

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Good nutrition and physical activity provides children with the basic building blocks for good health both now and in the future. This is a lifelong process, but one that is made easier when children and families have the knowledge to make nutritional choices and children are exposed to healthy practices from a young age. With healthy choices, also comes the importance of maintaining an active lifestyle and limiting screen time.

1.2 PURPOSE

This policy emphasises the importance of breastfeeding, healthy eating, physical activity and limiting screen time for the healthy growth and development of young children.

1.3 SCOPE

Fairfield City Council, Children and Family Services recognise the importance of supporting families in providing healthy nutritional food and drink options to their children. Educators acknowledge the important role we play in advocating for children’s physical activity, breastfeeding and healthy use of screen time in early childhood.

1.4 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Relevant National Regulations:

Part 4.2 – Children’s health and Safety	
Regulation 77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
Regulation 78	Food and beverages
Regulation 79	Service providing food and beverages
Regulation 80	Weekly menu
Part 4.7 – Leadership and service management	
Regulation 168	Policies and procedures

Relevant National Quality Standards:

Standard 2.1	Each child’s health is promoted
Standard 2.2	Healthy eating and physical education are embedded into the program

1.5 STAKEHOLDERS

This document applies to all Children and Family Services Managers and Coordinators, Centre Directors, Early Childhood Teachers, Child Care Workers, Child Care Assistants, Cooks, and Administrators. Stakeholders also encompass Family Members and their Child/ren, Community Professionals (Health and Safety), who attend services

SECTION 2 - POLICY

2.1 OBJECTIVE AND GOALS

- Provide a positive physically active environment that reflects cultural and family values.
- To create pleasant mealtimes where children are able to enjoy their food, strengthen social bonds with peers and caregivers, and explore their own and other cultures while developing their independence and self-help skills.

- To involve families, children and community health professionals in the development and evaluation of centre menus.
- To implement practices, inform families and advocate for the recommended use of screen time
- To provide unbiased information regarding breast-feeding and bottle-feeding to allow mothers to make informed choices.
- To ensure all staff implement effective hygiene practices at all times and in particular when handling food, breast milk and formula.
- To provide a space that supports breast-feeding mothers throughout the service operational hours to comfortably feed their infants.

2.2 POLICY STATEMENT

The education and care service is committed to implementing the healthy eating key messages outlined in Munch & Move and supports the National Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings as outlined in the Get Up and Grow resources.

2.3 APPLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION

- Each education and care service will seek to promote children’s physical activity and the development of their gross motor and fundamental movement skills through a range of planned and spontaneous active play.
- All educators will encourage communication with families about physical activity, gross motor skill development, fundamental movement skill development and limiting small screen recreation and sedentary behaviours i.e. sitting in front of a TV for long periods.
- Inform families at first contact and on enrolment that the service supports breastfeeding and advice of the provision of a suitable place within the service where mothers can breastfeed their babies or express breast milk.
- Breastfeeding practices are also discussed on enrolment in addition to the safe handling of breast milk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding. A written individual breastfeeding plan will be developed with families and regularly reflected on with the child’s family.
<http://thespoke.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/EncouragingSupportingBreastfeedingInChildcareResourceKit.pdf>
- Ensure there is a designated space for families to store breast milk and formula and for staff to heat bottles prior to giving them to babies and toddlers. Breast milk and made up formula must be stored at the back of the fridge, never in the door to ensure it remains under 5°C. Breast milk can be stored in the fridge for up to 2 days, made up formula for 24 hours.

Please ensure all bottles and containers are clearly labelled and placed directly in the designated fridge or cupboard.

- Breast milk and formula or milk bottles are not to be heated in the microwave under any circumstances, the recommended way to warm breastmilk formula or milk bottles is to stand it in a container of warm to hot water. Always check the temperature of milk by dropping some on your inner wrist before giving it to a baby to ensure it is not too hot.

