

## ▲ NUTRITION

### ▲ NQS

**Element 2.1:** Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted

**Element 2.1.3:** Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.

**Element 6.1:** Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.

**Element 6.1.3** The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.

**Element 6.1.3** Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

**Education and Care Services National Regulations:** 77-80; 168(2)(a)(i)

### ▲ PURPOSE

FROEBEL services recognise the importance of nutritious eating for the growth, development, and wellbeing of young children. FROEBEL aims to provide children with nutritious foods and drinks which meet the requirements for children according to the Australian Dietary Guidelines.

We aim to support and provide adequately for children with food allergies or specific cultural practices. The purpose of this policy is to provide information and education to children and families on food and nutrition,

### ▲ POLICY

#### **FROEBEL will:**

- Encourage and support breastfeeding. If a child is not breastfeeding, support appropriate formula/bottle feeding strategies.
- Support appropriate introduction of solid foods.
- Provide age-appropriate food and drinks to children that have been stored, prepared and served in a safe and hygienic manner and to promote hygienic food practices.
- Provide a positive eating environment that is relaxed and social, which reflects cultural and family values.
- Promote lifelong learning for children, early childhood educators and families about food and drink choices including trying a variety of foods.

- Encourage communication with families about the provision of appropriate food and drinks for children while they are at FROEBEL.

## ▲ PROCEDURES

### 1. Encourage and support breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of solid foods

- Abide by the current national *Infant Feeding Guidelines*.
- Offer a variety of nutritious foods to infants from all the food groups in line with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines*.
- Always supervise infants closely while drinking and eating.
- Ensure appropriate foods (type and texture) are introduced around six months of age including iron rich nutritious foods as infant's first foods.
- Adjust the texture of foods offered between six and 12 months of age to match the infant's developmental stage.
- Provide a suitable place within the service where mothers can breastfeed their infants or express breastmilk.
- Ensure the safe handling of breastmilk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding (see Food Preparation Serving and Storage policy)
- In consultation with families, offering cooled pre-boiled water as an additional drink from around six months of age.
- Where breastfeeding is discontinued before 12 months of age, supporting the transition to infant formula, cow's milk, or milk alternatives (e.g.: soy, lactose free, rice milk).

### 2. Promote healthy food and drinks based on the *Australian Dietary Guidelines* and the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*

#### **Where food is provided by the service:**

- Provide children with a wide variety nutritious food for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, lean meats, and alternatives.
- Plan and display the service menu (at least two weeks at a time) that is based on sound menu planning principles and meets the daily nutritional needs of children whilst in care (i.e., *Caring for Children* 'Nutrition Checklist for Menu Planning').
- Plan nutritious snacks on the menu to complement what is served at mealtimes and ensure the snacks are substantial enough to meet the energy and nutrient needs of children.



- Vary the meals and snacks on the menu to keep children interested and to introduce children to a range of nutritious food options.
- Ensure water is readily available (both indoors and outdoors) for children to consume throughout the day.
- Be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances and special dietary requirements and consult with families to develop individual management plans (see associated policies, allergies, anaphylaxis management, food preparation and storage and hygiene)
- Ensure children do not have unsupervised access to foods that may cause choking.
- Ensure all children remain seated while eating and drinking.
- Always supervise children while eating and drinking.
- Promote good oral health through learning experiences and daily 'swish and swallow' practice, by encouraging children to have a drink of water at the completion of their meal, swish it around their mouth and swallow.
- Ensure any fundraising promotes and advocates for children and family's wellbeing.

### **3. Provide age-appropriate food and drinks to children that have been stored, prepared, and served in a safe and hygienic manner to promote hygienic food practices**

- Ensure tongs are used by all staff handling 'ready to eat' foods.
- Children and staff wash and dry their hands (using soap and running water and single use or disposable towels) before handling food or eating meals and snacks.
- Food is stored and served at safe temperatures i.e., below 5°C or above 60°C.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat; utensils and hands are washed before touching other foods.
- Children are discouraged from handling other children's food and utensils.
- Ensure staff handling food attend relevant training courses and share knowledge with all educators.

### **4. Provide a positive eating environment that is relaxed, social and reflects cultural and family values**

- Ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role model nutritious food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided.
- Recognise, nurture, and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds through strong partnerships with families and community.



- 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 older toddlers and preschool-aged children to help set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink – providing opportunities for them to develop agency (that is, independence, confidence, and self-esteem).
- Respect each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats.
- Be patient with messy or slow eaters.
- Encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat.
- Never use food as a reward or withhold food from children for behaviour management purposes.

#### **5. Promote lifelong learning for children, early childhood education and care staff and families about nutritious food and drink choices, including trying various new foods**

- Foster awareness and understanding of nutritious food and drink choices through daily discussions, displays, and intentionally planned or spontaneous related learning experiences throughout our service curriculum.
- Encourage and provide opportunities for all educators and staff members responsible for providing food and drinks to the children to participate in regular professional development opportunities to broaden their knowledge and understanding of children's nutritional requirements.
- Provide opportunities for families to attend information sessions related to children's nutrition and wellbeing.

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

- Provide a copy of the *Nutrition Food and Beverages Policy* to all families upon orientation at the service.
- Request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to the service, and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate resolution so that children's individual dietary needs are met.
- Communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the service, including related professional development, and provide up to date information to assist families to provide nutritious food choices at home.

**R.E. allergies and anaphylaxis please refer to the Allergies & Anaphylaxis Management Policies.**

## ▲ SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Early Years Learning Framework
- National Quality Standard
- Food Safety Standards for Australia 2001
- Food Standards Australia and New Zealand Act 1991
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994
- Safe Food Australia 2nd Edition January 2001
- Food Act 2003
- Food Regulation 2010
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011
- C Burney and L Williams, Caring for Children, Birth to 5, Food, Nutrition and Learning Experiences, published by the Department of Health, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2014
- [Australian Dietary Guidelines, 2013,](#)
- [Caring for children birth – 5 years \(Nutrition, and learning experiences\)](#)
- [Nutrition Checklist for Long Day Care Menu Planning](#)
- [Go for 2 & 5](#)
- [National Health and Medical Research Council \(2013\) Australian Dietary Guidelines - Providing the scientific evidence for healthier Australian diets"](#)
- [National Health and Medical Research Council \(2012\) Infant Feeding Guidelines](#)
- [Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood - Cooking for Children Book](#)
- [Oral Health](#)
- [Food neutrality](#)

## ▲ ASSOCIATED POLICIES

- Allergies
- Anaphylaxis Management
- Celebrations
- Cultural Competence
- Educational programs
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Food Preparation, Storage and Hygiene

## ▲ POLICY REVIEW

- The Centre (together with educators) will review this policy every 12 months.
- The Approved Provider and Centre Director ensure that at all times all educators maintain and implement this policy and its procedures.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the Centre to review the policy and procedures.
  
- **Last review:** 27.07.2023
- **Next review:** 27.07.2024