

## SECTION 4: FOOD AND NUTRITION

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## 4.0 FOOD AND NUTRITION

### 4.1 NUTRITION POLICY

CELC educators understand the importance of leading a healthy, active lifestyle in order for children to achieve optimum growth and development. The CELC has developed approaches for supporting the health, protection, safety and wellbeing of all children while in our care.

Our CELC aims to provide young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning (CEDP philosophy statement) by ensuring that all children experience quality education in an environment that provides for their health and safety.

The service is committed to implementing the key messages outlined in Munch & Move and in supporting the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings. The CELC recognises the importance of supporting families in providing healthy food and drink to their children. We recognise that the early childhood setting has an important role in supporting families in healthy eating.

Providing for the children's health and safety involves viewing children from a holistic perspective with specific reference to their overall wellbeing. Wellbeing incorporates both physical and psychological aspects and is central to 'Belonging, Being and Becoming'. Without a strong sense of wellbeing it is difficult to have a sense of 'belonging', to trust others and feel confident in 'being' and to optimistically engage in experiences that contribute to 'becoming'.<sup>1</sup>

Fundamental to providing for children's wellbeing is to ensure that routines, activities and experiences support children's individual requirements for health, nutrition, sleep, rest and relaxation.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4.1.1 Nutritional Food Recommended

- The CELC has a healthy food focus and requests that parents/carers provide nutritionally based food from the food groups on the *Australian Dietary Guidelines – Dietary Guidelines for Adolescents and Children*.
- We discourage the provision of highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt and sugar and low in essential nutrients in children's lunchboxes. Examples of these foods include lollies, chocolates, sweet biscuits, muesli bars, breakfast bars, fruit filled bars, chips, oven-baked crackers and corn chips.
- We encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious foods.
- Families are required to provide water only. Please note: juice, cordial, flavoured milk and other high sugar drinks will be sent home.
- The CELC is an ALLERGY AWARE ZONE and parents/carers, staff and visitors are asked not to bring in products that may contain nuts.
- Parents/Carers are to ensure that children have rinsed their mouth with water and washed their hands prior to coming to the CELC if they have eaten nut products for breakfast.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2009), *Belonging Being & Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. p31

<sup>2</sup> ACECQA (2011) *Guide to the National Quality Standards*. p.50.

- Families are advised of alternate allergens that may trigger anaphylactic reactions and may be requested not to bring these into the CELC. For example eggs, dairy products. (Please check with Educators).
- Please refer to the Anaphylaxis and Allergy policy for further information regarding the CELC ALLERGY AWARE ZONE.

#### **4.1.2 CELC Educators Responsibilities**

- Engaging children in experiences, conversations and routines that promote relaxed and enjoyable mealtimes.
- Promoting healthy lifestyles and good nutrition by engaging children in learning experiences and conversations regarding food and physical activity.
- Ensuring that food is never used as a reward or punishment.
- Promoting and modelling healthy eating and nutrition practices with children during mealtimes;
- Following the CELC procedures for the safe storage of food and drink.
- Advising parents/carers on where to access resources to promote healthy eating and referring parents/carers to the Australian Government guidelines *Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood, and/or Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*.
- Providing access to water throughout the day.<sup>3</sup>

#### **4.1.3 Minimise the Risk of Choking**

The CELC staff will:

- Ensure children are always seated when eating.
- Calm children who are crying or upset prior to giving food/drink to children.
- Never force a child to eat.
- Ensure children's mouths are empty before they return to play.
- Actively supervise children when they are eating.

#### **4.1.4 Parents/Carers Responsibilities**

- Providing children with food that is consistent with the *Australian Government Guidelines Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood, and/or Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*.
- Providing adequate and sufficient quantities of food for children that are consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*.<sup>3</sup>
- Not bringing in products that may contain nuts or traces of nuts or other allergens according to the needs in accordance with the "Anaphylaxis and Allergy Policy".
- Provide a bottle of water.

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<sup>3</sup> *Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) (NSW)*, Clause 90 (1)(a) p.52.

