

# HEALTH, HYGIENE & FOOD SAFETY POLICY

## OVERVIEW

As per Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, our service has a nutritional and food safety policy and procedures in place to ensure quality practices relating to nutrition, food and beverages and dietary requirements are always followed.

Our Outside School Hours Care (OOSH) Service recognises the importance of safe food handling and healthy eating to the growth and development of young children and is committed to implementing the healthy eating key messages outlined in the Australian Dietary Guidelines for primary school aged children.

SUNBEAMS recognises the important role educators have in teaching healthy lifestyles through everyday experiences and routines and physical activity. Our educators support families by providing information about healthy food and drink for their children when visiting our service.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD	OTHER SERVICE POLICIES/ DOCUMENTATION	OTHER
r77, 78, 79, 80, 90, 91, 160, 162, 168, 170, 171, 172	Standard 2.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administration of First Aid Policy</li> <li>- Child Safe Environment Policy</li> <li>- Control of Infectious Disease Policy</li> <li>- Enrolment Policy</li> <li>- Communication Policy</li> <li>- Excursions/ Incursions Policy</li> <li>- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy</li> <li>- Inclusion Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ACECQA</li> <li>- Australian Dietary Guidelines for children and adolescents.</li> <li>- National Food Standards Code (FSANZ)</li> <li>- Food Act 2003 (NSW)</li> <li>- Food Regulation 2015)</li> <li>- My Time Our Place</li> <li>- Guide to the National Quality Framework</li> <li>- NSW Food Authority</li> <li>- Eat Smart Play Smart (Out of School Hours Care)</li> </ul>



### OUTLINE:

This policy outlines the goals developed by Sunbeams management and staff to ensure children are provided the opportunity and encouraged to make healthy and diverse choices related to food consumed at the service, and steps undertaken by staff to ensure hygienic food preparations and service, while minimising food contamination and waste.

### WHO THE POLICY AFFECTS?

Management  
Staff  
Students  
Parents

### POLICY STATEMENT:

**SUNBEAMS** believes that good nutrition is essential for each child's healthy growth and development. For this reason, the service will provide nutritious, good quality food that is consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Young People in Australia*. We will aim to provide a relaxed and enjoyable environment for children to eat their meals and snacks ("My Time, Our Place" 1.1). All food served at the service will be consistent with the child's own dietary requirements and take into consideration the children's like and dislikes as well as meet any cultural requirements of families ("My Time, Our Place" 3.2). We will endeavour to uphold Standard 3 of the Child Safe Practices ensuring families and communities are informed and involved in decisions affecting their children. High standards of hygiene will be maintained throughout all food preparation. We will encourage the development of the children's good eating habits through the modelling and reinforcing of healthy eating and nutrition practices by educators. Families will be encouraged to share recipes and traditions to enrich the variety and enjoyment of food by the children and support the children's development of respect for and understanding of diversity ("My Time, Our Place" 1.3). Where possible we will seek out opportunities to learn about growing our own food and collaborate with children to produce our own opportunities to use food, we have grown ourselves in our menu planning ("My Time, Our Place" 3.4). As per the NSW Health guidelines staff will ensure an "Allergy aware" approach and implement a range of possible strategies for minimizing risk to children during mealtimes.

## A) NUTRITION

- A menu, developed using the principles set out in the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents, will always be on display for families and children and be an accurate representation of the food and drink that is being served.
- All children's individual needs such as allergies, cultural requirements, and health needs etc. will be addressed in the menus and families advised if they will be required to supply specific foods for their child.
- Food and drink consistent with the menu will be provided for morning and afternoon tea as well as small nutritious snacks available as necessary.
- Fresh drinking water will always be available for the children and educators.
- Children and families will be encouraged to share family and cultural traditions, ideas and recipes to contribute to the menu.
- Education of healthy eating habits will be developed through ongoing example, specific activities, notices, posters and information sheets to families.
- The denial of food will never be used as a punishment.
- Children's cooking activities during Vacation Care will be encouraged to develop life skills.
- Educators are required to attend regular professional development on nutrition and food safety practices and document changes to practice as a result.
- Educators are required to complete a recognised food handling certificate if they are handling food, and one food supervisor will be also qualified on the premises. These qualifications will be available on the staff records.

### Where food is brought from home:

- provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and that are suitable for children's lunchboxes and after school snacks
- provide information to families on how to read the *Nutritional Information Panel* on food and drink labels
- encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious food provided.
- strongly discourage the provision of highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt, and/or sugar, and low in essential nutrients in children's lunchboxes. Examples of these foods include sweet biscuits, some muesli bars, breakfast bars and fruit filled bars, and chips.



