

# NUTRITION AND DIETARY REQUIREMENTS POLICY

## Policy Statement

Nutrition is important for the health, wellbeing, and development of all children. The Education and Care Services National Regulations requires Highgate School Outside School Hours Care (Highgate OSHC) to have a policy on nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements and food allergies to guide procedures that ensure children are provided with healthy and nutritious snacks, and their individual dietary requirements are considered.

Highgate OSHC recognises that families need their religious and cultural beliefs, practices and lifestyle choices in relation to food to be respected, and also need input into and feedback about what and when their child eats. Highgate OSHC aims to meet these needs to ensure that children have a balanced diet with their food preferences respected through regular snack times during which they can eat at their own pace. Children are especially prone to food borne illness because their immune systems are still developing and they cannot fight infection as well as adults can. The main causes of food borne illness are inadequate cooking, improper holding temperatures, contaminated equipment, unsafe food sources and poor personal hygiene.

Highgate OSHC is committed to:

- promoting healthy eating habits
- providing nutritious menu options
- respecting and supporting any special dietary requirements of individual children
- educating children and their families about healthy food choices and healthy eating habits
- ensuring the nutritional needs and/or dietary requirements of children are appropriately catered for, while they are attending Highgate OSHC
- providing a flexible approach to serving and consuming food for children
- Complying with all legislative requirements.

## Planning to Support the Nutritional Needs of School-age Children

When planning the menu Highgate OSHC aims to meet the nutritional needs of the school age children by:

- providing balanced snacks, consistent with the five major principles of the Australian Government's Dietary Guidelines 2013
- providing snacks that meet recommended daily nutritional needs of school-age children are adequate in quantity, and consider the child's growth and developmental needs, and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements
- wherever possible, using fresh seasonally available produce
- providing attractive and well-presented snacks that are appetising and provide variety in colour, texture and taste
- incorporating nutrition education, appropriate to the age of the children, into the children's program, and encouraging families' involvement in the nutritional program
- consulting with families about their child's individual needs, including likes and dislikes in relation to food and any special dietary requirements, with consideration to cultural perspectives and known allergies
- maintaining food preparation facilities in a hygienic condition.

## **Procedures for Menu Planning**

Highgate OSHC understands it has a duty of care to ensure that children's nutritional needs are met and food is prepared and stored safely within the service. Good nutrition is essential to healthy living and enables children to be active participants in play and leisure. Highgate OSHC refers to the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Government of South Australia's Right Bite Strategy when considering menu planning and serving suggestions for children before and after school. The educators respect that children, like adults, do have different food preferences. Children are exposed to a wide variety of foods and are encouraged to taste all of the foods offered; however, they are never forced to eat.

Highgate OSHC acknowledges that middle childhood is a key time to develop healthy food habits and children are supported to build healthy relationships with food and their bodies. To support this, food or drink will not be used as a reward nor will food be denied as a punishment or behaviour management strategy.

- Menus are planned with input from children, families, and educators.
- Menus are planned for the term and displayed on the family notice board at the service. Families are welcome to view them at any time.
- The menu will reflect a wide variety of cultures, and especially the cultural backgrounds of families and the local community.
- Any special dietary considerations are always taken into consideration when planning menus with children allergies etc. catered for.
- Families and children are encouraged to forward any ideas, suggestions and recipes for consideration in the planning of the menu.

## **Procedures for Snack Times**

Snack times at Highgate OSHC provide positive learning experiences for children who are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits. Families are consulted and asked to share family and multicultural values and experiences to enrich the variety and enjoyment of food planned to meet each child's daily nutritional needs.

Snack times at Highgate OSHC provide an important developmental opportunity for the children both physically and socially. It is therefore considered that the educator's participation enhances the value of each child's snack time. Snack times are an excellent time for the children to develop appropriate nutritional habits and healthy food practices.

Children will be:

- offered a variety of foods
- educated about safe and hygienic food handling skills
- supported to participate in sharing, socialising and taking turns.

