

Food brought from home.

Objective: To ensure children bring food into the centre that is safe, varied and nutritious.

Hawthorn Child Care Centre regularly displays recommended intakes of food groups, guidelines on nutrition and healthy, easily prepared recipes. We endeavour to educate both parents and children that any foods brought into the centre are nutritious and varied.

Parents are made aware of severe allergies: posters are displayed on the noticeboard clearly stating that our centre is a 'nuts-free' centre. Any other relevant food-allergy information is constantly updated for parents to view.

- ❖ All children bring a piece of fruit each day to share. This is cut up daily for 'Fruit Time'. We encourage parents that this is the only food that needs to be brought into the centre. We also ask that parent's do not 'pre-cut' the fruit to prevent any cross contamination. Any fruit provided that is 'pre-cut' will be thrown out.
- ❖ Parents are made aware that our centre promotes healthy, nutritious eating habits. We display eating charts and dietary guidelines.
- ❖ Families will be given a copy of the Centre's Food and Nutrition Policy at orientation prior to the child commencing.
- ❖ Our centre clearly displays a permanent poster informing parents that the centre is a 'nuts-free' centre. Any other food allergies will be displayed as they arise. Any foods that contain nuts or other allergy related foods, if found, will be immediately disposed of and the parent notified that this action has been taken.
- ❖ Children's kindergarten lunchboxes remain in their kindergarten bags at all times unless they have consumables that need to be stored in the fridge. Both Kindergartens that the children attend have the same nut free policy that the centre has.
- ❖ Children are fed at regular intervals with snacks provided. Parents are therefore made aware that it is not necessary for additional foods to be brought into the centre.
- ❖ The meals are written up each day on the notice board for parents to view.
- ❖ Parents are made aware if their child is not eating well within the centre.

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- ❖ Children's daily eating habits are recorded on their room's whiteboard. This record provides parents with information pertaining to their child's consumption of food throughout the day. A tick is used if the child has eaten well, specific information is provided if the child did not eat particularly well. This is then followed up with the parent at the end of the day. This communication reassures parents that their child is eating at the centre and allows us to inform a parent if their child is not so that action can be taken.
- ❖ Fussy eaters and children with specific eating requirements will be catered for by the Centre. Unless specific arrangements are made with the parents.
- ❖ Children with specific cultural food exemptions are catered for within our centre. Alternative meats and foods are provided. The cook clearly has specific needs displayed in the kitchen and all staff are informed. However, if parents wish to bring in individual meals we encourage nutritional and varied meals. Parents will be reminded to comply with the centre's allergy guidelines when providing food from home.
- ❖ Due to specific dietary and allergy requirements, parents are not to bring cakes for birthdays. We ask that you bring a bag of Natural Confectionary lollies for staff to hand out to children at going home time.

Food provided by the Centre

Objective: To provide children with food and drink that is safe, varied, nutritious and culturally diverse.

Hawthorn Child Care Centre understands that good nutrition is of vital importance to young children. Our policy ensures that children in long daycare are offered foods that provide them with at least 50% of their recommended daily intake of key nutrients: we aim to make a significant contribution to their overall intake of energy, vitamins and minerals.

All foods provided are prepared for individual age groups, on par with their eating capabilities. All foods prepared and served are done so with allergies in mind. Our menus are varied, nutritious and culturally diverse. We encourage suggestions and feedback from parents. We aim to support and provide adequately for children with food allergies, dietary requirements and restrictions and specific cultural and religious beliefs. Dietary information and centre recipes are provided to parents to assist them in planning healthy meals for their child at home.

- ❖ Food provided is consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia (NHMRC 2013).