- food items that should not be brought to SUNBEAMS include confectionary (lollies, sweets, chocolate, jelly), deep fried foods (chicken nuggets, fish fingers) and sugary drinks (cordial, energy drinks).

### **B) FOOD SAFETY**

- All food will be prepared and stored in a hygienic manner as per the current Australian New Zealand Food Standards.
- Opened food will be stored in tightly sealed containers, away from any chemicals.
- Kitchen equipment will to be cleaned and stored appropriately.
- Surfaces are cleaned and sanitised before and after food preparation.
- All perishable foods will be stored in the refrigerator and the temperature should be monitored to ensure it is less than 5°C,
- Children will not share their drinking and eating utensils.
- Tongs and spoons will be used for the serving of food. Where possible, educators will encourage children to serve their own food and drinks to encourage the development of their food handling skills as well as acknowledging their growing sense of independence.  
**The exception is in times of Government and/or school restrictions due to pandemic. During this period, only staff will serve food according to food safety procedures.**
- All cups, plates and utensils will be washed in hot, soapy water.
- Children should be seated while eating or drinking.
- Educators will wear gloves in addition to effective hand washing procedures. Care will be taken to avoid contaminating food by only using them for one continuous task and then discarding them. Gloves must be removed, discarded, hands washed, and the gloves replaced with a new pair before handling food and before working with ready to eat food after handling raw food.
- Gloves must be removed and discarded before using the toilet, smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief, eating, drinking or touching the hair, scalp or body. They will then be replaced if food preparation continues.
- All rubbish or left over food is to be disposed of immediately in lidded bins and bins emptied daily and regularly cleaned with disinfectant.
- Containers are to be cleaned and stored appropriately to ensure pests are not able to contaminate them.

- Children will be encouraged to be involved in food preparation to assist them to have opportunities to learn more about hygiene practices when preparing food. This participation should always be supervised and an explanation provided to children on the reasons why hygienic conditions are maintained.
- SUNBEAMS will regularly review and evaluate food handling practices in line with current best practice guidelines from recognised authorities.
- SUNBEAMS will provide food handling and hygiene information to parents.

**APPROVED PROVIDER/ MANAGEMENT/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:**

- ensure educators and staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations in relation to this policy and relevant procedures to ensure awareness of safe food handling practices while promoting healthy eating.
- ensure all staff understand and comply with the organisations Child Safe Code of Conduct and recognise that child safety is a shared responsibility.
- ensure new staff and educators are aware of food practices and procedures as outlined in this policy during induction and orientation.
- ensure water is readily available for children to drink
- ensure enrolment forms include information relating to child's food preferences, allergies, intolerances, cultural or religious considerations or medical conditions which involve food or food practices
- consult with families on enrolment to develop individual management plans, including completing Child Safe Risk Minimisation Plans for children with medical conditions involving food allergies, food intolerances and special dietary requirements as per [\*\*Medical Conditions Policy\*\*](#).
- ensure children's individual dietary requirements as per enrolment information or medical condition plans are communicated to all staff and food handlers
- ensure any changes to children's individual dietary requirements are recorded and communicated to all staff and food handlers
- ensure all staff and food handlers attend basic safe food handling training, including an appropriate Food Safety and Food Hygiene Certificate
- ensure the weekly menu is displayed in an accessible and prominent area for parents to view
- ensure the weekly menu is accurate and describes the food and beverages provided each day of the week.
- ensure the service menu is reviewed on a regular basis, every 6 months. Amendments made to the service menu will be recorded.



- encourage and provide opportunities for staff and educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about childhood nutrition and food safety practices.

### EDUCATORS/ FOOD HANDLERS WILL:

- ensure children remain seated while eating and drinking
- be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances, and special diets dietary requirements and consult with families and management to ensure individual management plans are developed and implemented, including completing Risk Minimisation Plans for children with medical conditions involving food as per *Medical Conditions Policy*
- supervise children whilst eating and drinking
- participate in regular professional development to maintain and enhance knowledge about childhood nutrition and food safety practices
- participate in safe food handling training on a regular basis, every 12 months, including the completion of an appropriate Food Safety and Food Hygiene Certificate
- consult with children, families, educators and dietitians (where possible) regarding the review of the service menu
- follow the guidelines for serving different types of food and the serving sizes in the guidelines
- provide nutritional information for families and keep them regularly updated
- ensure the weekly menu is displayed in an accessible and prominent area for parents to view
- ensure the weekly menu is accurate and describes the food and beverages provided each day of the week
- ensure food is presented attractively
- not allow food to be used as a form of punishment or to be used as a reward or bribe
- establish healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into our program
- encourage parents to the best of our ability to continue our healthy eating message in their homes
- encourage children to brush their teeth after breakfast at the OSHC Service, if possible, to promote good dental health
- ensure pets or animals are not present within the kitchen or food preparation areas

### **FOOD HYGIENE:**

Food poisoning is caused by bacteria, viruses, or other toxins being present in food and can cause extremely unpleasant symptoms such as diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and fevers. (Foodsafety.gov, 2019). SUNBEAMS will strictly adhere to food hygiene standards to prevent the risk of food poisoning.

