

Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens

NUTRITION POLICY - FOOD BROUGHT FROM HOME

CONSIDERATIONS:

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS	QA 1, QA 2, QA 3, QA 5, QA 6
NATIONAL LAW ACT & NATIONAL REGULATIONS	Law Section: 165,167 Regulations: 77, 78, 168

POLICY STATEMENT:

To encourage families to provide children with healthy lunches and drinks to support healthy eating practices through the Service program. To share with families physical activity information for children.

To incorporate discussions about supporting health and wellbeing in the Service program, which respect individual preferences and uphold the dignity of each child and their family at all times.

RELEVANT FORMS/MATERIAL:

- Kindergarten Enrolment Form
- Kindergarten Handbook
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Access, Orientation and Communication Policy - Families and Children
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergarten Excursion Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Food Preparation, Handling and Storage Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Hand Hygiene and Infection Prevention Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Interactions with Children Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Medical Conditions Policies
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Program Planning and Development Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Safety and Supervision Policy

POLICY SPECIFIC SOURCES:

- National Health and Medical Research Council (2024) *Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services* (6th Ed.) Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra.
 - Child Australia (2012). Promoting Healthy Eating and Nutrition in Education and Care Services.
 - Department of Education and Training (2023), Guide to Physical Health and Wellbeing, Australian Early Development Census (AEDC), Resources for Queensland Early Childhood Education and Care Services.
 - Australian Government, Department of Health, Guidelines for Healthy Growth and Development for your Child, Australian 24 hr Movement Guidelines (www.health.gov.au).
 - ACECQA and Queensland Government, Department of Education Early Childhood Education and Care, Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements and policy guidelines.
 - Allergy Aware (www.allergyaware.org.au)
 - Queensland Government, Health and Wellbeing website (www.hw.qld.gov.au).
 - Nutrition Australia (www.nutritionaustralia.org)
 - Australian Dietary Guidelines (2013)
 - Get Up & Grow Resources (www.health.gov.au)
 - Food ideas for busy parents, The importance of drinking water, Positive eating practices
 - Go for 2 and 5 Website (www.gofor2and5.com.au)
 - Safe Food Queensland (www.safefood.qld.gov.au)
 - Healthy Eating for Children (www.eatforhealth.gov.au)
 - Food Bank Australia (www.foodbank.org.au)
 - Starting Blocks. Nutrition in Child Care (ACECQA), (www.startingblocks.gov.au)
- (Accessed 2025)

Reviewed: January 2025

Date to be Reviewed: July 2026

FAMILY INFORMATION & CONSULTATION

INFORMATION

All families will be supplied with a list of nutritional information for children under school age.

We encourage Services to be a 'Peanut, Tree Nut and Fancy Nut Aware Service' and request that families do not send meals containing highly allergenic foods with traces of nuts or nut products to lessen the risk of a child's anaphylactic reaction during term one of each program year.

It is recommended that Services review foods to be excluded on a regular basis according to the needs of the children enrolled. For children with the medical condition of anaphylaxis, support strategies to limit exposure to a known trigger food will be discussed with the family and outlined in the individual child's Risk Minimisation Plan. At times these strategies may be adequate, rather than the specific food being excluded from the Service.

Reflective of the age of kindergarten children and range of Risk Minimisation Strategies which may be present each program year, following term one, where children have had the opportunity to be familiar with systems to support wellbeing and following discussion with the Nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider / Executive Committee, staff are able to review if the Service should continue to be a 'Peanut, Tree Nut and Fancy Nut Aware Service' for the remainder of the program year or the food items families may choose to send in their child's lunchbox can change reflective of this decision. The Nominated Supervisor will then arrange communication with families as needed.

Families of children with food allergies should be consulted and strategies for managing this should be developed in partnership with families.

Services will have a system of conveying clear strategies to families, in relation to supporting the health and wellbeing of all children enrolled at the Service, in relation to anaphylaxis and allergic reactions.

Nutrition is one component of supporting health and wellbeing. The Service will provide information to families in relation to physical activity guidelines and other health and wellbeing information, from recognised authorities during the kindergarten program year and on enquiry from families.

The Australian Dietary Guidelines provide up-to-date advice about the amount and kinds of foods that we need to eat for health and wellbeing. They are based on scientific evidence and research.

The Australian Dietary Guidelines of most relevance to children include:

- Guideline 1 – To achieve and maintain a healthy weight, be physically active and choose amounts of nutritious food and drinks to meet your energy needs.
- Guideline 2 – Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from the five food groups every day.
- Guideline 3 – Limit intake of foods containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugars and alcohol.
- Guideline 4 – Encourage, support and promote breastfeeding.
- Guideline 5 – Care for your food; prepare and store it safely.

