



Nutrition & Food Safety Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Lake Mac Newy OOSH believes that good nutrition is essential for each child's healthy growth and development. For this reason, the service will provide nutritious, good-quality food that is consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Young People in Australia and Eat Smart, Play Smart manual. We will aim to provide a relaxed and enjoyable environment for children to eat their meals and snacks ("*My Time, Our Place*" 1.1). All food served at the service will be consistent with the child's own dietary requirements and take into consideration the children's like and dislikes as well as meet any cultural requirements of families ("*My Time, Our Place*" 3.2). High standards of hygiene will be maintained throughout all food preparation. We will encourage the development of the children's good eating habits through the modelling and reinforcing of healthy eating and nutrition practices by educators. Families will be encouraged to share recipes and traditions to enrich the variety and enjoyment of food by the children and support the children's development of respect for and understanding of diversity ("*My Time, Our Place*" 1.3). Where possible we will seek out opportunities to learn about growing our own food and collaborate with children to produce our own opportunities to use food we have grown ourselves in our menu planning ("*My Time, Our Place*" 3.4).

PROCEDURE:

Where the Service Provides Food

- A menu developed using the principles set out in the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents will be on display for families and children at all times and accurately represent the food and drink being served. The menu may also consider the Eat Smart, Play Smart resource. In addition, the Yummy Tummy Book, endorsed by the Munch and Move program, may also be incorporated during menu planning and programming
- Provide children with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks, including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, lean meats, and high protein alternatives
- Vary the meals and snacks on the menu to keep children interested and to introduce children to a range of healthy food ideas
- Regularly review the menu to ensure it meets best practice guidelines
- Develop the menu in consultation with children, educators and families
- All children's individual needs such as allergies, cultural or religious dietary practices, special dietary requirements such as vegetarian and any other health needs etc. will be addressed in the menus and families advised if they will be required to supply specific foods for their child
- Food and drink consistent with the menu will be provided for breakfast and afternoon tea, substantial enough to meet children's energy and nutrient needs. Small nutritious snacks will be available as necessary. Portion size is to be monitored as a small snack serving, not a whole meal
- Fresh drinking water will be available at all times for the children and educators
- During Vacation Care, families will provide their child's lunch, snacks, and drinks unless otherwise stated in the program. No menu will be required where the service does not provide food and drink
- Children and families will be encouraged to share family and cultural traditions, ideas and recipes to contribute to the menu
- Education of healthy eating habits will be developed through ongoing examples, specific activities, notices, posters and information sheets to families
- Do not allow food to be used as a form of punishment or to be used as a reward or bribe
- Children's cooking experiences will be encouraged to develop life skills
- Educators are required to attend regular professional development on nutrition and food safety practices and document changes to practice as a result



Where Food Is Brought from Home

- Provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and that are suitable for children's lunchboxes and after-school snacks
- Provide information to families on how to read the *Nutritional Information Panel* on food and drink labels
- Encourage families to pack lunches and snacks in insulated lunchboxes with ice bricks or frozen water bottles, especially during warmer weather.
- Lunchboxes will be stored in an appropriate indoor or outdoor area monitored by educators and kept away from direct sunlight or other heat sources wherever possible.
- Limited fridge space may be available for high-risk foods only; families should not rely on refrigeration.
- Educators will remind children not to share food or utensils and will monitor storage areas for safety.
- Encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious food provided
- Strongly discourage the provision of highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt, and/or sugar and low in essential nutrients in children's lunchboxes. These foods include sweet biscuits, some muesli bars, breakfast and fruit-filled bars, and chips
- Food items that should not be brought to the OOSH service include confectionary (lollies, sweets, chocolate, jelly), deep fried foods (chicken nuggets, fish fingers) and sugary drinks (cordial, energy drinks)

The Approved Provider/ Management/ Nominated Supervisor Will:

- Ensure educators and staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* in relation to this policy and relevant procedures to ensure awareness of safe food handling practices while promoting healthy eating
- Ensure new staff and educators are aware of food practices and procedures as outlined in this policy during induction and orientation
- Ensure staff responsible for preparing, serving and supervising food for children with food allergies are offered to undertake the **All about Allergens for Cooks and Chefs** and **All about Allergens for Children's Education and Care (CEC)** online courses - <https://foodallergytraining.org.au>
- Ensure that a notice is displayed prominently in the main entrance of the OOSH Service stating that a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is being cared for or educated at the Service, and provide details of the allergen/s (Reg. 173(2)(f)) [note: this notice should not identify the child]
- Ensure enrolment forms include information relating to child's food preferences, allergies, intolerances, cultural or religious considerations or medical conditions which involve food or food practices
- Consult with families on enrolment to develop individual management plans, including completing *Medical Risk Minimisation Plans* for children with medical conditions involving food allergies, food intolerances and special dietary requirements as per *Medical Conditions Policy*
- Ensure children's individual dietary requirements as per enrolment information or medical condition plans are communicated to all staff and food handlers
- Ensure any changes to children's individual dietary requirements are recorded and communicated to all staff and food handlers
- Appoint a Food Safety Supervisor to oversee food handlers according to state requirements under Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A
- Ensure the Food Safety Supervisor holds a valid Food Safety Supervisor certificate and training through an approved registered training organisation
- Ensure all staff preparing food obtain basic safe food handling training, including an appropriate Food Safety and Food Hygiene Certificate
- Comply with Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A state requirements
- Keep an up-to-date *Food Safety Certificate Register* to provide evidence of safe food handling training for all food handlers



- Keep records relating to receiving, storage, processing, displaying and transportation of food. These records must be kept for a period of 3 months
- Ensure the weekly menu is accurate and describes the food and beverages provided each day of the week
- Ensure the Service menu is reviewed on a regular basis, at least every 6 months. Amendments made to the service menu will be recorded
- Encourage and provide opportunities for staff and educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about childhood nutrition and food safety practices
- The service will regularly review and evaluate food handling practices in line with current best practice guidelines from recognised authorities
- Ensure parents/guardians are notified as soon as practicable but within 24 hours if their child is involved in a serious incident/situation at the Service. Details of the incident/situation are to be recorded on the *Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Record*.
- Notify the regulatory authority of any serious incident or complaints alleging the safety, health or well-being of children has been compromised within 24 hours of the incident or the time that the person becomes aware of the incident or complaint
- Conduct a review of practices following a serious incident, such as a food poisoning outbreak, including an assessment of areas for improvement.

Educators/Food Handlers Will:

- Ensure children remain seated while eating and drinking
- Supervise children whilst eating and drinking
- Children will be encouraged not to share their drinking and eating utensils
- Be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances, and special dietary requirements and consult with families and management to ensure individual management plans are developed and implemented, including completing *Medical Risk Minimisation Plans* for children with medical conditions involving food as per *Medical Conditions Policy*
- Ensure educators serving food only have appropriate skills and knowledge in food safety and hygiene
- Participate in regular professional development to maintain and enhance knowledge about childhood nutrition and food safety practices
- Keep records relating to the safe handling of food, where required
- Consult with children, families, educators and regarding the review of the service menu
- Follow the Australian Dietary Guidelines for serving sizes and different types of food
- May use the Australian Government “eat for health” calculator- www.eatforhealth.gov.au when menu planning
- Display nutritional information for families and keep them regularly updated
- Ensure the weekly menu is displayed in an accessible and prominent area for parents to view
- Ensure the weekly menu is accurate and describes the food and beverages provided each day of the week
- Ensure food is presented attractively
- Do not allow food to be used as a form of punishment or to be used as a reward or bribe
- Establish healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into our program
- Encourage parents to the best of our ability to continue our healthy eating message in their homes
- Promote the importance of regular tooth brushing to children
- Ensure pets or animals are not present within the kitchen or food preparation areas



Food Hygiene

Food poisoning is caused by bacteria, viruses, or other toxins being present in food and can cause extremely unpleasant symptoms such as diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and fevers. (Foodsafety.gov, 2019).

