Nutrition & Food Safety Policy

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Date Created: July 2011 Date to be reviewed: May 2025 Version No: 12

Policy Statement:

Yarrunga Early Learning Centre provides a wholesome, nutritionally balanced and sustainable diet that is appropriate for each child and caters to their dietary needs.

Yarrunga is committed to individual care and aims to meet the needs of all children, regardless of their abilities, nationality, denomination or family situation.

We are committed to prioritising children’s health, safety and wellbeing through safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food.

Background:

Yarrunga recognises the importance of providing children in Long Day Care with at least 50% of their daily intake of nutrients in the form of healthy and appetising snacks, meals and drinks. A variety of food will be provided, including a range of textures and tastes, appropriate to the developmental needs of different age groups. Fresh fruit and vegetables will be offered with meals. The weekly menu is displayed on the Parent’s Noticeboard in the Centre foyer.

Yarrunga recognises the value of liaising with the Community Health Department to obtain advice and support for families on the dietary requirements of their children.

Yarrunga has implemented the *Food Standard Code*. All Educators are aware of the procedures for maintaining the kitchen. The standards are displayed for reference in the kitchen.

As nutrition influences the health and wellbeing of both adults and children, Yarrunga’s educators will role model healthy eating and activity throughout the day to all children and families.

Promote the six key *Munch and Move* messages to promote healthy, active habits in children from a young age.

Develop menus in accordance with the Australian Government Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings, and the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia; and

Support families in educating their children about healthy food choices.

Early Years Learning Framework- Outcome 3 Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing.

Scope:

This policy applies to all children that attend Yarrunga Early Learning Centre. Excerpts of the policy are provided to parents in the Parent Information Handbook which is given to families on enrolment.

Relevant legislation:

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (77,78, 79,80) (modified 1/10/2023)

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (in force version 30/10/2023)

Food Act 2003 No 43 (in force version 13/01/2023)

Staying Healthy in Child Care \_ 6th Edition – 2024

 Food Standards Code.

Reference sources:

Munch and Move manuals and *Get Up & Grow*. Retrieved from [www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au)

Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood – Resource collection. Retrieved from <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/get-up-grow-resource-collection>

Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia. Retrieved from [www.nutritionaustralia.org](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org)

Australia New Zealand Food Authority – A Guide to the Food Safety Standards – Safe Food Australia NSW Food Australia.

Retrieved from <https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/publications/pages/safefoodaustralia3rd16.aspx>

Resourced 17/11/23 - [Foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/retail/childrens-services/changes-childrens services](https://yarrungaelc.sharepoint.com/Shared%20Documents/DATA/Master%20documents/Policies/2.%20Childrens%20Health%20and%20Safety/Nutrition/Nutrition%20%26%20Food%20Safety%20Policy.docx)

* Staying healthy in childcare sixth edition https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf
* <www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources.preparing-ebm>

Location of Information:

This Nutrition and Food Safety policy is available on Yarrunga’s website or on request.

Strategies:

**Professional development of staff and educators**

* Educators will be encouraged to attend *Munch and Move* professional development training or receive similar training and information.
* All educators will have access to the Get Up and Grow: *Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings.*
* The Catering Officer employed to prepare meals will be qualified in an approved training course of food handling, nutrition and hygiene, and will be provided with ongoing professional development opportunities to refresh their knowledge of children’s dietary needs, food handling and hygiene procedures. Our Catering Officer will undertake a ‘Food Safety Supervisor’ training to keep in line with current requirements.
* At least one educator in each room will attend or complete (online) food handling training. All staff will acquire the required skills and knowledge for safe food handling through a variety of means including:
* In-house training
* distribution of relevant documentation
* on-line courses and/or formal training courses

**Provision of food and drinks at Yarrunga**

**The Approved Provider will:**

* Ensure that all children always have access to safe drinking water.
* Ensure that all children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day.
* Ensure that food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and take into account each child’s individual dietary requirements, growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements.
* Ensure that an accessible menu is displayed which accurately describes the food and beverages provided each day, and
* Ensure that educators and staff are aware of the need to implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for at Yarrunga.

**The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:**

* All children will have access to safe drinking water at all times.
* All children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day.
* Ensure that as per the *Medical Conditions Policy,* Yarrunga shall promote a ‘nut free service’ and that all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to. Yarrunga Early Learning Centre Inc Policy and Procedures aim to protect children with allergies to peanuts and similar nut products. The centre has a policy that no food or products containing nuts should not be brought into the service.
* Food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, in consideration of growth and development needs, any known allergies and intolerances of specific children, individual dietary requirements and cultural and religious needs.
* Yarrunga displays an accessible menu which accurately describes the food and beverages provided each day.
* The menu is diverse and will reflect the cultural background of families and local community.
* Educators and staff implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children.

**Educators and Staff will ensure that:**

* Ensure that as per the *Medical Conditions Policy* Yarrunga shall remain a nut free centre and that all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to;
* Ensure that families are notified of any known allergens that pose a risk to a child and strategies for minimising the risk are developed.
* NO NUTS, food containing tree nuts will come into the service.
* Healthy eating is promoted through role modelling and eating with the children**.**
* Children are encouraged to make healthy food choices**.**
* All mealtimes are positive, relaxed and social**.**
* Children are encouraged to try new foods, and their food likes and dislikes are respected**.**
* Children are positively involved in mealtimes**.**
* Staff will adhere to best practices around safe storage and heating of both expressed breast milk and formula (see bottle preparation procedure)**.**
* They implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing, and storing food to minimise risk to children**;** and
* The introduction of solids to babies and toddlers will be done in consultation with families and in line with recognised guidelines.

**Supporting Families**

* Staff and educators will support families’ choices regarding infant feeding, including breastfeeding and formula feeding.
* Parents/guardians are responsible for advising Yarrunga if their child has any food allergies.
* Parents/ guardians of nursery aged children will be required to complete an “Introduction to New Foods” form and keep this information up to date. Educators will regularly check in with families to ascertain any changes in a child’s dietary needs, particularly with the infants in the nursery/toddler room.
* Yarrunga will provide families with up-to-date information on dietary requirements of young children to ensure optimal growth and development and provide families with opportunities to discuss ways to maximise the health and well-being of their children.
* Yarrunga will provide families with daily information about their child’s intake of food and drinks throughout the day.

**Education and information**

* Educators will engage children in learning experiences that are fun and enjoyable and incorporate key messages around healthy eating.
* Educators will provide safe opportunities for children to cook in order to facilitate their understanding of food preparation and safety. Educators will use the opportunity to explore other concepts such as science, maths, literacy etc. Hygiene practices will be role modelled by Educators and children will wash and dry their hands before and after the cooking experience. Educators will ensure that children participating in this learning experience will have their long hair tied back.
* To reduce the risk of harmful germs spreading through food. Children will only prepare food that will be cooked afterwards.
* Implemented learning experiences will be guided by the EYLF principles and incorporate the child’s identity.
* Families will be provided with current information about recommended guidelines around dietary requirements, screen time and physical activity.

Review and Evaluation:

* Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the Nutrition and Food Safety Policy regularly. Updated information will be incorporated as needed.
* Yarrunga offers appropriate and healthy food and beverages to all children and mealtimes will be relaxed and model healthy eating to children.
* Any changes to this policy will be notified to families 14 days prior to coming into force.
* This policy will be reviewed every 18months or as required.