ONGOING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of recommended and discouraged (discretionary) foods will be given to all families at intervals throughout the year and displayed at the Service. • Families are to inform teachers/educators of any particular dietary requirements or restrictions on the Enrolment Form. • Water will be the primary drink and will be available at all times. • It is recommended children of kindergarten age have 1.2 litres of fluids (water / small amount plain milk) in a day. • Large quantities or frequent consumption of fruit juice will be discouraged where possible. <i>Fruit juice will be served diluted with water and at most given once a day.</i> • Services will advise families that juice poppers are not recommended for daily consumption. • Teachers/educators will act as role models in drinking water whilst around children. • Full cream dairy products will be recommended in preference to skim. • 'Emergency food' will be available e.g. crackers, canned food etc., under situations such as the contents of the child's lunch box has been dropped on the floor, the child's lunchbox has not been brought to the Service, food in the child's lunchbox is past the expiry date or when all food has been consumed and a child is still hungry. • Children will have access to breads/cereals or fruit/vegetable snacks if they are hungry between meals (from their lunchbox). • Families will be advised when their child is not eating well or requiring more food in their lunchbox. When additional food is recommended for a child's lunch box, where possible it is suggested that this is a serve of vegetables, fruit or healthy fat (e.g. avocado, seeds, full fat dairy which supports mental cognition and brain development). • Teachers/educators will encourage and respect family's cultural differences when considering mealtimes and food from various cultures and food preferences. • Consideration is also provided when food has been cooked with the child, family celebration, etc. • If discretionary foods or drinks are regularly brought to the Service, this will be discussed with the family in a supportive way, with information from the Australian Dietary Guidelines shared. • During meal times teachers/educators may discuss with children how healthy food can assist their bodies by providing nutrition or that eating fresh food first means that if they prefer to not eat all of their lunchbox contents that day, the non-perishable food can be eaten on the way home or on another day. • Where families have provided the food in a child's lunch box, the child is able to select any food to eat for any meal period during the program day. It is not recommended to focus on leaving discretionary food choices until all other food has been eaten. This can enhance the 'treat value' or 'reward value' of this food, rather than children knowing it is a discretionary or sometimes choice. Staff can discuss with children that this is a food to eat occasionally/sometimes rather than everyday. • All discussions undertaken in relation to food choices and health and wellbeing will be undertaken in a way that upholds and respects the dignity of the individual child and their family at all times. • Teachers/educators will encourage positive relationships with food and discuss individual strategies with families as relevant. • Information regarding food therapy sessions maybe discussed or shared as required. • The Service will make information regarding food bank or other local community food support services available to families. Information shows that one in five people in Australia experienced food insecurity in the past year.
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SUITABLE FOOD	
SUITABLE FOOD	<p>Dietary guidelines recommend the following for children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoying a wide range of nutritious foods from the five food groups. • That all dairy products be full cream. • That soy substitutes should be fortified with calcium. • That vegetarian meals include a protein food. • Where diet permits, that red meat is offered at least twice a week. • The use of a variety of breads e.g. brown, white, rolls, unleavened breads. • One to two serves of cereal food be offered per day while in care (bread, rice, pasta, a serve is 1 slice of bread, ½ cup cooked rice or pasta) to support children in meeting the recommended daily serves intake. • For a child aged 4-8 years the recommended daily intake of vegetables and legumes/beans is 4 ½ serves. It is therefore recommended that a serve of vegetables is included in their lunchbox (a serve is ½ cup of cooked vegetables or 1 cup of green leafy or salad vegetables) to support children in meeting the recommended daily serves intake.
WHAT YOU SHOULD DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave left over food in containers to be returned home (refrigerate if necessary). It is the teacher/educator role to provide an opportunity and space for the meal time, it is the individual child's choice how much food they consume during that meal time. Meal times should generally be 20 to 30 minutes in length, with experiences provided for those children who finish their meal earlier. • Encourage families to share knowledge/expertise of foods/nutrition. • Consult with families if the child is not eating well and decide on a plan to support the child's positive relationship with food/intake of food during the program day as applicable. • Teachers/educators will discuss with families the need to include healthy food, food from the five food groups as shared in the Australian Dietary Guidelines for children in lunch boxes. • Families will discuss with teachers/educators children's birthday celebrations and what is considered appropriate, (e.g. plain cake, cup cakes – see Kindergarten Handbook). Alternatives such as ice blocks, fruit platters etc. may also be considered.
AVOID	<p>Foods which present a choking risk, relative to the individual child and their capabilities.</p> <p>(Children of kindergarten age are able to have e.g.: popcorn, corn chips at the families' discretion).</p>
FOOD HANDLING	
ONGOING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and staff will wash their hands before handling food or eating meals and snacks. • Staff will adhere to the Hand Hygiene and Infection Prevention Policy, washing their hands prior to supporting children during meal times. Staff will then wear food handling gloves when supporting children and directly touching the food. • Where a service chooses not to use food handling gloves during the normal meal process in the program, staff will wash their hands immediately prior to the meal

