



FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY

Loxton District Children's Centre	
Policy ID:	POL-
Version:	3
Review Date:	Jan 2017
Next Review Date:	Jan 2019

1. Policy Statement – Woodleigh's Food Philosophy

The Loxton District Children's Centre (LDCC) continues to acknowledge the importance of establishing healthy eating behaviours early in life and as such promotes healthy eating practices that support the National Quality Standards.

Eating habits formed in childhood are often transferred into adulthood, and so this policy aims to encourage healthy eating behaviours from a young age. Healthy eating promotes proper growth and development, improves concentration, learning and behaviour, promotes resistance to infection and minimises future health risks. In 2011-13, 25.3% of Australian children aged 5-17 years were overweight or obese. Children in rural and remote areas are more likely to be overweight or obese than their city peers.

The Centre recognises that parents have the right to choose what and how much to feed their children at home, and does not encroach upon this right. The Centre's philosophy and approach to food while children are in the long day care setting is that we only offer nutritious, varied, high quality food.

Morning tea is provided by the parents/ guardians. Each child is to bring along a piece of fruit for morning tea each day. Fruit is to be supplied in whole pieces or if cut pieces, needs to be packaged from a supermarket. Lunch, afternoon tea and a late snack are provided by the Centre, taking into consideration specific dietary needs and age groups – and this is inclusive in the fee. The centre does not provide or give breakfast. Safe drinking water is available to children throughout the day.

Parents are encouraged to provide feedback regarding the menu to the Director and/ or the Centre's Cook, and to raise any concerns regarding food practices in your child's room directly with your child's primary carer in the first instance.

This policy is to provide a healthy and balanced diet for your child in line with the Nutrition Australia Guidelines. The centre aims to provide an eating environment that is safe, positive and supports healthy eating for all children.

2. Procedure

1. Parents of bottle-fed infants must provide enough labelled, prepared bottles of breast milk / formula or water / formula powder. Bottles can be heated in a microwave when the correct procedure is followed (see procedure in room). Breast milk will not be heated in the microwave. Bottles will not be given to children in a cot or bed. Please note that bottles containing cordial, flavoured milk, juice, soft drinks or medication will not be given to children.
2. The centre will provide documentation of correct storing/thawing/warming procedures for breast milk and formula (refer to procedure in the room).
3. The centre encourages and supports the provision for mothers to breastfeed. Staff will contact the mother when their child is due for a breastfeed if requested by the parent(s). Mothers can choose to breastfeed their children in the child's room or can request a quiet area away from distractions.
4. Drinks will be frequently offered and will consist of full cream milk or water.
5. After 6 months of age, staff will offer and encourage children to begin drinking from a cup. Bottles will not be given to children over 12 months of age.

Loxton District Children's Centre	
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6. Solid foods (smooth food) will be introduced gradually from 4 – 6 months, with prior advice from the parent(s) that the child has begun solids at home. Progression from pureed food to semi-solid and solid food will be made as soon as your child is ready, to encourage chewing.
7. All meals served at the Centre will have a high nutritional value and will take into account the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents and Nutrition Australia guidelines for Infant nutrition. The menu will provide at least 50% recommended daily intake for key nutrients.
8. The menu is reviewed by the centre's Cook and Director every six months and incorporates feedback from the staff, parents and children.
9. Whenever possible fresh fruit and vegetables will be used rather than canned. When fresh produce is unavailable or cost prohibitive, the Centre will endeavour to use frozen Australian produce (picked and packed in Australia) rather than imported frozen produce where possible.
10. **The centre is a nut minimisation centre.** No peanut butter or nut products will be used when in the rooms where children are present or in preparation of children's meals. There may be some children at the centre who are allergic to products that contain nuts. If parents bring in any food, it must not contain any nuts and must not be made at home (where traces of nuts may be evident).
11. Staff are trained in First Aid in an Education and Care Setting. This includes but is not limited to Anaphylaxis Awareness to deal with any medical emergency.
12. All meals and snacks will be low in refined sugar. Recipes used will have the sugar content reduced. Only un-sweetened products will be used (eg tinned fruit in juice, not syrup). Artificial sweeteners will not be used.
13. All meals and snacks will be low in salt, preservatives and colourings. Foods with a higher salt content such as vegemite will be served sparingly and occasionally.
14. On significant festive days (eg. Christmas, Easter, Halloween etc) processed meats higher in salt, fat and preservatives such as hot dogs, salami, fritz, chicken nuggets, sausage rolls etc may be served in minimal amounts.
15. Food will be high in fibre. Wholemeal bread and pasta will be used regularly in the weekly menu. Where appropriate baked goods will contain some wholemeal flour.
16. The Centre's fortnightly menu will consist of a variety of nutritious foods from the five food groups;
 - Plenty of vegetables of different types and colours, legumes and beans
 - Fruit
 - Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties, such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley
 - Lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, and legumes/beans
 - Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives
17. The menu will be emailed to parents every Thursday for the week ahead and displayed prominently in the Centre. Occasionally there will be late menu substitutions to allow for donations of fresh produce

Loxton District Children's Centre	
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to be used promptly and these changes will be written up on the board or on the existing displayed menu during the day.