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- ❖ Our menus are a 6 weekly rotational menu and aim to provide children with all of the food groups that are required for children's healthy growing needs.
- ❖ Menus are reviewed twice yearly and are displayed in each classroom and at the front of the Centre. When the menu's are reviewed these are emailed to parents asking for feedback and suggestions.
- ❖ All foods are prepared so that they are appropriate for a specific developmental age group. This is to prevent choking while at the same time focusing on children's specific eating capabilities.
- ❖ All foods offered encourage independent eating. This is a developmental goal teaching independence and self-sufficiency. Children will be encouraged to eat as much or as little as they like.
- ❖ Tap water is the main drink offered to children and is available at all times via a self-serving container and clean cups. Each room has a method of ensuring children has access to water throughout the day. Milk is offered to children during morning tea.
- ❖ Children will be offered with food throughout the day if they are hungry, not just restricted to scheduled meal times. Children will be offered fruit or a savoury biscuit.
- ❖ As part of our enrolment procedure a 'special dietary needs' questionnaire must be completed by parents/guardians. This allows our centre to take into account specific dietary needs on an individual level and provide a tailored diet if required.
- ❖ Food is prepared and served in a safe and hygienic manner, with positive and independent food eating habits encouraged (*as outlined in the chapter heading 'Mealtimes and the eating environment'*)
- ❖ All staff at Hawthorn Child Care Centre are required to receive training in nutrition and food safety and food handling no later than 1 month after employment and then 12 monthly.
- ❖ Parents are encouraged through newsletters, email and our noticeboard to contribute to the menu. We specifically encourage the sharing of healthy easily prepared meal ideas from parents' including culturally diverse meals that we can add to our centre's menu.
- ❖ We understand that it may take several attempts for a child to develop a 'taste' for a new food and to keep encouraging in a positive manner.
- ❖ We understand that children do not always know what foods are good for them and need to be guided and educated. We aim to offer and support the

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introduction of new foods in a positive and social environment while maintaining a commitment to providing good nutrition for growth and development.

- ❖ Babies will be fed by educators individually, where appropriate older babies will be encouraged to try it themselves with guidance.
- ❖ Children independently feeding themselves a bottle will do so sitting up to reduce the risk of choking

Mealtimes and the eating environment

Objective: To provide a safe, supportive and social environment in which children can enjoy eating.

Mealtimes and the eating environment play a large role in the nutritional outcomes of children. Hawthorn Child Care Centre aims to positively encourage the forming of good eating habits. We explicitly teach children that it is not only about the 'taste' of foods that should determine their choices, but to teach them what foods contain i.e. minerals and nutrients and their role within our body. This knowledge will help their decisions when trying a variety of foods.

Educators within Hawthorn Childcare Centre will ensure that:

- ❖ Children wash their hands (supervised) with soap and water before each meal. Children unable to do so will have their hands wiped with a pre-moistened disposable wipe.
- ❖ Mealtimes are sociable occasions.
- ❖ Children learn responsibilities by passing out the bowls and passing around the cutlery container and cups (where age appropriate)
- ❖ Children learn independence by being able to serve themselves (where age appropriate)
- ❖ Educators always sit and eat with the children, encourage them to try the meal and set an example. Educators promote positive discussion about the foods and conversations are based around the foods whether it be; promoting a cultural awareness or the nutrients within the food.

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- ❖ Food is not used as a punishment or reward at Hawthorn Child Care Centre.
- ❖ Food preferences are respected while at the same time a variety of foods are promoted and discussed.
- ❖ Cultural food events are practised and celebrated and incorporated into the menu and mealtimes.
- ❖ Educators will always ensure that mealtimes are an enjoyable and safe time where the development of social skills can take place.
- ❖ Children are required to be seated and supervised at all mealtimes to ensure a safe eating environment.
- ❖ Foods that are considered choking hazards are not offered to children. All vegetables provided are cooked. Hawthorn Child Care Centre follows the guidelines as advised by Child and Youth Health.
- ❖ Below is a table extracted from Child and Youth Health's information for families regarding choking of food and children under 4 years of age:

Choking Hazards

Type of food	Examples	How to modify to make food safer
Foods with skins	Sausages, hotdogs, Frankfurt's.	Remove skins, cut lengthwise, and then into small pieces.
Round foods	Grapes and cherry tomatoes.	Cut in half.
Foods with seeds, pips and stones	Cherries, stone fruit, olives.	Remove seeds, pips and stones and cut into small pieces.
Foods that are hard, crunchy or stringy	Hard fruit and vegetables such as raw apple, carrot and celery.	Grate, very finely slice, cook or mash.
	Corn chips, popcorn, nuts, and hard or sticky	Don't serve these

	lollies. Very hard crackers that don't dissolve or break up easily.	
Foods that are tough and chewy	Meat with gristle and bone. Tough meat.	Remove fat, gristle and bone. Cut into small pieces. Mince, shred or slow cook.
Foods containing small bones	Fish, chicken.	Remove bones and cut into small pieces.

Breastfeeding, Breast Milk and Bottle Warming

Healthy lifestyles and good nutrition for each child is paramount. As such, we encourage and make it possible for all families to continue breast feeding their child for as long as they wish.

