



Healthy Food Supply and Nutrition Policy.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT WE ARE AN ALLERGY FRIENDLY SITE.

Happy Valley Kindergarten aims to promote good nutrition and safe, healthy eating habits in a supportive environment for all children attending preschool and playgroup.

To help achieve this, a Healthy Eating Policy has been developed with the help of staff, parents and a Dietician Nutritionist from Woodcroft Community Health Services.

Early childhood is a very important time for establishing lifelong healthy eating habits. Healthy eating has both short and long-term benefits for children.

In the *short term* it maximises growth, development and activity while minimising sickness.

In the *long term* it minimises the risk of diet related chronic diseases later in life, such as heart disease, strokes, some cancers and diabetes.

Through this policy we aim to:

1. Promote a nutritious diet to children
2. Teach children about food and nutrition
3. Promote safe eating practices

How these goals will be achieved?

1. Promote a nutritious diet to the children

- 1.1 Parents will receive information on nutritious and safe foods to pack for their children to take to Happy Valley Kindergarten
- 1.2 Water will be available at all times
- 1.3 Staff will model healthy food choices

2. Teach children about food and nutrition

- 2.1 Introduce children to a wide variety of foods, tastes and textures
- 2.2 Encourage practical experiences in food preparation
- 2.3 Encourage the appreciation of foods from a variety of cultures
- 2.4 Positively promote healthy foods
- 2.5 Grow fruit and vegetables in the kindergarten

3. Promote safe eating practices to prevent food poisoning and choking

- 3.1 Children will wash their hands before handling food or eating meals
- 3.2 Parents may place children's food (perishable food brought from home) in the kindergarten fridge
- 3.3 Children will not be allowed to play or run around while eating
- 3.4 Children will be supervised at all times while eating
- 3.5 Parents may receive information on safe food handling and storage



3.6 Parents may receive information on the prevention of young children choking of foods

At Happy Valley Kindergarten, we are a breastfeeding friendly site.

The Food and Nutrition curriculum at Happy Valley Kindergarten:

- Is consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, and the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*.
- Includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes, and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health.
- Includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food.
- Integrates nutrition across the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the National Quality Standards (NQS).

Happy Valley Kindergarten Food Supply Guidelines:

Fruit Time

Fruit time is part of every morning and afternoon session at Happy Valley Kindergarten.

Parents and carers are asked to provide only fresh fruit, vegetables or dried fruit for the Fruit time for the following reasons:

- 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.
- Please make every effort to provide only fruit and vegetable at fruit time (these foods encourage chewing which promotes good oral muscle development).
- Dried fruit will also be accepted at fruit time.
- If for some reason you are unable to provide fruit, vegetable, please discuss this with staff so that a suitable alternative for Fruit Time can be negotiated.
- It is essential that you discuss with staff your child's individual dietary needs.
- For children who refuse to eat fruit and vegetable, staff are able to assist you in making a referral to see the Dietician at Woodcroft Community Health Services. The Dietician will assess the adequacy of your child's diet and suggest strategies for overcoming eating behaviour problems (such as food refusal).



Drinks

To minimise the risk of infection parents are to provide children with a named drink bottle containing only water. Please DO NOT send fruit juice or cordial, they are high in sugar, attract ants and European Wasps and can make a sticky mess when spilt! Fresh water is available at all times for those children who do not have a drink bottle.

Unacceptable Food for Fruit and Lunch Time that will be Sent Home.

Parents and carers are requested not to provide the following foods and drinks for fruit and lunch times as they provide little goodness (vitamins and minerals). Some foods are high in fat, while others are high in sugar and promote tooth decay. Other foods are soft and don't promote chewing for healthy teeth, gums and face muscles.

- Sandwich spreads such as chocolate spread, hundreds and thousands, peanut butter, nutella, etc.
- Potato chips & Snack foods eg processed cheese and biscuit packs, corn chips, chips, twisties, burger rings etc (high in fat and salt)
- Cereal eg Nutrigrain, Cocoa Pops etc (high in sugar)
- Muesli bars (high in sugar and may contain traces of nuts and nut products)
- Roll-ups (high in sugar, stick to teeth and a higher risk food for choking)
- Fruit straps/fruit metres/fruit bars (high in sugar and stick to teeth)
- Chocolates (high in fat and sugar)
- Biscuits including Breakfast Biscuits (high in fat and sugar and may contain traces of nuts and nut products)
- Cakes/buns/pastries (high in fat and sugar)
- Chewing gum (high in sugar)
- Coconut balls, apricot cubes, yoghurt covered sultanas, sugar coated fruit, etc (high in sugar)
- Nut products of any kind

Lunch Time Guidelines

Our Policy extends to the Lunch Time Program and parents are expected to provide their children with a healthy lunch. Some healthy lunch suggestions include:

- Sandwiches (on whole grain bread) with salad fillings
- Salad plate/Pack
- Salad Wrap
- Savoury Muffin

Parents may also choose to include: cheese, a piece of fruit, vegetable sticks, yogurt, or a Fruit muffin.



How much should you pack for your child's lunch?

A kindergarten child's lunch should only include one main savoury item such as a sandwich, wrap, salad, etc, and if needed, one other item such as cheese, crackers, fruit or vegetables, or yoghurt. It is confusing for a child to open a lunchbox that has more than 2 or 3 choices in it, as many worry that they will be in trouble if they do not eat it all, and it encourages over-eating. The children only have around 20-25 minutes to eat their lunch, which is practice for getting into the routines of school where they may only have 10-15 minutes. Two to three items in the lunchbox is sufficient.

Please **DO NOT** include pre-packaged foods such as muesli bars, processed cheese and biscuit packs, chocolate, chips, nuts, lollies etc as these items may not be eaten at kindy and children will be asked to take them home. Please **DO NOT** send pre-packaged food that has been taken out of its original packaging. **Home-made foods such as savoury and fruit muffins need to be labelled e.g. BANANA MUFFIN - NUT FREE** or will be sent home as they are hard for staff to identify/monitor safely due to various allergies.

DO NOT include nuts or nut products, or whole egg products such as boiled eggs, quiches/frittata, and egg sandwiches. If your child has a severe allergy to another food, e.g, fish, please inform us so we can put appropriate measures in place to ensure the safety and well-being of your child.

To avoid food contamination during the warmer months, your child's lunch will be stored in the air-conditioned Lunch Room. If possible, please bring your child's lunch in a small 'fridge' bag with an ice-pack to keep the lunch cool.

Food Guidelines for Birthdays

Children's birthdays are celebrated with the lighting of candles on a special "fake" cake, "Happy Birthday" is sung and the children receive a card. Please do not send birthday cakes or other birthday food treats to kindergarten.

Guidelines for Children on Special Diets

Children who have food allergies to nuts, egg, milk, seeds, wheat, seafood or soy protein must not come into contact with the food they are allergic to. If a child attending Happy Valley Kindergarten has one of the above allergies, **please notify staff** so that all parents/carers can be informed not to bring the particular food to the centre. All staff and volunteers will be made aware of needs of individual children.

Parents can seek further information about daily fruit and vegetable requirements and access simple recipes at the Go for 2 and 5 website. www.gofor2and5.com.au

This policy will be reviewed annually.