#### 4.1.5 Responsibilities and Partnerships between CELC and Parents/Carers

Working in partnership with families is central to the operations of the CELC. In order to promote healthy eating habits in children, staff will:

- Encourage families to share favourite nutritious food recipes, including culturally diverse food.
- Be sensitive to any ongoing issues families may be dealing with related to the child's health and nutrition.
- Support and assist families in addressing issues or concerns they have about their child's eating habits.
- Share the NSW Food Authority fact sheet *Food brought from home* with families. This sheet is available at the following link: [http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/Documents/industry\\_pdf/food\\_from\\_home.pdf](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/Documents/industry_pdf/food_from_home.pdf) (accessed 24 November 2015).

#### 4.1.6 The Eating Environment

The focus of the mealtime environment is on a safe and relaxed atmosphere and about building positive relationships between staff and children and among peers. In the eating environment, staff will provide:

- Tables for small groups of children to sit together.
- Maintain the meals area in a clean and aesthetic environment.
- Provide opportunities for children to assist in setting up and clearing away the meal environment – in line with their skills and interest.

#### 4.1.7 Interactions at Mealtimes

The focus of interactions and conversations is primarily on the children's interests and experiences. Educators will:

- Develop good table manners
- Encourage children to talk amongst their table group.
- Discuss nutrition and good dental hygiene at mealtimes, in an informal manner.
- Draw children's attention to a new food or something interesting about a particular food e.g. how beans grow; if food has been prepared differently, and any cultural factors about the food offered.
- Encourage the children to eat their snacks/lunch without coercion.
- Provide an alternate activity for children who may finish eating more quickly than others.
- Allow a child time to finish their meals.
- Discuss sustainable practices such as recycling, composting food scraps, and benefits of food scraps for worm farms.
- Educate children on the rubbish free lunch initiative to reduce need for plastic wrapping on morning tea and lunches brought from home.
- Families can access information regarding rubbish free lunch via web link <http://www.nudefoodday.com.au>

#### 4.1.8 Health and Safety

Food safety and hygiene practices are also important to consider as part of the mealtime experience.

Staff ensure that:

- The eating areas are clean before and after children eat.
- They are aware of and are alert to children with food allergies and monitor the meal environment closely for known allergens.
- Anaphylaxis and Allergy action plans are on display near eating areas.
- Sensitive discussions take place regularly to help other children understand the dangers of some foods for some children.
- Children thoroughly wash and dry their hands before and after eating.
- In the event that food is to be served, food tongs are used.
- Children do not share food or handle the food of other children.
- Additional support for educators in promoting nutrition and health can be found in the Physical activity and small screen recreation policy.

#### Links with:

Section 2 Administration and Enrolment

Section 3 Curriculum

Section 5 Health and Safety

#### References:

*Guide to the National Law and National Regulations* (2011), p. 60

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2009), *Belonging Being & Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. p31

Bunney, C & Williams, L 4<sup>th</sup> Ed 2005; *Caring for children: Food, nutrition and fun activities*, NSW Department of Health, Centre for Health

Department of Health and Ageing (2009), *Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood*, Canberra.

*Guide to the National Law and National Regulations* (2011), pp. 56-57.

National Health and Medical Research Council (2005), *Staying Healthy in Child Care*, Canberra, pgs. 32-3

Munch n Move Factsheets. [www.healthykids.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.gov.au)

| <b>REVIEW DATE:</b>                                |   |
|--|---|
| <b>DATE</b>  | <b>WHO WAS INVOLVED</b>   |
| November 2014; November 2015; November 2016        | Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta:<br>CEDP, CELC Directors, CELC staff; parents/carers |
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|  |   |
| <b>NEXT REVIEW DATE:</b><br>enter next review date | August 2017   |

## 4.2 FOOD HANDLING POLICY

### *Regulation 77*

*The nominated supervisor of an education and care service must implement, and ensure that all staff members of, and volunteers at, the service implement:*

- (a) adequate health and hygiene practices; and*
- (b) safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service.*

### 4.2.1 Food Storage

Parents/Carers will ensure that:

