



NUTRITION, FOOD AND BEVERAGE AND DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

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POLICY OBJECTIVES:

Gordon OHSC recognises and acknowledges the importance of providing food that is both nutritious and appropriate to meet the needs of the children attending OSHC. Services encourage and promote the health and wellbeing of children by providing positive learning experiences during meal/snack times where good nutritional food habits are developed in a happy, social environment. Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in this approach to nutrition for their children.

Gordon OHSC is committed to promoting the safety and wellbeing of all children enrolled at or visiting the Service by encouraging healthy eating habits amongst Educators, children and families. Food will never be used in the Service as punishment or reward for children.

Nutrition is important for the health, wellbeing and development of all children, and Gordon OHSC recognises that children and families need their health and lifestyle choices in relation to food to be respected, and aims to reflect the cultural diversity of the community while meeting the health and dietary requirements of all children during meals and snack times and cooking activities.

THE ROLE OF GORDON OHSC IS TO:

- *Promote healthy foods and eating habits that ensure healthy growth and development in children*
- *Provide a pleasant and attractive place for meal and snack times that are inclusive and culturally appropriate*
- *Ensure that meal and snack times are an opportunity for social learning and positive interaction, with staff sitting with children to act as role models*
- *Consult and work collaboratively with families, recognising cultural practices and lifestyle choices*
- *Provide guidelines for a flexible approach to serving and consuming food for children attending the service*
- *Provide opportunities for children to try new foods, including different colours, flavours, aromas and textures through cooking experiences*
- *Communicate effectively with families about their child's food and nutrition requirements*
- *Provide children with opportunities to learn about food, nutrition and healthy lifestyles*
- *Provide a safe, supportive and social environment in which children can enjoy eating*

PROCEDURES

The team has the responsibility to ensure that:

- *Children have access to water at all times.*
- *A suitable break is arranged to allow snacks and meals to be eaten.*
- *A written menu will be on display at all times and will accurately reflect what foods are offered to children, by the service, on a daily basis (R 80). (e.g. Breakfast, Morning and Afternoon tea)*
- *All meal breaks are observed by staff to ensure all children eat and drink.*
- *The food provided by the service will meet the dietary requirements of individual children, taking into account each child's growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements.*
- *Children are to be seated while eating and drinking. Educators will model this behaviour by sitting with the children and discussing the food the children are eating, along with events of the day.*
- *Educators are aware of the individual dietary needs of the group. They are also aware of the foods, which may cause a child/ren's allergic reaction, allergy free food and the medical procedure and plan for dealing with an allergic reaction.*
- *They encourage, discuss and model balanced, nutritious and healthy eating practices and choices with the children.*
- *Gordon OHSC maintains a clean and hygienic area for cooking activities which meets local council requirements for OSHC services.*
- *Children are educated in necessary safety precautions while cooking.*
- *Children are supervised while cooking.*
- *All staff and children involved in food preparation wash and dry their hands before a cooking activity.*
- *All staff and children wash and dry their hands before eating.*
- *Children do not eat food or use utensils which have been dropped on the floor.*
- *Children do not use drinking or eating utensils which have been used by another child.*

MENU PLANNING

Where the Service provides food, Educators will seek to provide food which is healthy, balanced, varied, age-appropriate and consistent with the Australian Government's Australian Dietary Guidelines. <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines>

- *Menu planning will occur in compliance with Regulation 79 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations (2011).*
- *Service menus are planned to ensure that food provided is varied and encompasses all the food groups.*
- *Any special dietary considerations are always taken into consideration when planning menus.*
- *Menu information will accurately describe the food and beverages to be provided and be displayed at the Service. Families are notified of any changes to the planned menu through information included on the menu planner, in a prominent place for families and children, in compliance Regulation 80 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations (2011).*
- *Menus are planned with input from children, families, educators who are responsible for food preparation.*
- *Parents/Guardians are encouraged to forward any ideas, suggestions and recipes for consideration in the planning of the menu.*
- *Recipes for all meals will be available to families upon request.*

WHEN PLANNING THE MENU, GORDON OHSC ENDEAVOURS TO MEET THE NUTRITIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN BY:

- *Providing attractive and well-presented snacks that are appetising and provide variety in colour, texture and taste.*
- *Providing balanced snacks, consistent with the principles of the Australian Dietary Guidelines.*
- *Providing snacks that meet recommended daily nutritional needs of children that are adequate in quantity, and take into account the child's growth and developmental needs, and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements.*
- *Gordon OHSC aims to promote healthy eating habits, and endeavours to avoid providing foods that are high in sugar, high in fat, or high in salt, and wherever possible, using fresh produce that is in season, which is free of preservatives and any additives.*
- *The menu will include a good balance of fresh foods, as opposed to pre-packaged and prepared foods; which as far as reasonably possible, meets the dietary needs of all children, including children with special dietary needs*
- *Dental and oral health will be considered when planning, providing or encouraging healthy eating choices.*

DRINKING WATER

Gordon OHSC will ensure that drinking water is available in compliance Regulation 78 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations (2011)

- *The staff will ensure that children have ready access to clean and cool drinking water and clean cups.*
- *Children are encouraged by Educators to drink water throughout the day.*
- *Water is available to all children throughout the day when in attendance on the Service premises.*
- *The provision of water will be considered at any time that children leave the premises, for example during excursions.*
- *Educators will encourage children to drink extra water during the summer months, inviting children to supply their water bottle while in attendance at the Service*

HOT DRINKS

Gordon OHSC is committed to the education of its staff, children and families, other users of the Service and the community, in the prevention of scalds and burns from hot drinks.

