

FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY

Rationale: We want to promote healthy eating messages to tamariki, parents/whānau and kaiako.

Purpose: To ensure that all tamariki health is promoted, and they are provided with appropriate and adequate food and fluids.

Helps: **Objective 2, priority 3.** Reduce barriers to education for all, including for Māori and Pacific learners/ākonga, disabled learners/ākonga and those with learning support needs.

Guidelines:

- To ensure all tamariki understand that healthy food creates a healthy body.
- To help tamariki appreciate the cultural and family/whānau values of food.
- To educate parents/mātua about healthy food so that they may be good role models to ensure healthy food is provided at home.

Strategies:

Kaiako will reinforce healthy foods by:

- Role modelling
- Including nutritional based activities into the tamariki programme
- Sitting with tamariki at meal times and discussing healthy food choices

Procedures:

- Water is provided at all times in the classroom, Kaiako will encourage tamariki to maintain hydration. Tamariki is strongly discouraged from sharing cups and drink bottles.
- Allergies, food intolerances and special dietary requirements will be a shared responsibility of the tamaiti family and centre. Medical advice needs to be sought before eliminating food from a tamaiti diet.
- If a tamaiti allergy is life threatening a management plan will be in place to ensure all Kaiako know the emergency protocols.
- Due to the severity of peanut allergies and to prevent choking, our centre is a **NUT FREE ZONE**. There are no nuts, peanuts or peanut butter kept on the premises and we request that parents/mātua do not send any food items containing nuts with their tamariki. Parents/mātua will be advised using a note system or verbally, if nuts are found to be present in any food tamariki bring to the Centre.

- We ask parents/mātua not to provide lollies or chocolates in their lunchboxes, they can have them at home for their treats.
- A record of baking completed and any shared food(e.g birthday cakes etc) at the centre will be kept. Along with a record of any food provided by the centre during service hours.
- Activities focusing on food nutrition, health and food safety will be incorporated into the centre's daily programme.
- We ask that any foods high in fat, sodium or sugar are kept to a minimum or just for special occasions.
- Hand washing and general hygiene routines are observed when kaiako and tamariki are handling food.
- Tamariki will be supervised during all meal times. Tamariki will remain seated while eating.
- Kaiako will sit with tamariki at meal times and discuss healthy choices and encourage the eating of healthy items first when available.
- Only milk or water shall be allowed for drinking by the children attending the centre.
Takeaways, lollies, energy drinks or fizzy drinks are also not permitted in the centre.
- Some foods such as yogurt raisin balls, apple, carrots and grapes may present a choking hazard. As from the 25th January 2021 there has been a change to the early childhood regulations around the types of foods that early childhood centres can provide. The Ministry of Health has also made the following provisions for how food is to be served in centres and identified the following choking hazards for children under 5, these were their recommendations:
 - The following foods will not be served in the centre by kaiako:
 - whole or pieces of nuts
 - large seeds, like pumpkin or sunflower seeds
 - hard or chewy sweets or lollies
 - crisps or chippies
 - hard rice crackers
 - dried fruit
 - sausages, saveloys and cheerio's
 - popcorn
 - marshmallows.

If the above food is provided by parent's/mātua in their lunch boxes, apart from lollies, nuts and marshmallows

- Tamariki will be served the food that has been provided by their parents/mātua in their own lunchboxes for kai times. The centre will only provide food that has been prepared to meet the regulations around the provision of food.

- All families/whānau have been given a copy of the foods which cause choking and have been informed of the regulations around the provision of food. New families/whānau sign this on their tamaiti enrolment form and current families/whānau have signed a letter saying they have read and understood the requirements.

Foods that pose a higher choking risk for children under five years

Please refer to <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/reducing-food-related-choking-babies-and-young-children-early-learning-services>

- No tamariki will have access to fluids or food while in bed.
- Tamariki with allergies will not be given any centre's party food or drink unless verbal permission is first gained from parents/mātua or guardians. An allergies poster is displayed in the classrooms with a photo of their tamaiti on it. This is hung up above the lunchbox trolley.
- If tamariki run out of food, kaiako will provide food that has been prepared to meet the regulations around the provision of food from our spare food cupboard.
- The dining room floor will be swept immediately after meal times to ensure that no food items are left lying around for tamariki to pick up and eat.
- The kitchen is maintained in a clean and hygienic manner at all times. All cups and cutlery used are washed in the dishwasher at the end of each session. Sterile dishwashing facilities ensure eating utensils are cleaned thoroughly.
- Food and food celebrations will be considered positive and social times.
- Kaiako encourage tamariki by role modelling healthy eating when they share meal times together.
- There is a blessing or karakia before every meal.
- Parents/mātua will be informed, if required, on their tamaiti eating habits regularly.
- Meal times are flexible and designed to meet the needs of tamariki eating habits. We start off the day with a rolling kai at approximately 9.30am, followed by lunch at 11.30, afternoon tea at 2.30pm and for the tamariki who stay late we then offer remaining tamariki their lunchboxes around 4.30pm unless asked for prior.

Date of review: June 2023

Signed:

Date of next review: June 2026