- Dairy and cold meats provided for children's morning tea and/or lunch will be refrigerated.
- Clearly labeled (not insulated) lunch boxes are placed in the provided fridges.
- Cold food is kept at less than 5°C in the fridges provided. This is consistent with the 4-Hour/2-Hour rule.
- Food that has been kept at temperatures between 5° and 60° for a total of 4 hours or longer, must be thrown out. "
- Hot food is not to be brought to CELC for either morning tea or lunch following conditions specified in the 4 Hour/ 2 Hour rule.
- They are aware that CELC will not reheat food for children to consume on the CELC premises.
- All food is stored in non-toxic food containers with a properly fitted lid.
- Foods transported to CELC follows recommendations by NSW Food Authority Factsheet Foods Brought From Home. This factsheet is available from the CELC or alternatively via weblink

[http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/Documents/industry\\_pdf/food\\_from\\_home.pdf](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/Documents/industry_pdf/food_from_home.pdf)

### 4.2.2 Serving Food

- Tables will be cleaned before and after meals.
- Staff and children will wash hands.
- When directly handling food to be eaten by children educators will ensure that a barrier is present to prevent direct contact with food. E.g. gloves, tongs, food containers.

### 4.2.3 Food Handling and Preparation

The CELC will:

- Store all perishable foods e.g. dairy products, cold meats, cut fruit and vegetables, in a sealed container or plastic bag in the refrigerator.
- Refrigerator is monitored and checked to ensure that it is between 0 ° and 5° C.
- Separate utensils are used on raw food and ready to eat food.
- When serving food, clean tongs and serving spoons will be used.
- Student safety will be considered during cooking experiences for example monitoring hot surfaces, cross contamination, avoiding known allergens, hand washing and cleaned surfaces.

#### 4.2.4 Hygiene and Pest Control

To prevent pests from contaminating the meals' area:

- Food is not stored on the floor and is at least 15cm above ground.
- Food is thrown away by its due date.
- Food is stored in the lunch boxes that parents/carers provide with a fitted lid.
- Ensure bins have secure bags and self-closing lids.
- Staff empty, clean and sanitise bins regularly.
- Rubbish is not left overnight.
- Meal areas are cleaned and maintained.
- The CELC is fumigated annually. In circumstances where considered appropriate, the CELC Director may organise other fumigations.

**Links with:**

Section 2 Administration and Enrolment

Section 3 Curriculum

Section 5 Health and Safety

**References:**

October 2009 Sourced : Children's Services Regulation 2004, QIAS, FSANZ Food Standards Code – Chapter 3 – Food Safety Standards; Food Safety Fact Sheets, FSANZ at <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au>

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| <b>NEXT REVIEW DATE:</b><br>enter next review date | August 2017   |

### 4.3 BIRTHDAY CAKE POLICY

Birthdays are recognised as a great celebration!

The CELC is not an alternative venue for children's birthday party.

Parents/Carers and family members are welcome to celebrate birthdays at the CELC.

#### 4.3.1 Parent/Carer Responsibilities

- Birthday cakes as a sometimes food, is considered acceptable on special occasions.
- It is preferable that individual cup cakes are provided.
- Parents/Carers are asked to adhere to the ALLERGY AWARE policy of the CELC.
- Parents/Carers of children with food allergies will be asked to provide an alternative food for birthdays and special occasions.

**Please do not bring cakes that contain nuts or any other identified allergen to the CELC.**

#### 4.3.2 CELC Staff Responsibilities

- Staff will adhere to the food handling policy. See Food Handling Policy.
- Children will wash hands before eating.
- This will be used as a social time and a time where manners are encouraged.
- Educators need to check for presence of allergens that trigger reactions or anaphylactic reactions in children prior to serving food. Where an alternative food is supplied by the parent, educators must ensure that these are served to affected children.

**Links with:**

Section 2 Administration and Enrolment

Section 3 Curriculum

Section 5 Health and Safety

**References:**

National Health and Medical Research Council (2005), *Staying Healthy in Child Care*, Canberra, p. 24.

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