#### **Buying and transporting food:**

SUNBEAMS will:

- ensure food supplies have been ordered in a timely manner
- always check labels for the 'use by' and 'best before' dates, understanding that 'use by' dates apply to perishable foods that could potentially cause food poisoning if out of date, whilst 'best before' dates refer to food items with long shelf life, but quality could be compromised
- avoid buying food items in damaged, swollen, leaking or dented packaging
- always check eggs within cartons: Never buy dirty or cracked eggs
- never buy any food item if unsure about its quality
- ensure fresh meat, chicken, or fish products cannot leak on to other food items
- ensure chilled, frozen, and hot food items are kept out of the 'danger zone'

(5°C to 60°C) on the trip back to the Service by:

- not getting chilled frozen, or hot food items until the end of the shopping.
- placing these items in an insulated shopping bag or cooler
- immediately unpacking and storing these items upon the return to the Service
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#### **Storing food:**

SUNBEAMS will:

- ensure the refrigerator and freezer has a thermometer and that the refrigerator is maintained at 5 °C or below and the freezer is maintained at -17 °C or below
- ensure fridge and freezer temperatures are checked daily
- store raw foods below cooked foods in the refrigerator to avoid cross contamination by foods dripping onto other foods
- ensure fresh meat is not stored in the fridge for more than 3 days
- ensure that all foods stored in the refrigerator are stored in strong food-safe containers with either a tight-fitting lid, or tightly applied plastic wrap or foil

- ensure that all foods not stored in their original packaging are labelled with:
  - the name of the food
  - the 'use by' date
  - the date the food was opened
  - details of any allergens present in the food
- transfer the contents of opened cans into appropriate containers
- ensure all bottles and jars are refrigerated after opening
- place 'left-over' hot food in an appropriate sealed container in the refrigerator as soon as the steam has stopped rising. Food can be cooled quickly to this point by placing in smaller quantities in shallow containers, reducing the amount of time sitting in the 'danger zone'
- not reuse disposable containers (e.g., Chinese food containers)
- store dry foods in labelled and sealed, air-tight containers if not in original packaging.
- store dry foods in cupboards or if in a walk-in pantry, on shelving no lower than 30cm from the floor
- not place anything on the floor of a walk-in pantry (as containers of any type create easy access to shelves for mice and rats)
- store bulk dry foods only in food-safe and airtight containers
- use the FIFO (first in, first out) rule for all foods (dry, chilled, and frozen) to ensure rotation of stock so that older stock is used first
- store cleaning supplies and chemicals separate to food items

### **Preparing and serving food**

SUNBEAMS will:

- ensure that all cooked food is cooked through and reaches 75 °C
- ensure that cooked food is served promptly, or
- use a thermometer to ensure that hot food is maintained at above 60 °C until ready to serve.
- ensure that prepared cold food is stored in the refrigerator maintained at below 5 °C until ready to serve
- discard any cooked food that has been left in the 'danger zone' for two or more hours. Do not reheat.
- reheat cooked food (if required, for example for a child who was sleeping at lunch time) to a temperature of 70 °C (but only ever reheat **once**. Discard if the food is not eaten after being reheated).
- keep cooked and ready-to-eat foods separate from raw foods



- ensure foods are defrosted in the fridge or microwave
- wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under clean running water before preparation
- ensure unused washed fruit or vegetables are thoroughly dry before returning to storage
- ensure food that has been dropped on the floor is immediately discarded
- thoroughly clean kitchen utensils and equipment between using with different foods and/or between different tasks
- avoid cross-contamination by ensuring that separate knives and utensils are used for different foods
- avoid cross-contamination by ensuring that colour-coded cutting boards are used (note that it doesn't matter which colour you use for which food providing signs are displayed to alert all staff). Common colours are:
  - Blue: raw fish/seafood
  - Green: fruit and vegetables
  - Red: raw meat
  - Brown: cooked meat
  - Yellow: raw poultry
  - White: bakery and dairy
  - Pink: Vegan
  - Purple: Allergen free
- ensure that gloves are changed between handling different foods or changing tasks
- ensure that staff preparing food for children with food allergies or intolerances are proficient at reading ingredient labels
- ensure that food allergies and intolerances are catered for by using separate easily identifiable cutting boards, utensils, and kitchen equipment (e.g., using a colour code, or food-safe permanent marker)
- ensure that children with food allergies and/or intolerances are served their meals and snacks individually on an easily identifiable plate (e.g. different colour), and that food is securely covered with plastic wrap until received by the child to prevent possible cross-contamination
- ensure all educators and staff are aware of children who have severe allergic reactions to certain foods as per ASCIA Action Plans
- ensure that unwell staff do not handle food
- ensure left-over food is stored immediately in the fridge or thrown away

