

## Nutrition food and beverages, dietary requirements policy

Woodend Children's Centre is committed to promoting and educating children and their parents about healthy eating habits. We value and celebrate the diversity of our community and respect the food choices that families make for their children's lunch boxes. We promote both sustainable practices and healthy eating/ the development of healthy eating habits now and for later life in line with the Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools.

*"Better health equals better learning, research shows that children and teenagers who eat well are not only healthier but also learn better" (SA Department of Education and Children's Services and SA Health, 2008)*

*"Research shows that children and teenagers who eat well are not only healthier but also learn better. Promoting healthy eating during the school years will help set up a strong foundation for developing positive habits for life." (SA Health, Government of South Australia, 2022)*

We believe early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit children as it...

- ✓ maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health
- ✓ minimises the risk of diet-related diseases later in life
- ✓ good nutrition contributes to good health and well-being which is vital for positive engagement in learning experiences

The staff at Woodend Children's Centre model and encourage healthy eating behaviours. Food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the Right Bite strategy and our allergy aware guidelines.

You can find more information on the Right Bite Strategy here: <https://healthy-kids.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/SA-Right-Bite-Healthy-Food-and-Drink-Supply-Strategy.pdf>

### **Morning snack time:**

Parents are encouraged to provide healthy foods at morning snack time. These may include fruit, vegetables, cheese, yoghurts, dried fruit. Highly processed foods or foods high in sugar, salt or fats are not recommended.

**The following items are recommended for lunchtime:** Sandwiches/ wraps with a healthy filling, cubed cheese, rice crackers, salads, cold cuts of meat, yogurts, fruit, dried fruits and vegetables. We do not encourage "sometimes" or "treat" foods (these include foods that are high in sugar, salt, and/or fats such as rollups, lollies, processed cakes, chips, bars and chocolate).

Staff encourage children to eat their healthiest food first and are reminded to 'save something for lunch'. During eating times staff will talk with children about healthy foods, managing waste from lunch boxes and promote independence.

We are an allergy aware site, please understand that at times there may be further restrictions regarding specific foods such as nuts or eggs should children in attendance have moderate or severe reactions.

## **The Learning environment:**

Children at our preschool:

- ✓ have fresh, clean tap water accessible and available at all times
- ✓ are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day
- ✓ wash their hands before eating and cooking (we promote and encourage correct hand-washing procedures with children and staff)
- ✓ eat routinely at scheduled times in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- ✓ engage in opportunities to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food
- ✓ use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods

## **Curriculum:**

As part of our role as educators' staff will ensure children receive positive education through the play-based curriculum about healthy lifestyles. This will include the importance of a healthy balanced diet and recognise that some foods are acceptable in moderation. We provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health. This includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food. This aligns with the Early Years Learning Framework, Outcome 3: 'Children have a strong sense of wellbeing'.

## **Drinks:**

Children are to bring their own water bottle to preschool which is placed in a bucket next to their lunch boxes to provide easy access throughout the day. These can be refilled at any time through a maintained puratap filter. On hot days drink bottles and lunch boxes will be kept inside.

## **Children with special dietary needs:**

If a child has special dietary needs, staff will ensure provisions are made to adhere to health care plans and provide inclusive alternatives when planning for the provision of food. Children are supported to understand that we do not share our food at preschool in line with our philosophy of 'be safe, be kind, be you'

## **Food allergies and special dietary needs:**

We liaise with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children who require a health care plan related to food issues or allergies. Special dietary needs may be specified for a variety of reasons which include medical, allergy, intolerance, family preference, cultural and religious reasons. Any needs for a child relating to food, nutrition and eating are to be indicated on the Preschool Enrolment Form when a child is enrolled and health care plans submitted to ensure the child's safety.

Staff will inform families when we have a child with severe food allergies attending the centre and our allergy aware sign will be updated to maintain a safe learning environment.

It is the responsibility of enrolling families/caregivers to advise preschool staff of food allergies or health conditions.

## **Supporting documents:**

[Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy \(Healthy-Kids.com.au\)](https://www.healthy-kids.com.au/Right-Bite-Healthy-Food-and-Drink-Supply-Strategy)

[Australian dietary guidelines \(eatforhealth.gov.au\)](https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/)

[Get Up & Grow | Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood | Resource Collection \(health.gov.au\)](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/physical-activity/Get-Up-&-Grow-Healthy-eating-and-physical-activity-for-early-childhood)

# Approvals

Status: Approved

Version: 3.0

Approved by: Carrie Mitton | Director, Woodend Children's Centre

Approved by: Katie Dix | Governing Council, Woodend Children's Centre

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Next review date: 26 June 2026 (must be 3 years from the approved date)

## Review table

26/6/23	GC approved	Carrie Mitton
3/5/23 Draft Version 3.0	Updated to reflect updated site philosophy	Ellie Beshay (teacher)
27/11/18	No identified changes	E.Kiriakou (Director)
12/11/15	Initial version	E.Kiriakou (Director)