Safety tips for giving a baby a bottle from Better Health Website: *Bottle feeding – Safety Issues Fact Sheet (2008)*

- ✓ Don't prop the bottle in baby's mouth and leave baby to feed unattended, as the baby may choke
- ✓ Do not put baby to bed with a bottle. This can be tempting for older children, who can hold their own bottles, but it can damage their teeth. Milk sugars called lactose (which are found naturally in all milks) can cause very serious tooth decay. This can start soon after the first teeth appear
- ✓ Take the bottle away as soon as baby has had enough
- ✓ Cuddle baby close to the body, and hold the bottle while baby feeds. Feed time should be an enjoyable time for everyone.

It is recommended that babies receive only breast milk or formula for their first 6 months to provide for their developing nutritional needs and to help prevent the occurrence of food allergies.

Some foods are **not suitable** for babies under 12 months. These include:

- ✓ Honey – there is a potential risk of bacterial infection from honey.
- ✓ Tea – contains tannins that can restrict vitamin uptake.
- ✓ Whole nuts – should be avoided due to the risk of choking. If there is no food allergy in your family, nut pastes can be used after 12 months.
- ✓ Fruit juice – contains no nutritional benefit and can reduce the amount of milk consumed.
- ✓ Reduced fat milk – is not suitable for children under two.

- In consultation with families, determine appropriate foods (type and texture) from around 6 months of age. Adequate supervision will always be given to babies and children while drinking and eating ensuring safe bottle feeding and eating practices. Families are asked to inform staff when you are introducing solids at home and provide a list of foods that your child is able to eat. Please update the list whenever a new food has been introduced successfully. New foods will not be introduced to younger children at the service until the family has trialed the food at home.
- Water will be made available for all children across the day, allowing opportunities for children to self-serve. Milk and water will be offered for morning and afternoon tea, while only water will be offered at lunchtime to promote dental hygiene. Water will be made available for all children across the day in age appropriate ways, i.e. for staff to pour for younger children and for older children to self-serve. Juice will not be provided by the centre due to its sugar content and because milk and water or breastmilk are the preferred options for fluid intake according to nutritional guidelines
- Soft drink, confectionary and lollies are not considered a healthy alternative and will not be provided by the centre or encouraged to be brought in by families.
- **Where food is provided by the service:**
 - ✓ Children will be provided with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, dairy products, lean meats and alternatives.
 - ✓ Menus implemented at the service (which are displayed at all times) will be evaluated on a regular basis with involvement from families, children, service staff and local health professionals.
 - ✓ All dairy products for children under two will be full cream as recommended by Australian Dietary Guidelines unless there is a medical request not to do so (please see QMPOL-CS-063 Medical Conditions for more information).
- **Where food is brought from home (preschools):**
 - ✓ Educators are to provide information on the types of food and drinks consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for children, what is suitable for lunchboxes on enrolment and throughout the year.
 - ✓ Encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurts, before eating less nutritious food provided.

- ✓ Discourage the provision of processed snack foods high in fat, salt and sugar and low in essential nutrients in children’s lunchboxes. For example lollies, chocolate, sweet biscuits, muesli bars, fruit filled bars, chips.
- Encourage and provide opportunities for cooking staff and educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about nutrition and physical activities in early childhood.
- In regards to children’s eating habits or related situations:
 - ✓ Staff will respect each child’s individual food preferences, appetite, personality and mood
 - ✓ Children will be encouraged to eat, but will never be forced to eat
 - ✓ Food will not be used either as a reward or punishment
 - ✓ Children who do not eat their main meal will not be denied dessert unless in consultation with families in response to an ongoing concern
 - ✓ Children may be offered alternatives to their meal while fruit will be offered as the only alternative for dessert
- Review enrolment package information and conduct meetings/phone conversations with families of children with additional food requirements effectively incorporating their needs into the menu. Ensure this information is shared with room educators and documented.
- Maintain a healthy environment by preventing children from sharing food and drink, eating from a dirty utensil or eating food or with utensils that have dropped on the floor
- Educators will act as role models eating food provided by the service or their own healthy and nutritious food and water with the children. Educators will use these times as a teachable moments talking about food, nutrition, physical activity and overall wellbeing.