**Cleaning:**

SUNBEAMS will:

- ensure that food preparation areas and surfaces are cleaned both before, after, and during any food preparation
- ensure that all cooking and serving utensils are cleaned and sanitised before use
- ensure that all dishwashing sponges, brushes, and scourers are cleaned after each use and allowed to air dry or placed in the dishwasher
- ensure the food storage area is clean, ventilated, dry, pest free, and not in direct sunlight
- ensure refrigerators and freezers are cleaned regularly and door seals checked and replaced if not in good repair
- prevent pest infestations by cleaning spills as quickly as possible and ensuring rubbish and food scraps are disposed of frequently
- ensure that floor mops are thoroughly cleaned and air dried after each use
- replace any cleaning equipment that shows signs of wear or permanent soiling.

**Personal hygiene for food handlers:**

SUNBEAMS will:

- clean clothing is worn by food handlers (such as an apron or appropriate jacket)
- long hair is tied back or covered with a net (hairspray may be used for fringes to secure hair).
- hand and wrist jewellery are not worn while preparing food (e.g. rings and bracelets)
- nails are kept short and clean, and no nail polish is worn (as it can chip into food and hide dirt under the nails)
- strict hand-washing hygiene is adhered to, including washing hands each time they return to the kitchen before continuing with food preparation duties
- wounds or cuts are covered with a brightly coloured, waterproof dressing (that will easily be seen if it falls off), and gloves will be worn over any dressings
- staff who are not well will not prepare or handle food.

**All staff handling food will:**

- ensure children and staff wash and dry their hands (using soap, running water, and single use disposable towels or individual hand towels) before handling food or eating meals and snacks
- ensure gloves (and food tongs) are used by all staff handling 'ready to eat' foods.
- ensure food is stored and served at safe temperatures (below 5°C or above 60°C), with consideration to the safe eating temperature requirements of children
- ensure separate cutting boards are used for raw meat and chicken, fruit and vegetables, and utensils and hands are washed before touching other foods
- discourage children from handling other children's food and utensils
- ensure food-handling staff members attend relevant training courses and pass relevant information on to the rest of the staff.

**Creating a positive learning environment:**

SUNBEAMS will:

- ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role-model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided
- choose water as a preferred drink- consider serving it chilled or with ice in summer; add lemon, mint leaves or other fruits such as oranges for flavour
- endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- choose foods from the five food groups
- create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with educators and other children
- encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat
- not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes
- role-model and discuss safe food handling with children

**OOSH Service Program:**

SUNBEAMS will:

- foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating
- educate children about not sharing food to promote good hygiene skills and aid in minimizing risk of allergen exposure (recommended by NSW Health Department)
- encourage children to participate in a variety of 'hands-on' food preparation experiences
- provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices
- embed the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in everyday activities and experiences

**Cooking with children:**

Cooking can help develop children's knowledge and skills regarding healthy eating habits. Cooking is a great, fun activity and provides opportunities for children to be exposed to new foods, sharing of recipes and cooking skills. During any cooking experience, educators will be vigilant to ensure that the experience remains safe, and relevant food hygiene practices are adhered to.

**Communicating with families:**

SUNBEAMS will:

- provide a copy of the *Nutrition and Food Safety Policy* to all families upon orientation at the Service
- provide opportunities for families to contribute to the review and development of the policy
- request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to SUNBEAMS and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children's individual dietary needs are met
- display menus for families to view easily
- communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within Sunbeams and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home.



- This information may be provided to families in a variety of ways including factsheets, newsletters, during orientation, information sessions and informal discussion.
- discuss discretionary choices- (food and beverages which are not necessary as part of a balanced diet) with families and if necessary.

#### ENDORESEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

The policy will be reviewed as required. The review will be conducted by management, staff, families, children and the wider community.

Last reviewed: September 2025

Date of next review: March 2027

APPROVAL DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE FOR REVIEW: \_\_\_\_\_