



## Lock Early Learning Centre

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# ***Nutrition Food and Beverages Policy***

## **Rationale**

Establishing Healthy eating patterns at a young age provides a critical foundation for good eating patterns in adult life with health, social and financial benefits to individuals, families and society. At the Lock Early Learning Centre we promote positive attitudes to the development of personal health. As educators we model and develop in children an understanding of sound nutrition and health practices. Children will indicate this knowledge by demonstrating knowledge of different foods and the link between food and health.

Snack time and lunch time are part of the every day learning program at Lock Early Learning Centre. To support this we ask families to send nutritious snacks and lunches to kindergarten with their children for the following reasons:

- Research informs us that for the long-term health and well being of children, it is vital that they eat healthy food from birth.
- To provide children with important vitamins and minerals.
- To encourage a taste for healthy foods and promote healthy eating habits.
- To avoid children pressuring parents and carers to buy and provide other less healthy foods they may see other children having.

## **Guidelines for families for food brought from home:**

- Parents are asked to send only healthy and nutritious snacks and lunches to kindergarten, preferably as fresh and natural as possible. Suggested foods are breads and cereals, fruit and vegetables, dairy foods and lean meats.
- Parents are asked to send other snacks such as muesli and fruit bars, sweet biscuits and cakes and other overly processed packet snack foods sparingly, perhaps no more than 2 items per day
- We ask parents to avoid sending foods such as lollies, chocolates and cordials.
- Parents are asked to send a named water bottle with their child.
- Staff will monitor the food children are eating and will discuss with parents alternatives that can be sent when children are eating unhealthy food or require more food throughout the day.

## **The learning environment/food safety**

- Drinking water will always be available and accessible to children.
- Children are expected to wash their hands prior to eating and snacks and lunch are to be eaten in a designated area.
- Eating when hungry will be promoted.
- The importance of eating nutritious food and food safety will be discussed with the children during snack time and cooking experiences, as appropriate.
- A refrigerator is available to place foods that require being kept in a cooled environment. Families are encouraged to place a cool pack in children's lunch boxes in hot weather.

- We will display nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating and provide educational resources for the children to use about healthy eating.

### **Food-related Health support planning**

- Where children are on a special diet or have allergies the parents must notify centre staff and provide relevant information at the time of enrolment.
- Our centre will liaise with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues.

### **Working with families, Health services and industry**

- Information regarding healthy food choices will be made available to parents on enrolment, through centre newsletters and the parent library.
- Parents and caregivers have been involved in the review of our whole of site food and nutrition policy
- Invites health professionals to provide information to families.
- Lock Early Learning Centre will adhere to the healthy eating guidelines provided by DECD, where foods that do not comply with the *Dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia* are supplied at special events only.
- Lock Early Learning Centre is a breastfeeding friendly environment.

Endorsed by the Governing Council

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