- *The Service will be able to serve hot drinks including but not limited to soup to children. Children will not be permitted to be served tea or coffee.*
- *During any time hot when drinks are served to children, children will be supervised and guided appropriately with consideration to safety and appropriate behaviour. Educators will serve hot drinks to children only when children are sitting at a table.*
- *Hot drinks will be served at below boiling point.*
- *Hot drinks may be consumed by Educators in a designated, safe area, where there are no children present, i.e. office or kitchen space where children are not permitted, and only during designated break periods or before children arriving at the Service.*

SERVING FOOD

- *Food will be available in compliance with Regulation 79 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations (2011).*
- *At meal/snack times, Educators will encourage children to try different foods and to take appropriate portions.*
- *Children will be provided with balanced meals of adequate quantities that meet the Australian Dietary Guidelines.*
- *Independence will be fostered by encouraging children to serve themselves food, under supervision from Educators, using appropriate equipment.*

- *Educators will encourage and involve children in conversations and routines that promote healthy eating and good nutrition.*
- *Educators will facilitate children being involved in the preparing and serving of food.*
- *Appropriate hygiene standards will be maintained while preparing and serving foods in compliance Regulation 77 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations (2011).*

CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES WITH FOOD

Gordon OHSC introduces children to a wide variety of foods by planning children's learning experiences involving food. Educators will encourage children to taste the foods offered.

- *Wherever possible, children's learning experiences involving food utilise fresh produce that is in season, free of preservatives and any additives.*
- *Children are exposed to a variety of foods during children's learning experiences involving food and are encouraged but never forced to try all foods.*
- *Educators will incorporate nutrition education, appropriate to the age of the children, into the program. The importance of good, healthy food, hygienic and safe food handling and storage practices are discussed with children as part of the educational program.*
- *Food preparation facilities will be maintained in a hygienic condition during children's learning experiences involving food.*
- *Children's learning experiences involving food are planned with input from children, families, and Educators.*
- *Children's learning experiences involving food will reflect a wide variety of cultures, and especially the cultural backgrounds of families and the local community.*
- *Families are encouraged to forward any ideas, suggestions and recipes for consideration in the planning of children's learning experiences involving food.*
- *Recipes for all children's learning experiences involving food will be available to families upon request.*
- *Information that accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by the children's learning experiences involving food is displayed at the main entrance of each Service prior to the experience taking place, and families are informed of any changes that occur in compliance with Regulation 80 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations (2011).*
- *Children's food likes and dislikes, families' religious or cultural beliefs, or family lifestyle, i.e. vegetarianism will always be respected in compliance with Regulation 79 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations (2011).*
- *Any special dietary considerations are always taken into consideration when planning children's learning experiences involving food with children allergies etc. catered for in compliance Regulation 79 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations (2011).*

MANAGING SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

It is the Parent's/Guardian's responsibility to inform Gordon OHSC of any foods their child is not able to eat for any reason. Parents/guardians are required to add the relevant information to the child's enrolment form and advising Educators on any changes to this requirement as the need arises in compliance Regulation 162 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations (2011).

Children with special dietary needs will be catered for accordingly, with strict adherence to each of their requirements and special diets in compliance Regulation 79 of the Education and Care Service National Regulations (2011).

- *It is the responsibility of the individual family to inform Gordon OHSC of any special dietary requirements their child may have via the enrolment form and in person at the service.*
- *Where children are on special diets, the families will be asked to provide a list of suitable foods and the child's food preferences.*
- *Children's learning experiences involving food will incorporate a child's specific dietary requirements for medical/health/religious/cultural reasons.*
- *Diabetic Health Support Food Plans should be completed by families, including maintenance of a hypo-kit for children at risk of hypoglycemia, in accordance with Gordon OHSC's Diabetes policy.*

REFERENCES:

ACECQA National Quality Framework Resource Kit (2012)

Quality Area 1 – Educational Program and Practice.

Quality Area 2 – Children’s health and safety.

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011). R 77, 78, 79 & 80

Heart Foundation, 2002, Eat Smart, Play Smart, A Manual for Out of School Hours Care, Australia

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

Nutrition Australia - Healthy Together Victoria – www.nutritionaustralia.org.au

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