	<p>session and throughout the session as required if they attend to other tasks, consume their own food or open food which has been mouthed by a child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food will be stored in a refrigerator at 5 Degrees Celsius or below as soon as possible after a child arrives. • Services should promote that at the Service, children's lunches are stored in non insulated lunch boxes to facilitate effective refrigeration. Families may select to transport food in an insulated container and transfer this to a suitable container on arrival at the Service. • Services will assess the size or number of fridges available at the Service, in ensuring that children's lunches are able to be stored at a safe temperature and the fridge is not overloaded. • Children will be discouraged from handling other children's food and utensils. • Staff will not permit children to eat food that has fallen on the floor (Whole fruit or vegetables which have rolled off the table can be washed at staff discretion). • During an outbreak of illness at the Service, cooking experiences will not be undertaken, and staff will serve food to individual children, for example if a shared fruit or vegetable platter is part of the daily practice of the Service. • Where ingredients are purchased for use in cooking experiences staff/families should ensure that these ingredients are stored, transported and prepared in accordance with food safety guidelines. • Services should ensure that food for social events/fundraising is stored, transported and prepared in accordance with food safety guidelines. • Staff will attend Food Handling training bi-annually.
THE SOCIAL FACTOR	
WHAT YOU SHOULD DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit with the children at the table and engage in conversation during mealtimes. • Celebrate special occasions with culturally appropriate foods e.g. birthdays, cultural and religious days. • Include food awareness activities from a variety of cultures. • Invite families to participate in food and nutrition occasions.
NEVER	Use food as a form of punishment or reward either by its provision or denial.
FOOD AS PART OF THE SERVICE PROGRAM	
WHAT YOU SHOULD DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include food awareness activities in the Service program, including foods that reflect special occasions and religious celebrations in other cultures. • Encourage children to have practical experiences in food preparation. • Discuss the food being eaten with the children. Discuss healthy food choices and the importance of good nutrition. • Encourage families to share knowledge/expertise of foods/nutrition with children. • Ensure that mealtimes are pleasant, and staff interact with children and engage children in interesting and sustained conversations at mealtimes. • Ensure food is available for children whenever they are hungry throughout the day. Where children have a variety of healthy choices available staff will support their individual choice, in how much they consume and in which order e.g. sandwiches or bulk of food maybe consumed at morning tea with smaller volume left for lunch time.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure children have access to water throughout the program and during meal times. • The staff and families should discuss and reflect on how the cooking experiences or fundraising experiences undertaken as part of the Service program encourage families and children to follow the Australian Dietary Guidelines.
<h2 style="text-align: center;">PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN</h2>	
<p>WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW AND DO</p>	<p>Being physically active every day is an important part of child growth and development. Playing and exploring helps children develop physical and social skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents of children aged one to five should be encouraged to allow their child to be physically active for at least three hours each day, spread throughout the day. • Inactive or sedentary time should be minimised in children. <p>Encourage parents to avoid screen time (watching television or using other electronic devices) for children less than two years of age.</p> <p>Physical Activity Recommendations are:</p> <p>Infants (Birth to one year) physical activity particularly through supervised interactive floor-based play in safe environments should be encouraged from birth. For those not yet mobile, 30 minutes of tummy time including reaching and grasping, pushing and pulling, and crawling spread throughout the day during awake periods is encouraged.</p> <p>Toddlers (1 to 2 years) should spend at least 180 minutes a day doing a variety of physical activities including energetic play such as running, jumping and twirling spread throughout the day- noting more is better.</p> <p>Pre-schoolers (3 to 5 years) should spend at least 180 minutes a day in a variety of physical activities, of which 60 minutes is energetic play such as running, jumping and kicking and throwing, spread throughout the day - noting more is better.</p> <p>Sedentary Behaviour Recommendations are:</p> <p>Infants (Birth to one year) should not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g. in a stroller, car seat or high chair). Infants should also not spend any time watching television or using other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games) and instead, when sedentary, the caregiver is encouraged to engage with them through activities such as reading, singing, puzzles and storytelling.</p> <p>Toddlers (aged 1-2 years) should not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (e.g. in a stroller, car seat or high chair) or sit for extended periods. For those toddlers younger than 2 years, screen time is not recommended during sedentary periods. For those aged 2 years, screen time should be no more than 1 hour in total throughout the 24-hour period- less is better. When toddlers are sedentary, the caregiver is encouraged to engage with them through activities such as reading, singing, puzzles and storytelling.</p> <p>Pre-schoolers (aged 3-5 years) should not be restrained, for more than 1 hour at a time e.g. in a stroller or car seat) or sitting for extended periods. Sedentary screen time should</p>

be no more than 1 hour in total throughout the 24-hour period -less is better. When pre-schoolers are sedentary, caregivers are encouraged to engage with them through activities such as reading, singing, puzzles and storytelling.

Sleep Recommendations are:

Infants (Birth to one year) are recommended to have 14 to 17 hours (for those aged 0-3 months) and 12 to 16 hours (for those aged 4-11 months) of good quality sleep, including naps during the 24 hour period.

Toddlers (aged 1-2 years) are recommended to have from 11 to 14 hours of good quality sleep, including naps during the 24-hour period with consistent sleep and wake-up times.

Pre-schoolers (aged 3-5 years) are recommended to have 10 to 13 hours of good quality sleep, which may include a nap, with consistent sleep and wake-up times.