



Food and Nutrition Policy

At Port Lincoln Children's Centre we believe healthy eating helps children grow, develop and maintain healthy bodies and minds. Early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong eating habits that can benefit children in three ways:

Short term- maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health;

Long Term- minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.

Good Nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning activities.

Port Lincoln Children's Centre;

- understands the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children;
- teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum;
- is a breastfeeding friendly site.

Therefore

- Staff at P.L.C.C will model and encourage healthy eating behaviours
- Food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children
- Families are encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the Right Bite Strategy for their children at preschool

The Food and Nutrition policy will be implemented in the following ways

Curriculum

- Includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of food for good health.
- Includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food.
- Integrates nutrition across the curriculum where possible
- Is part of the Early Years Learning Framework

Learning Environment

At Port Lincoln Children's Centre we:

- Have fresh clean tap water available at all times and encourage children to drink water regularly throughout the day;
- Encourage children to bring their own named drink bottle;
- Eat in a positive, appropriate social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours.

Food Supply

Food brought from home

- On enrolment families are advised of the healthy options we encourage, in line with the Right Bite strategy ([Attachment 5](#))
- Ensure healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive.

Centre provided food

- The Centre will provide families the option of a healthy nutritious lunch menu for babies and children based on the “Dietary requirements for Children and Adolescents in Australia”
- Menus will be reviewed on regularly to allow for the inclusion of seasonal foods, special occasions and curriculum focus.
- The menu will be displayed for families’ perusal.
- Where possible will make use of the seasonal vegetables from the Centre’s garden.
- Children’s choices will be respected at all times. They will be encouraged to try new foods and alternative choices are available.
- Food will be available for hungry children including morning fruit, lunch and afternoon snacks.

Safe Food Handling

- Food provided by the Centre will be prepared, stored and served hygienically
- Food preparation facilities will be maintained in a hygienic condition in accordance with the P.L.C.C’s Food Safety Program
- Staff will be trained in food safety and hygiene using the “Bug Busters” video and quiz.
- Food safety is promoted to children through the curriculum
- Management will ensure adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- Correct hand washing procedures are encouraged for children and staff.
- See Kitchen Policy for more detail.

Families, Community and Health Services.

- Families are encouraged to be involved in the review of food and nutrition policy.
- The Centre will seek information from parents regarding dietary requirements of their children.
- Information of nutrition, healthy food choices, safe food handling and storage is available through to families via newsletters, pamphlets and posters
- Health professionals involved in food and nutrition may be invited into the Centre to give information to families and children.
- Staff will communicate with families about their child’s nutrition. Parents will be informed when staff have concerns about their child.

Infants

- Breastfeeding is encouraged and supported at our centre. Comfortable seating is available for mothers to feed their children.
- The storage, thawing and warming of breastmilk and infant formula will follow guidelines sourced from Australian Breastfeeding Association.
- Families are required to provide their own infant formula and suitable food and foods for their baby if they are unable to eat meals provided.

Fluids for Children at our Centre

- Water is the primary drink for children at the centre and will be available at all times and regularly offered to children([Attachment 4](#))
- Milk will be served with morning tea as part of the daily dietary intake

Eating Environment

PLCC recognises that eating should be an enjoyable, relaxed social experience. Our staff will model positive and socially acceptable eating habits such as:

- Appropriate use of utensils
- Encouraging self-help skills
- Encourage conversation relating to support social interaction and development of knowledge of nutrition and health
- Proactively reinforce hygiene practices before, during and after food related experiences
- Remaining seated whilst eating to minimise choking risks ([Attachment 3](#))

Other dietary considerations including multicultural foods

Port Lincoln Children's Centre aims to:

- Support and celebrate families' cultural and food practices.
- Offer a variety of foods from different cultures
- Meet dietary considerations as required for special diets both for medical reasons ([Attachment 1](#)) and cultural or religious reasons ([Attachment 2](#))
- Celebrate special occasions in many different ways with food being only one of these.

Celebrations at our centre are important for our families and when required the Centre will supply meals for special occasions. These will include a mixture of healthy food and 'occasional' food.

We celebrate children's birthdays with a birthday crown, photo and singing "Happy Birthday". Families may supply birthday cakes but they will only be accepted if purchased and still in the original wrapping displaying a list of ingredients. Cakes must be of a low risk nature and not contain cream, custard or nuts.

Cultural meat will be purchased from a butcher when required, with all the safety requirements in place for safe food handling. This may include kangaroo tail.

National Quality Framework

QA 2 Element 2.2.1 Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child.

Early years Learning Framework:

Outcome 3 children take an increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing.

Sources:

Staying healthy in childcare 5th edition

Right bite: Easy guide to Healthy Food and drink supply for SA schools and preschools

www.health.sa.gov.au Guidelines for Food and Nutrition Policy

[Wwww.cyh.sa.gov.au/HealthTopics/HealthTopicsCategories.aspx?&p=302](http://www.cyh.sa.gov.au/HealthTopics/HealthTopicsCategories.aspx?&p=302)

www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Issue No: 3
Date
Review date
Signed