a Food Supervisor with the relevant training
- Staff working in kitchen spaces or serving food will securely tie back long hair.
- Staff will wear blue gloves when serving food, and children will use tongs to take food from shared platters.
- All staff will watch the Food Safety PowerPoint made for the Centre and the specific requirements required

Food excess and waste

- Food from the Sugarloaf will not be kept over 24hours as we do not possess the used-by-dates and it is prepared at the Sugarloaf not at the ELCC.
- Staff or families are welcome to take excess food home, if they want to take this food, they sign a waiver (Appendix 1)
- Waste from the day will go into the ELCC compost bins, these scraps will be given to the chickens at the Centre or go into the compost bin outside the Centre. This will go to Recology which will be turned into compost for gardens. Please see our sustainability policy and procedure.

Nutritional Education

- Educators will incorporate nutritional education into the program, following evidence-based guidelines such as the ACECQA National Quality Framework, 'Eat a Rainbow' program, Get Up and Grow and Nutrition Australia recommendations.
- All staff and Sugarloaf staff will have access to the Food Foundations website for ideas and to help educate the children on healthy eating.
- Food and beverages will never be used as rewards or punishments.

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- All staff at all food times are encouraged to eating the meals with the children, encouraging them to try new foods, talking about the tastes and have conversations around food and being risk-takers or praising positive choices and trying different and new foods.
- We understand that it may take several attempts for a child to develop a 'taste' for a new food and to keep encouraging in a positive manner.
- Cultural food events are practised and celebrated and incorporated into the menu and mealtimes.

Professional learning

- The ELCC will train Sugarloaf staff for trainings around early years eating, menu planning and best practice.
- The ELCC will support staff to extend their knowledge with opportunities in training around food, nutrition and early years standards in Australia and its impact on development.
- All ELCC staff complete National Allergy Training annually and provide their certificate to ELCC administration
- Recommended to Sugarloaf Café staff to complete

Responsibilities

Nominated Supervisor and Director's Responsibilities

- Ensure that regulatory obligations are met in relation to nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements.
- Implement procedures for nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements.
- Ensure adequate health and hygiene practices are followed, as well as safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, in line with Australian food safety standards and any jurisdictional requirements.
- Ensure children have access to safe drinking water at all times and are offered food and beverages appropriate to each child's needs on a regular basis throughout the day.
- Ensure the food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and chosen based on each child's dietary requirements (accounting for their growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements).
- Display and make accessible to family members a weekly menu which accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by the service each day.
- Ensure that child enrolment records include any special considerations for the child, such as cultural or religious dietary restrictions, as well as any health-related dietary restrictions - for children with medical conditions that can be impacted by food, work with families to develop risk minimisation plans and ensure educators and staff implement these plans
- Ensure that a system for ongoing communication is developed and maintained between families, educators, staff and cooks, so that all are aware of children's nutrition and any special dietary requirements.
- Develop program planning that promotes healthy eating and knowledge of nutrition by children and families and involves children in decision-making about healthy food and beverage choices. The Director will plan and display the weekly menu in line with ACECQA National Quality Framework and Nutrition Australia guidelines in collaboration with the on-site cook at Tenison Woods College.
- The Director will ensure an adequate supply of nutritious food and beverages at the Centre.
- Families will receive up-to-date information on healthy eating and nutrition.
- Provide clear access to the policy and procedure in the Centre when families begin at the service and give opportunities for feedback.

ELCC Staff Responsibilities

- Implement the Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements Policy and procedures.
- Handle, prepare and store food using safe practices, in line with Australian food safety standards and any jurisdictional requirements.
- Monitor children's food and beverage intake to ensure it is adequate and appropriate to each child's needs.
- Be familiar with the individual needs and action plans for the children in your care with specific dietary requirements, and ensure those requirements are taken into consideration, including on excursions.
- Maintain ongoing communication with families and other members of staff (including the Nominated Supervisor) about any changes to children's dietary requirements and ensure these changes are reflected in the mealtimes.
- Implement and reflect on program planning to:

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- Promote healthy eating and knowledge of nutrition by children, e.g. eating with the children, conversations during mealtimes around food;
- Promote healthy eating among families;
- Involve children in decision-making about healthy food and beverage choices, e.g. having them assist with food preparation.
- Educators will ensure that drinking water is always available, and milk is provided during breakfast and snack times.
- Meals and snacks will be served at regular intervals.
- Adequate quantities of food and beverages will be available during mealtimes.
- Educators will actively discuss healthy eating with children, involving them in meal preparation and clean-up activities.
- Educators will model healthy eating practices and adhere to the service policy.
- Food and beverages will never be used as rewards or punishments.
- Educators will maintain appropriate hygiene practices.
- Educators will document and share daily reports of each child's meal consumption during mealtimes.

Cook and Kitchen Staff Responsibilities

- Implement the Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements Policy and procedures and ensure all the action plans that are in place are carried out in line with these.
- Handle, prepare and store food using safe practices, in line with Australian food safety standards and any jurisdictional requirements.
- Plan the menu with the Director to ensure food and beverages are nutritious, adequate in quantity, and based on each child's dietary requirements (accounting for their growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements).
- Maintain communication systems with management, educators, staff and families to ensure all changes with food preparation and provision of food are actioned.

Families' and Children's Responsibilities

- Ensure the service is advised of their child's dietary requirements – relating to their child's growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements – at the time of enrolment, and that this information is kept up-to-date.
- Should their children have a medical condition that can be impacted by food, work with the service to develop risk minimisation plans.
- Read the service's weekly menu and provide any feedback.
- If providing food and beverages from home, ensure these are nutritious and plentiful and that they are in line with service requirements (e.g. that they do not contain allergens that could harm other children at the service), noting that the service is not required to serve food and beverages from home to children.

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Appendix 1 – Wavier and Release forms



LEFTOVER FOOD WAIVER AND RELEASE LIABILITY FORM

By signing the waiver, I _____ release Tenison Woods College Early Learning & Community Centre from any liability with regard to possible spoilage or food-borne illness from leftover food removed from the site on _____ (date) at _____ (time).

I am aware the food has been removed from the Sugarloaf kitchen, transported to the ELCC and kept warm during serving until 1pm, after this being placed in the fridge. By signing this form, I accept full responsibility for the removal and safe storage of the removed food.

Signed _____ Date _____



EGGS WAIVER AND RELEASE LIABILITY FORM

By signing the waiver, I _____ release Tenison Woods College Early Learning & Community Centre from any liability with regard to possible spoilage or food-borne illness from the eggs removed from the site on _____ (date) at _____ (time).

I am aware the eggs were collected, and the date was written on the shell. After being stored in the fridge. By signing this form, I accept full responsibility for the removal and safe storage of the eggs.

Signed _____ Date _____