18. A wide variety of foods will be offered, including foods from other cultures. Different cultural meals will be served to the children on a regular basis. Staff will encourage the children to try these new foods and role model positive attitudes towards trying new and different foods.
19. Breakfast should be consumed at home before the children arrive at the morning session and lunch should be consumed before the afternoon session.
20. The centre will offer children who are still hungry, seconds at lunch time if all children have been served. A light late snack will be served between 4:30pm – 5pm.
21. **Special diets.** The Centre will cater for children with allergies, diabetes, colic, religious beliefs, and medically certified food intolerances. In some instances, parents/guardians may be asked to supply specialised food if the diet is very different to the food already used.

Individual dietary needs, restrictions or allergies must be recorded upon enrolment and discussed with the Director/ Assistant Director and Room Coordinator.

Parents and guardians are responsible for the health and wellbeing of their children and need to provide relevant health care information. For example:

Food Allergy

- Medical evidence supported by a health professional
- Information on severity of allergy
- Negotiation on the provision of suitable food
- Care and emergency care plans in place

Food Intolerance

- Medical evidence supported by a health professional
- Information on offending foods, what symptoms are common
- Negotiation on the provision of suitable foods
- Care plan

It is not feasible for the Centre to cater for every individual palate or preference. Children who are fussy eaters and frequently refuse to eat what is offered may be offered an alternative after efforts have been made to encourage the child to eat. These alternatives may include a piece of fruit or plain vegetables, plain rice or noodles, or a sandwich. Parents are encouraged to meet with the Director and the Cook in the event that their child is refusing food at the Centre and develop a strategy to address their concerns.

22. Meals and snack times will be happy, friendly and relaxed. Socially accepted eating habits will be encouraged. Children will be shown how to use eating utensils according to their age and development. Children will not be forced to eat and will not be given food or drink when they are running, playing, laughing or crying.

Loxton District Children's Centre	
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23. Hard fruit and vegetables will be cooked or grated to soften them and all bones will be removed from fish or meat.
24. Food will be prepared and stored hygienically with continual training for food handlers, including the resources and facilities available for staff to provide for each child's daily nutritional needs.

Food Safety and Hygiene requirements for Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code include:

- The centre must show evidence that comply with the National Food Safety Standards – a confirmation letter from the council
- Food Safety Practices
 - Temperature monitoring
 - Monitor deliveries
 - Maintain a pest control regime
 - Review the cleaning schedule
- Food Safety Training – Staff trained in basic food hygiene

25. Possums room: Parents will be advised of their child's food intake each day at pick up time, and details will be recorded on the white board to sight. The fortnightly menu will be displayed above at the sign in desk for parents to view.

Joey's room: Parents will be advised of their child's food intake each day at pick up time by educators. The weekly menu will be displayed on the white board to sight.

Kangaroos room: Parents will be advised of their child's food intake each day at pick up time, and details will be recorded on the white board to sight. The fortnightly menu will be displayed in the passage near the kitchen for parents to view.

Kookaburras room: Food intake details are not routinely kept for every individual child in this room, however staff generally observe and participate in meal times and will be available to speak with at pick up time for parents with any queries about their child's eating. The fortnightly menu is displayed in the Kookaburra's room for parents to view.

26. The importance of nutritional healthy food will be discussed with children as part of their daily program. Children will be encouraged to be involved in food preparation and cooking activities with staff.
27. **Birthdays.** Ice cream, cake or other 'party' food is not to be brought into the Centre. It is not expected that parents supply anything to the Centre for their child's birthday. Birthdays will be celebrated by singing, playing and other ways to help make the birthday child feel special.
28. **Special Occasions.** Food is an important part of cultural events, nationally celebrated occasions and fundraising events (examples: Chinese New Year, Shrove Tuesday/Pancake Day, Australia Day etc). When food is incorporated into a special occasion at the Centre, or when children are involved in cooking as part of their program (eg Christmas biscuits etc) it will be consistent with the Nutrition Policy.

3. Review

The Food and Nutrition Policy will be reviewed every two years. Three months prior to the review date, the Director will call for nominations from parents and staff to form a Nutrition sub-committee in order to carry out

Loxton District Children's Centre	
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the review, draft the changes and seek feedback from the wider Woodleigh community .

4. References

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand (Standard 3.2.1 Food Safety Programs)
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand (Standard 3.3.1 Food Safety Programs for Food Service to Vulnerable Persons)
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand (Standard 3.2.2 Food Safety Practices and General Requirements – Australia Only)
- Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013

5. Related LDCC Documents

- Work Health and Safety Policy

Endorsed by Director – Jo Mitchell	
Director Signature.....	Date/...../.....
Endorsed by Employee Rep. Name –	
Employee Signature	Date...../...../.....
Adopted by Management Committee	
Management Committee Chairperson Signature.....	Date...../...../.....
Date Minuted:...../...../.....	Date of implementation:/...../.....

Review History

Document History	Version No	Issue Date	Description of Change:
	1.0		Reviewed Document, June 2008
	1.0		Reviewed Document, August 2010
	1.0		Reviewed Document, April 2012
	2.0		Document reviewed, researched and re-written, December 2014 – Sept 2015
	3.0	Dec 2016	Document reviewed and change made, December 2016



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