Our OOSH Service will strictly adhere to food hygiene standards to prevent the risk of food poisoning.

During warmer weather, the risk of foodborne illnesses increases. Our OOSH Service will strictly adhere to food hygiene standards to prevent the risk of food poisoning including:

- Maintaining proper temperature control for perishable foods
- Ensuring refrigerators are set to recommended temperature of 5 °C or below, regularly monitoring and recording temperatures to guarantee food safety
- Emphasising hand hygiene for staff and children and encourage frequent handwashing before and after meals
- Implementing food safety practices to minimise the risk of cross-contamination
- Ensuring staff are aware of heightened increase in allergic reactions and maintain consistent allergen management
- Consider the impact of the sun on food safety when eating meals outside
- Use insulated containers to keep perishable food cool and avoid leaving food exposed to direct sunlight.

Buying And Transporting Food

- Ensure food supplies have been ordered in a timely manner
- Always check labels for the 'use by' and 'best before' dates, understanding that 'use by' dates apply to perishable foods that could potentially cause food poisoning if out of date, whilst 'best before' dates refer to food items with long shelf life, but quality could be compromised
- Avoid buying food items in damaged, swollen, leaking or dented packaging
- Always check eggs within cartons: Never buy dirty or cracked eggs
- Never buy any food item if unsure about its quality
- Record temperatures of foods upon delivery (See *Food Delivery Register*)
- Ensure fresh meat, chicken, or fish products cannot leak onto other food items
- Ensure chilled, frozen, and hot food items are kept out of the 'danger zone' (5 oC to 60 oC) on the trip back to the Service by:
 - Do not select chilled, frozen, or hot food items until the end of the shopping.
 - Placing these items in an insulated shopping bag or cooler
 - Immediately unpacking and storing these items upon return to the Service

Storing Food

- All food will be prepared and stored in a hygienic manner as per the current Australian New Zealand Food Standards
- All perishable foods will be stored in the refrigerator
- Ensure the refrigerator and freezer has a thermometer and that the refrigerator is maintained at 5 °C or below and the freezer is maintained at -17 °C or below
- Ensure fridge and freezer temperatures are checked and recorded daily (See *Refrigeration Temperature Control Register*)
- Store raw foods below cooked foods in the refrigerator to avoid cross-contamination by foods dripping onto other foods
- Ensure fresh meat is not stored in the fridge for more than 3 days
- Ensure that all foods stored in the refrigerator are stored in strong, food-safe containers with either a tight-fitting lid or zip-lock bags



- Ensure that opened foods be stored in tightly sealed containers in its original packaging where possible
- Opened foods not stored in their original packaging are labelled with:
 - The name of the food/label
 - The 'use by/expiry' date
 - The date the food was opened
 - Ingredients
 - Nutritional value
 - Details of any allergens present in the food
- Transfer the contents of opened cans into appropriate containers
- Ensure all bottles and jars are refrigerated after opening
- Place 'left-over' hot food in an appropriate sealed container in the refrigerator as soon as the steam has stopped rising. Food can be cooled quickly to this point by placing in smaller quantities in shallow containers, reducing the amount of time sitting in the 'danger zone'
- Not reuse disposable containers (e.g., Chinese food containers)
- Store dry foods in labelled and sealed, air-tight containers if not in original packaging
- Store dry foods in cupboards or, if in a walk-in pantry, on shelving no lower than 30cm from the floor
- Not to place anything on the floor of a walk-in pantry (as containers of any type create easy access to shelves for mice and rats)
- Store bulk dry foods only in food-safe and airtight containers
- Use the FIFO (first in, first out) rule for all foods (dry, chilled, and frozen) to ensure rotation of stock so that older stock is used first
- Store cleaning supplies and chemicals separately and away from all food items