The Director and educators at Highgate OSHC ensure that children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day as per the following table.

|                           |   |  |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Before School Care</b> | Breakfast offered from arrival until 8.15am.  | Includes toast (wholemeal) with a variety of toppings and a selection of cereals with milk. Water is available at all times. |
| <b>After School Care</b>  | Sit down afternoon tea offered 3.15pm-3.45pm.<br>Food continues to be available at all times.   | Includes fresh fruit, and vegetables and a wide variety of main snack. Water is available at all times                       |
| <b>Vacation Care</b>      | As above<br>Families to provide morning snack and lunch for children to eat during the session. | As above<br>Families to provide morning snack and lunch for children to eat during the session.                              |

- Snack times are a relaxing time of the day for children to practise many independent skills encouraged by educators.
- Snack times are held in an informal manner where children may choose when to eat. Snack times are set to a regular schedule (as above) but individual needs are accommodated and children who are still hungry will be offered small nutritionally appropriate snacks.
- Safe drinking water is always readily available and is regularly offered to children:
  - Drink bottles are required to be brought to each session by children.
  - Several water taps are available with both fountains for drinking and taps for refilling bottles.
- Children will not be required to eat food they do not like or eat more than they want.

### **Procedures for Safe Food Handling, Preparation & Storage**

- All snacks are prepared using fresh ingredients and following the correct food-handling guidelines and conditions.
- All hazardous materials are stored away from food in a labelled cupboard inaccessible to children.
- Foods that cause allergic reactions are put in separate containers with their own tongs to avoid cross-contamination.
- Highgate OSHC follows strict safe food storage and preparation guidelines, found within the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, to ensure children's protection from food-borne illness.
- Highgate OSHC as a food supplying business is registered with Unley City Council as required.
- Safe food-handling and hygiene practices are undertaken at all times.
- Children are not permitted in Highgate OSHC's kitchen, except under direct supervision during cooking activities or when helping clean up.
- Accredited food safety training is completed and kept updated as necessary by all educators at Highgate OSHC.
- Records are kept of fridge and freezer temperatures, approved food suppliers, goods receiving, and cleaning roster.
- Stock is used by rotation so that 'used by' or 'best before' dates are used first.

### **Procedures for Managing Special Dietary Requirements**

It is the family's responsibility to inform Highgate OSHC of any foods their child is not able to eat for any reason. They can do so upon enrolment or contacting the service if any changes occur. Children with special dietary needs and/or allergies will be catered for accordingly, with strict adherence to each of their

requirements and special diets. Any alternative snack provided will be as similar to the regular snack as possible to ensure the child does not feel any negative emotions regarding this.

### **Procedures for Managing Food Allergies**

Highgate OSHC endeavours to ensure the health and safety of children with food allergies by doing the following:

- A Medical Management Plan is required upon enrolment – refer to the Highgate OSHC's *Medical Conditions and Allergies Policy*.
- The Director, or delegate, will assess the potential for accidental exposure to allergens while a child with food allergies is in the care of the service, and develop a risk minimisation plan in consultation with educators and the family of any child who has such allergies (as per the Highgate OSHC's *Medical Conditions and Allergies Policy*)
- As far as possible, food to which a child is allergic is not to be presented on the days on which that child is in attendance. If it is unavoidable that other children will be eating food that contains ingredients to which a child is allergic, then the food of the child with the allergy will be prepared and plated separately, covered, and labelled with the child's name.
- Children's allergies are to be clearly displayed in the service kitchen and office.

### **Requirements of Food from Home**

- Highgate OSHC asks that families do not bring any food items or products listed on the Vacation Care program important information.
- To ensure the protection of children, families are asked not to bring food into Highgate OSHC to be shared among other children due to the risk of allergies, food-borne bacteria and for cultural reasons.
- Where families do not provide for the nutritional requirements of their child on a regular basis, they will be encouraged to follow current recommendations from recognised authorities. Highgate OSHC will provide information for families on the recommended nutritional intake for their child.

Approved by Highgate School Governing Council 26<sup>th</sup> October 2021

DATE OF EFFECT: 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021

REVIEWED: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022

TO BE REVIEWED: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023

#### Related Documents

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-law-and-regulations/national-regulations>

Education & Care Services National Regulations (2011) – Regulations 77, 78, 80, 91, 92, 168

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care (2010) – Standards 2.2.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 4.2.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.1

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/out-school-hours-care-oshc>

Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children & Adolescents (2013) [australian-dietary-guidelines.pdf \(health.gov.au\)](#)

Right Bite: Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools [Right Bite manual \(colour\) \(education.sa.gov.au\)](#)