Hills Grammar

Nutrition, Food, Beverage and Dietary Requirements Policy

Policy Statement

The ECEC staff will provide all families with information regarding the importance of good nutrition. Children will engage in discussions with educators regarding the importance of healthy eating. Menus will be developed in and accordance with the Australian Dietary Guidelines. Nutritious, healthy food and drink will be served to the children during their time at the ECEC.

Rationale

It is important for early childhood educators to role model healthy eating and encourage young children to make healthier food choices. We recognise the importance of supporting families in providing healthy food and drink to their children.

Strategies

Menu

- The menus will be displayed for families to view.
- The menu will be on a rotating schedule and may change according to the children's needs.
- The food served will not be intentionally cooked with eggs or nuts.

Communication

- Families will be asked the details of any food allergies, intolerances or specific dietary requirements for their child before they commence care in the ECEC.
- Educators will work in partnership with families so that children's individual dietary needs are met.
- Educators will communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the ECEC and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home.
- A list of children's allergies will be accessible to educators.
- A list of children's dietary requirements including allergies and anaphylaxis will be supplied to ECEC and Chartwells.

Meal Times

- Chartwells along with chartwells kitchen staff (who work in the ECEC kitchen) will prepare morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea for the children.
- All hot meals will be temperature tested ensuring food is above 75 degrees before being served to the children.
- Chartwells kitchen staff will prepare, serve and clean up the food that is served to the children at ECEC. This employee will clean crockery and cutlery after the meals.
- Meal times will be relaxed, pleasant and based on the needs of the children.
- Milk will be served for morning and afternoon tea.
- Water will be served for lunch and will be accessible at all times throughout the day. Educators will encourage children to drink water during the day.

- Educators will sit with the children during mealtimes.
- Children with special diets or children who have allergies will be supplied with an alternate meal. All children will be catered for in relation to culture, allergies and any other medical conditions.
- Children will be encouraged to interact with each other to develop social skills during meal times.
- Children will be encouraged to try all meals supplied.
- Children will be taught to respect and promote other children's individual and cultural food preferences.

Safe Food Handling

- Educators will supply food to children that has been stored, prepared and served in a safe and hygienic manner.
- Educators will promote hygienic food practices, by serving food to children using gloves and serving utensils.
- Educators and children will wash their hands before handling or eating food.
- The food is stored and served at safe temperatures ie below 5 degrees and above 75 degrees.
- When the children are encouraged to serve themselves, educators will support this process and ensure children are using kitchen utensils such as tongs, so they are not touching the food.

Professional Development

- The kitchen staff member, employed by Chartwells will attend any necessary professional development training required for upskilling or extending on current knowledge.
- The Nominated Supervisor will share any professional development opportunities with educators at ECEC.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Oversee that the allergy and dietary chart is updated and educators at ECEC and staff at Chartwells are aware of all children with anaphylaxis, food allergies or dietary requirements.
- Oversee that children have access to safe drinking water at all times.
- Oversee children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day.
- Ensure food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, in consideration of growth and development needs, any known food allergies and intolerances of specific children, specific cultural, religious or health requirements and in line with recommended dietary guidelines.
- Regularly communicate with Chartwells to discuss the ECEC menu and the preparing of food within the ECEC.
- Oversee that the weekly menu is displayed for families to view and is reflective of the food and drink that is served to the children during the day.
- Where necessary, make changes to the menu depending on the children's likes and dislikes in food.
- Ensure the menu is diverse and reflects the cultural backgrounds of families.
- Ensure the ECEC remains a nut and egg aware Centre and that all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to.
- Ensure that the ECEC implements adequate health and hygiene practices and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimize risks to children being educated and cared for at the ECEC.

Chartwells kitchen staff (working at ECEC) will:

- Check the allergy and dietary chart and be aware of all children with anaphylaxis, food allergies or dietary requirements.
- Check the food labels and Allergen Declaration Card that indicate what is included in the meals prepared by Chartwells before serving the food to the children.

- Temperature check the food before serving into rooms.
- Keep the kitchen organised and hygienic.
- Clean the kitchen cupboards, fridge, pantry and oven as required.
- Complete the chartwells fridge temperature check.

Educators will:

- Check the allergy and dietary chart and aware of all children with anaphylaxis, food allergies or dietary requirements.
- Wash hands, and wear gloves when serving food to children.
- Encourage healthy eating and drinking and role model healthy food and drink choices.
- Encourage children to make healthy food choices.
- Make meal times positive, relaxed and social.
- Encourage children to try new foods, and also respect their likes and dislikes.
- Communicate with families if children are not eating during mealtimes and work in partnership to offer alternatives. For example, serve what is offered on the menu but also offer an alternative of a food that is safe to be consumed in ECEC and is also a food that the child prefers.
- Encourage children to be positively involved in mealtimes and where appropriate, encourage them to serve themselves and pack up their plates and cups.
- Put strategies in place to ensure food is not a reward or incentive for children.
- Sit with the children during mealtimes and role model healthy food and drink choices.

Families will:

- Communicate regularly with educators regarding children's specific nutritional requirements and dietary needs, including food preferences.
- Communicate with educators if a child's food likes or dislikes change or there is any concern around their child's food intake.
- Contribute to menu ideas and recipes.
- Inform the ECEC of any known anaphylaxis or food allergies before their child commences care in the ECEC.

Statutory Legislation and Considerations

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Guide to the National Quality Standard ACECQA

Sources

Community Early Learning Australia www.cela.org.au

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) www.acecqa.gov.au

Australian Childcare Alliance www.childcarealliance.org.au

Staying Healthy in Childcare 6th Edition

Get up and Grow - Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood

]Review

This policy is reviewed by management, employees and families as required or when legislative requirements change. Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.