



## St Margaret's Kindergarten

### Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements Policy

#### Rationale

St Margaret's Kindergarten promotes safe, healthy eating habits in line with the Right Bite *Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools* and relates to the DECD wellbeing strategy.

We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit children in three ways:

1. Short term: maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health.
2. Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning activities.

Therefore:

- staff at this preschool 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 for their children at preschool.

This food policy has been established after consultation with staff and parents within the preschool community.

#### Curriculum

Our preschool's food and nutrition curriculum:

- is consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, and the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*
- includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health
- includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food
- integrates nutrition across the Early Years Learning framework where possible, relating to the developmental learning outcome: **'Children have a strong sense of wellbeing'** evident when children show an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.

Educators promote this learning when they model and reinforce health, nutrition and personal hygiene practices with children.

#### The Learning environment

Children at our preschool:

- have fresh, clean tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day
- eat routinely at scheduled break times
- eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing
- nutritious foods

Our preschool:

- provides rewards/encouragements that are not related to food or drink
- understands and promotes the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children
- teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum

#### Food supply

Our preschool:

- encourages healthy **food and drink choices** for children in line with the *Right Bite* strategy
- encourages food choices which are representative of the foods of the preschool community
- ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- ensures a healthy food supply for preschool **activities and events** in line with the *Right Bite* strategy
- displays nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating

St Margaret's has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home:

### **Fruit Time:**

Parents and carers are to supply fruit and vegetables at fruit time to:

- provide children with important minerals and vitamins
- encourage a taste for healthy foods.
- Encourage chewing which promotes oral muscle development
- Fresh fruits, vegetables or a slice of cheese are recommended for fruit time

### **Lunch Time:**

Parents and carers are to supply a healthy lunch in line with the *Right Bite Strategy*.

#### **Food and drinks provided to children:**

- Water is available for the children at all times
- Children are to bring along a named drink bottle and request water as the acceptable choice.
- Staff will ensure that food provided to children by the preschool is in line with the **Right Bite** strategy.
- Staff supervise children whilst eating
- Staff model healthy eating by sitting down with the children and eating with them.
- Children will be encouraged to dispose of their food scraps in the appropriate bucket for composting.

**FOODS UNSUITABLE FOR FRUIT/LUNCH TIME:** include packaged foods, cakes, sweets. ALL NUT PRODUCTS. Cordials and sweetened fruit juices are not recommended.

#### **Food safety**

Our preschool:

- promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum
- encourages staff to access training as appropriate to the *Right Bite Strategy*
- provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.

#### **Anaphylaxis/Nut Allergy**

Anaphylaxis is a serious and sudden form of allergic reaction and usually occurs within minutes of exposure to a trigger substance. Anaphylaxis can be life threatening without immediate appropriate treatment. There are times when children attending our preschool have severe life threatening allergies to particular foods/substances.

Some children are highly allergic to nuts. It is vitally important that no products containing nuts, e.g. peanut paste, nutella, muesli bars, etc come to kindergarten. Staff will inform the kindergarten community when there are children with severe allergies attending and what foods/ substances trigger these reactions through our newsletters.

Photos of children with food allergies are on display in the office and kitchen for staff to identify.

#### **Working with families, health services & industry**

Our preschool:

- invites parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our food and nutrition policy
- provides information to families and caregivers about the *Right Bite Strategy* through a variety of ways including:
  - newsletters
  - policy development/review
  - information on enrolment
  - pamphlet/poster displays

The staff at St Margaret's Kindergarten thanks you in advance for your support of this policy.

#### ***National Quality Standard 2.2***

#### ***Regulation 168(2)(a)***

#### ***Related key regulations 77,78,79,80***

#### ***Reference***

*Right Bite Food and Nutrition Policy for Preschool – Nov 2007*

*Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia, and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating Get up and Grow*