Specifically for Long Day Care Services:

- A qualified cook is employed by the centre to develop the menu, prepare the food and support families and educators in the implementation of a nutritionally balanced diet
- The cook’s qualifications will be displayed in a prominent place in the kitchen. When relief cooks work at the centre, including centre based staff, they are to bring and display a copy of their qualifications
- The menu will include morning and afternoon tea and a two course lunch
- Breakfast will be provided for children within the hours dictated by the child’s feeding plan
- Healthy snacks are available at all times to cater for children who are hungry between meal times. A healthy snack must involve breads/ cereals or fruit/ vegetable
- Two weeks of menus will be displayed for families

Specifically for Preschool Services:

- Families will provide Morning Tea, lunch and Afternoon Tea for their child that takes into consideration a nutritionally balanced diet reflecting Australian Dietary Guidelines recommendations.
- Foods brought from home will not be heated or re-heated, this is because the education and care service does not know if the prepared food has been within the temperature 'danger zone' (5–60°C), or ensure food is prepared in a way that is safe for the children in their care.

Specifically for Multipurpose Services:

- Services will provide planned and nutritionally balanced morning tea and afternoon tea for children in care
- Families will provide lunch for their child that takes into consideration a nutritionally balanced diet reflecting Australian Dietary Guidelines recommendations.
- Foods brought from home will not be heated or re-heated, this is because the education and care service does not know if the prepared food has been within the temperature 'danger zone' (5–60°C), or ensure food is prepared in a way that is safe for the children in their care.

- Share children’s individual culture within meal times through discussion and inviting families to participate where possible. We invite and encourage families to share their family recipes with the centres, particularly ones that reflect the culture so we can share this with all of the children at the service through incorporating them into the menu.
- All food at the service that requires storing must be stored in a container that is for food only and covered with a lid, foil or plastic film. The container needs to be labelled with the food contained and the date it was stored. Do not reuse containers which are only meant to be single use, throw out containers which are not in good condition.
- Keep foods below 5°C or above 60°C
- Utensils must be used or disposable gloves worn when handling cooked or ready to eat foods
- Dish cloths, dish mops, scourers etc. should be cleaned and sanitised after each use
- Fruit that is to be eaten should be washed in running water before cutting
- Services will use colour coded boards to prevent cross contamination when preparing food. Services will display a sign indicating what each board is used for:



- The following food will be stored accordingly if not in vacuum sealed bags

<i>Raw Food</i>	<i>Storage life in Refrigerator</i>
Chicken	3 days
Meat	3 days
Fish	3 days
Minced meat	2 days
Prawns & other shellfish	2 days
Expressed breast milk (<i>if not previously warmed</i>)	2 days

- At least one educator has completed a food safety training course and can inform families and staff about food safety and hygiene.
- Laminate and display the following food safety posters in areas where food is prepared and served
 - ✓ *Food Safety Rules*
 - ✓ *Keep Hands Clean and Food Safe*
- Complete [QMF-CS-077 Kitchen Temperature Monitoring Charts](#) twice per day on all fridges within the centre;
 - at the beginning of the shift
 - at the end of the shift
- Check all food deliveries to ensure the cold food is under 5°C, frozen food is under 0°C degrees and all packaging is intact. Complete a [QMF-CS-078 Product Receiving Sheet](#). If the food does not meet this criteria, refuse to accept on these grounds and contact the supplier. Record the situation and inform the Director of the situation
- Complete the [QMF-CS-094 Daily Kitchen Cleaning Schedule](#) throughout the week and the [WHS-03.1.21 Workplace Inspection Form – Children & Family Services](#) every 3 months to ensure the kitchen is clean and safe
- Work benches, surfaces and food preparation equipment should be washed with hot soapy water and then sanitised after each use. Please refer to [QMPOL-CS-008 Dangerous Products Policy](#) for ways of sanitising safely
- If reheating food, ensure it reaches the temperature of 75°C to destroy any bacteria. Food is only to be reheated once

Specifically for Preschools:

- Any left-over food must be discarded
- Food is to be stored in the fridge at the centre

- Communicate regularly with families and provide information, support and advice on physical activity, gross motor skills development, FMS development, everyday physical

tasks, active transport. Emphasizing Australia’s 24 hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (0-5 years), this information may be provided to families in a variety of ways including factsheets, newsletters, noticeboards, during orientation, information sessions and informal discussion.