We aim to work with families with children who are still being breastfed and provide a supportive environment by feeding children breast milk supplied by their families.

We will provide a supportive environment for women who breastfeed and provide them with a quiet area to do so within the centre if they wish.

Families will be regularly reminded by educators and the service to update the service in regards to their child's preferences, habits, likes, dislikes, dietary requirements and restrictions.

Breast milk procedure

- Breast milk that has been expressed should be brought to the service in a clean sterile named container.
- We will refrigerate the milk at 4 degrees Celsius until it is required.
- Breast milk will be warmed and/or thawed by using a bottle warmer.
- The milk will then be temperature tested by educators before being given to the child.
- If the service does not have enough breast milk from the family to meet the child's needs that day, individual families will be contacted on what the service should do in these circumstances.

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- Unused milk will be returned to families at the end of the day when they come to collect their child.

Educators who Breastfeed at the Service

- The service also recognises the importance and benefits of breastfeeding and that many women will return to work before they wish to wean their children. Requests for allowances to be made for educators to continue breastfeeding once they have returned to work at the service will be treated sympathetically and reasonably and all efforts will be made to support the educator in her choice to continue breastfeeding her child.
- On return to work from maternity leave, female educators may seek to change their work arrangements. The returning staff member will have a meeting with the Nominated Supervisor to try and work out an arrangement which suits the educator, the Nominated Supervisor and also the running of the service. The service will provide Lactation Breaks for the educator to express milk or breastfeed her child. The Nominated Supervisor will be reasonably flexible as to when these occur.
- A comfortable place will be found to allow the educator to breastfeed.
- When an educator is in the process of breastfeeding her child or expressing milk, educator to child ratios cannot be compromised. Educators will work to cover the Lactation Break as they would any other break.

Safe Storage and Heating of Babies Bottles

Our service will not use microwaves because milk may not heat evenly, causing hot spots which could lead to children being scalded.

For infant formula or cow's milk, the service will always use:

Bottle Warmers

Our service will use bottle warmers that have a thermostat control to heat Infant Formula/Cow's Milk/Breast Milk

- The service will use the bottle warmer as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- Educators will ensure that bottle warmers are inaccessible to children at all times.
- Bottles will be warmed for less than 10 minutes.

Food & Curriculum

Objective: To teach children about food and nutrition. To use food within the curriculum to make learning fun and educational

Hawthorn Child Care centre is aware that it has a responsibility towards contributing to the children's knowledge of and understanding of healthy eating of all enrolled children. Studies have revealed that this education makes important contributions to the choices they make later in life.

Food is included in our curriculum as a tool towards literacy and numeracy, fine and gross motor skills, social skills and awareness of other cultures. Within these five main domains we are able to educate children on the many aspects of food, to explicitly make the connections between food and the energy it provides, its role within societies and cultures and its impact on individuals.

- ❖ Children are given opportunities to learn about food and nutrition.
- ❖ Our centre includes food and nutrition activities within our planned curriculum.
- ❖ Our Director encourages the use of food in spontaneous programming.
- ❖ We include food activities from a variety of cultures.
- ❖ Mealtimes are both a social and educational time within our centre. We take the opportunity to discuss nutrition and energy with the children in a fun and positive way.
- ❖ We teach mealtime behaviour, social skills, independence and responsibility during mealtimes. Children are able to serve their own meals and help set up and clear away the plates and cutlery.
- ❖ We discuss food safety and hygiene with children.
- ❖ We discuss food allergies with children.
- ❖ We incorporate oral hygiene, cleaning our teeth, the spreading of germs etc. in connection with food.

- ❖ Food is a common element to relish in other cultures, and to educate children about the world and our environment.

Special Diets

Objective: To cater for the special needs of children with food allergies, food sensitivities or medical diets in consultation with parents and the appropriate medical professionals.

At Hawthorn Child Care Centre our utmost concern is for the health and well-being of all enrolled children. We aim to cater for special dietary needs as much as possible, whether they be for health, cultural or religious needs. We follow the procedural guidelines as outlined by DECD when dealing with special dietary needs. It is a requirement that centres are provided with written information from a medical professional and we ask to have this information passed on prior to the child commencing care. We then develop a management plan in conjunction with the parents to ensure that the child has limited exposure to the allergen.