Preparing And Serving Food

- Ensure that all cooked food is cooked through and reaches 75 °C
- Ensure that cooked food is served promptly, or use a thermometer to ensure that hot food is maintained at above 60 °C until ready to serve
- Ensure that prepared cold food is stored in the refrigerator maintained at below 5 °C until ready to serve
- Discard any cooked food left in the 'danger zone' for two or more hours. Do not reheat
- Reheat cooked food (if required, for a child) to a temperature of 70 °C (but only ever reheat **once**. Discard if the food is not eaten after being reheated)
- Keep cooked and ready-to-eat foods separate from raw foods
- Ensure foods are defrosted in the fridge or microwave
- Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under clean running water before preparation
- Ensure unused washed fruit or vegetables are thoroughly dry before returning to storage
- Ensure food that has been dropped on the floor is immediately discarded
- Thoroughly clean kitchen utensils and equipment between using with different foods and/or between different tasks
- Avoid cross-contamination by ensuring that separate knives and utensils are used for different foods



- Avoid cross-contamination by ensuring that colour-coded cutting boards are used (note that it doesn't matter which colour you use for which food providing signs are displayed to alert all staff). Common colours are:
 - Blue: raw fish/seafood
 - Green: fruit and vegetables
 - Red: raw meat
 - Brown: cooked meat
 - Yellow: raw poultry
 - White: bakery and dairy
- Ensure that gloves are changed between handling different foods or changing tasks
- Ensure that staff preparing food for children with food allergies or intolerances are proficient at reading ingredient labels
- Ensure that food allergies and intolerances are catered for by using separate easily identifiable cutting boards, utensils, and kitchen equipment (e.g., using a colour code, or food-safe permanent marker)
- Ensure that children with food allergies and/or intolerances are served their meals and snacks individually on an easily identifiable plate (e.g. different colour), and that food is securely covered with plastic wrap until received by the child to prevent possible cross-contamination
- Ensure all educators and staff are aware of children who have severe allergic reactions to certain foods as per ASCIA Action Plans
- Ensure that unwell staff do not handle food
- Ensure leftover food is stored immediately in the fridge or thrown away

Cleaning

- All cups, plates and utensils will be washed in hot, soapy water or with the use of a dishwasher
- Kitchen equipment to be cleaned and stored appropriately
- Ensure that food preparation areas and surfaces are cleaned both before, after, and during any food preparation
- Record cleaning and sanitising of food contact surfaces (*See Daily Food Preparation Checklist*)
- Ensure that all cooking and serving utensils are cleaned and sanitised before use
- Ensure that all dishwashing sponges, brushes, and scourers are cleaned after each use and allowed to air dry or placed in the dishwasher
- Ensure the food storage area is clean, ventilated, dry, pest free, and not in direct sunlight
- Ensure refrigerators and freezers are cleaned regularly and door seals checked and replaced if not in good repair
- Prevent pest infestations by cleaning spills as quickly as possible and ensuring rubbish and food scraps are disposed of frequently
- Ensure that floor mops are thoroughly cleaned and air-dried after each use
- Replace any cleaning equipment that shows signs of wear or permanent soiling
- All rubbish or left-over food is to be disposed of immediately in lidded bins and bins emptied daily and regularly cleaned with disinfectant
- Containers are to be cleaned and stored appropriately to ensure pests are not able to contaminate them



Personal Hygiene for Food Handlers

- Clean clothing is worn by food handlers
- Long hair is tied back or covered with a net
- Gloves to be worn at all times when handling or serving food
- Strict hand-washing hygiene is adhered to, including washing hands each time they return to the kitchen before continuing with food preparation duties and putting on gloves
- Wounds or cuts are covered with a brightly coloured, waterproof dressing (that will easily be seen if it falls off), and gloves will be worn over any dressings
- Staff who are not well will not prepare or handle food

All Staff Handling Food Will:

- Ensure children and staff wash and dry their hands (using soap, running water, and single-use disposable towels or individual hand towels), eating meals and snacks
- Hand sanitiser is best used when access to soap and water is not possible and should not replace handwashing, especially when soap and water are available
- Ensure staff wash and dry their hands (using soap, running water, and single-use disposable towels or individual hand towels) before putting on gloves to handle food
- Staff are to wear gloves at all times when handling food. Care must be taken to avoid contaminating food by only using them for one continuous task and then discarding them. Gloves must be removed, discarded, hands washed, and the gloves replaced with a new pair before handling food and before working with ready-to-eat food after handling raw food
- Staff are to wear gloves at all times when serving food, including tongs when necessary
- Ensure that all staff handling 'ready-to-eat' foods wear gloves and/or use food tongs or other utensils when serving food to others
- Gloves must be removed and discarded before using the toilet, smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief, eating, drinking or touching the hair, scalp or body. They will then be replaced if food preparation continues
- Ensure food is stored and served at safe temperatures (below 5°C or above 60°C), with consideration to the safe eating temperature requirements of children
- Ensure separate cutting boards are used for raw meat and chicken, fruit and vegetables, and utensils and hands are washed before touching other foods
- Tongs and spoons will be used to serve food. Where possible, educators will encourage children to serve themselves their own food and drinks to encourage the development of their food handling skills as well as acknowledging their growing sense of independence
- Discourage children from handling other children's food and utensils
- Ensure food-handling staff members attend relevant training courses and pass relevant information on to the rest of the staff

Creating A Positive Learning Environment

- Where possible, educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role-model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided
- Choose water as a preferred drink- consider serving it chilled or with ice in summer; add lemon, mint leaves or other fruits such as oranges for flavour
- Endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Choose foods from the five food groups



- Create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoy the social interactions with educators and other children
- Encourage children to try different foods, but do not force them to eat
- Do not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes
- Role model and discuss safe food handling with children

OOSH Service Program

- Foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating
- Encourage children to participate in a variety of 'hands-on' food preparation experiences to assist them to have opportunities to learn more about hygiene practices when preparing food. This participation should always be supervised, and an explanation provided to children on the reasons why hygienic conditions are maintained
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices
- Embed the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in everyday activities and experiences

Cooking With Children

Cooking can help develop children's knowledge and skills regarding healthy eating habits.

Cooking is a great, fun activity that provides opportunities for children to be exposed to new foods, share recipes, and learn cooking skills. During any cooking experience, educators will be vigilant to ensure that the experience remains safe and relevant food hygiene practices are adhered to.

Communicating With Families

- Provide a copy of the *Nutrition and Food Safety Policy* to all families upon orientation at the Service
- Provide opportunities for families to contribute to the review and development of the policy
- Request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to the OOSH Service and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children's individual dietary needs are met
- Display menus for families to view easily
- Communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the Service and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home
- Communicate regularly with families and provide information and advice on appropriate food and drink to be included in children's lunchboxes- especially during Vacation Care. This information may be provided to families in a variety of ways including factsheets, newsletters, during orientation, information sessions and informal discussion
- Educate and inform families on healthy choices for food and beverages that are not necessary as part of a balanced diet. Alternative healthy food options will be offered to children when necessary
- The service will provide food handling and hygiene information to parents



CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
S167 R77, 78, 79, 80, 109	Standard 2.1 Elements 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3 Child Safe Standards 2,3,4 & 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent Handbook - Staff Handbook - Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy - Dealing with Medical Conditions and Medication Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Australian Dietary Guidelines for children and adolescents. - National <i>Food Standards Code (FSANZ)</i> - <i>Food Act 2003 (NSW)</i> - <i>Food Regulation 2010 (NSW)</i> - NRG@OOSH (Network of Community Activities) - Parent Handbook - Staff Handbook - Menus

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

Approval date: December 2025

Date for Review: December 2026