- Facilitate a program to ensure physical activity is embedded in the daily running of the service and that it is incorporated both physically and in learning practices (theory based learning). Encourage all children to participate in physically active experiences to the best of their ability and provide opportunities for children to engage in discovering learning about the importance of being physically active. Educators will act as role models and participate in physical activity experiences with the children where possible.
- Facilitate an active program that is reflective of the Australian 24 Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years 0-5years and acknowledge the time children are exposed to small screen time at home.
- Children 0-2 years will not be offered small screen time outside of special events. Children 2-5 years will not be offered small screen time outside of planned and educational learning experiences. Screen time offered will aim to involve active play or educational research and will be offered less than 1 hour per day collectively.
- Screen time will not be used as a reward or to manage challenging behaviors and educators will role model appropriate use.

SECTION 3 – GOVERNANCE

3.1 RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Policy Number	QMF-CS-082 Preschool Nutrition Information and Lunch Box ideas QMF-CS-081 Menu Surveys QMF-CS-080 Kitchen Maintenance Checklist QMF-CS-078 Product Receiving Sheet QMF-CS-077 Kitchen temperature Monitoring Charts QMF-CS-076 Weekly Menu (template) QMF-CS-101 Weekly Menu (example) QMF-CS-096 Menu Evaluation QMPOL-CS-008 Dangerous Products Policy QMPOL-CS-019 Hygiene Policy
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3.2 RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner	Children and Family Services
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3.3 VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
1	October 2015	Children and Family Services Committee	

3.4 REVIEW DATE

Every 5 years as required by quality assurance requirements or when a change to governing legislation occurs, whichever sooner.



FAIRFIELD CITY COUNCIL – CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Doc Number
QMPOL-CS-025

Nutrition Policy

Appendix – National Recommendations

Australian Dietary Guidelines

1. Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended, with positive support, for infants until around six months. Continued breastfeeding is recommended for at least 12 months – and longer if the mother and baby wish.
2. If an infant is not breastfed, is partially breastfed, or if breastfeeding is discontinued, use an infant formula until 12 months of age.
3. Introduce suitable solid foods at around six months.
4. Make sure that food offered to children is appropriate to the child's age and development, and includes a wide variety of nutritious foods consistent with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines*.
5. Provide water in addition to age-appropriate milk drinks. Infants under the age of six months who are not exclusively breastfed can be offered cooled boiled water in addition to infant formula.
6. Plan mealtimes to be positive, relaxed and social.
7. Encourage children to try different food types and textures in a positive eating environment.
8. Offer an appropriate amount of food, but allow children to decide themselves how much they will actually eat.
9. Offer meals and snacks at regular and predictable intervals.
10. Ensure that food is safely prepared for children to eat – from the preparation stages to consumption.

Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep

Infants (Birth to one year)

- Physical activity, particularly through supervised interactive floor-based play in safe environments, should be encouraged from birth. For those not yet mobile, this should include **30 minutes of tummy time** (including reaching and grasping, pushing and pulling, and crawling) spread throughout the day during awake periods.
- Infants should not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g. in a stroller, car seat or high chair).
- Screen time is **not recommended**.
- When sedentary, engaging in pursuits such as reading, singing, puzzles and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged

Toddlers (1–2 years)

- Toddlers should spend at least **180 minutes** in a variety of physical activities, including energetic play, spread throughout the day; more is better.
- Toddlers should not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g. in a stroller, car seat or high chair) or sit for extended periods.
- For those younger than 2 years, sedentary screen time is **not recommended**.
- For those aged 2 years, sedentary screen time should be **no more than 1 hour**; less is better.
- When sedentary, engaging in pursuits such as reading, singing, puzzles and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.

Pre-schoolers (3–5 years)

- Pre-schoolers should spend **at least 180 minutes** in a variety of physical activities, of which **at least 60 minutes** is energetic play, spread throughout the day; more is better.
- Pre-schoolers should not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g. in a stroller or car seat) or sit for extended periods.
- Sedentary screen time should be **no more than 1 hour in total throughout the 24-hour period**; less is better.
- When pre-schoolers are sedentary, caregivers are encouraged to engage with them through activities such as reading, singing, puzzles and storytelling.