Procedure for special diets:

- ❖ Families are informed what dietary support the centre can provide before their child is formerly enrolled.
- ❖ Our centre negotiates special health diet requirements on an individual basis. This determines the contributions that can be made by both parent and centre. This can be reviewed and renegotiated. Our Centre will aim to accommodate specific dietary requirements as much as possible.
- ❖ Special diets based on cultural and religious reasons will be discussed and negotiated with parents and accommodated by the centre on an individual basis as much as possible.
- ❖ For special health requirements, our centre needs to be provided with a health care plan as deemed necessary by a relevant health care professional. This needs to include specific medical conditions and recommended emergency procedures and medications required.
- ❖ Our menu's are written in conjunction with the allergy/intolerance information we are provided by parents. We endeavour to tailor the menu to suit each child attending that day. If not our cook is able to prepare modified meals on a daily

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basis. This procedure works quite well for children with special dietary requirements or cultural needs.

- ❖ The health and safety of the child is foremost and any concerns about the child's dietary intake will be discussed and negotiated with parents whenever deemed necessary by staff.

Steps taken if a parent or carer suspects that a child has a food allergy or food sensitivity (food intolerance).

- ❖ Parents or staff will be informed of the suspected case. A food intolerance should be confirmed by a Paediatrician, Immunologist or Dietician. The specialist needs to provide detailed information about the allergy or sensitivity and details of any emergency procedure required.
- ❖ Parents are informed that a Dietician's input is strongly recommended. Our Director will ask parents to obtain detailed written information on the special diet required from a Dietician.
- ❖ Our centre will negotiate with parents of what dietary needs the centre can provide.
- ❖ Educators will ask families to keep us informed to determine how the diet is progressing and how long the child needs to be on the special diet.
- ❖ Emergency procedures specific to individual children's special dietary requirements are displayed where all staff can view them.

Below is the recommended process as outlined by DECD [**] the procedural guidelines for special diets.

Step 1. Before Enrolment: provision of general information to families and a supportive environment for children and students.

Step 2. When a need is identified: collection of individual health care information (and agreement about interim measures).

Step 3. The planning process: negotiation of an individual management plan.

Step 4. Monitoring and review: ensuring health support plans are current and effective.

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Below are some contacts where further information can be obtained by parents about the management of a food allergy or food sensitivity.

Nutrition Department (Children, Youth and Women's Health Service)

Phone (08) 8161 7233

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Allergy Unit.

Phone (02) 9515 8244

Community Dietician/Nutritionist

Local Doctor

Allergy specialist e.g. Immunologist or Paediatrician

Private Dietician

Below is the recommended schedule for introducing solids. Our centre follows these guidelines unless specific needs are asked by individual parents. Staff negotiate individual requests with parents, however, the baby's safety and health are our utmost concern within this negotiation period.

Parents are asked to seek dietetic advice regarding the timing of the introduction of eggs, nuts, cow's milk/diary products, fish and soy if there is a strong family history of allergy.

Menu development guide	
Age and texture	Suitable foods
Birth – 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Breastmilk/infant formula provides all the nutrition a baby needs for about the first 6 months of life..
'First tastes' 6 months to 7 months (if needed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Breastmilk/infant formulaIntroduce first solids:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- First introduce baby rice cereal (iron enriched)

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<p>earlier, can offer solids between 4-6 months, but NOT BEFORE 4 months).</p> <p>Smooth and pureed foods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Then fruits and vegetables - Then pureed, well cooked lean meat, poultry and *fish "Baby" *Yoghurts and *custard, <p>* Cow's milk in small amounts in the preparation of foods</p>
<p>'Learning to chew and self-feed'</p> <p>7-12 months</p> <p>Mashed or chopped food progressing to finger foods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breast milk/infant formula as the main drink. • Fruits, vegetables and legumes • Well-cooked lean meat, poultry and *fish. • *Yoghurt with soft lumps, *custard, *cheeses. • Other cereals (eg, wheat, oats), bread pasta • *Eggs – (well cooked)
<p>'Centre menu with some changes'</p>	<p>Offer a wide variety of foods from the centre menu, some changes in texture or flavour may be needed. Use the <u>Nutrition Checklist</u> as a guide to food variety but quantities may differ for younger age groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breastmilk and/or full cream cows milk as a drink • Water and no more than one small cup of diluted fruit juice from a cup, not a bottle.

Last Review Date: July 2017

Next Review Date: July 2018

Changes made: No changes made

Sources: Child and Youth Health, Raising Child Network, DECD, ACECQA, Mitcham Council, Breastfeeding association.

Quality Area: 2