

## Nutrition and Food Safety Policy:



### POLICY STATEMENT:

Grays Point Activity Centre (GPAC) 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.

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 followed at all times.

Our Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Service 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.

### PURPOSE:

Out of School Hours Care Services are required by Legislation within the National Quality Standard to ensure the provision of healthy foods and drinks that meet the requirements for children according to the *Australian Dietary Guidelines*. It is essential that our OSHC Service partners with families to provide education about nutrition and promote healthy eating habits for children to positively influence their health and wellbeing. Dietary and healthy eating habits formed in the early years are shown to continue into adulthood and can reduce the risk factors associated with chronic adult conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Our Service recognises the importance of healthy eating for the growth, development, and wellbeing of children and is committed to promoting and supporting healthy food and drink choices for children in our care. This Policy affirms our position on the provision of healthy food and drink while children are in our care and the promotion and education of healthy choices for optimum nutrition.

We believe in providing a positive eating environment that reflects dietary requirements, cultural and family values, and promotes lifelong learning for children, as we commit to implementing and embedding the healthy eating key messages outlined in the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*.

Grays Point Activity Centre is also committed to ensuring consistently high standards of food preparation, food storage and transportation are adhered to.

### SCOPE:

This Policy applies to children, families, staff, visitors, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and management of Grays Point Activity Centre.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

Our Service has a responsibility to help children to develop good food practices and approaches, by working with families and Educators.

Mealtimes reflect a relaxed and pleasant environment where Educators engage in meaningful conversations with children. This assists in creating a positive and enjoyable eating environment.

Food will be prepared in accordance with the Food Safety Program. All kitchens and food preparation areas will comply with Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ). All staff involved in the stages of food handling have the skills and knowledge to ensure food safety is a priority.

From Friday 8 December 2023, Early Education and Care Services who prepare food, including ready to eat food or meals that have brought into the Service by families, must adhere to requirements relating to food safety outlined within the Food Standards Code and Food Act 2003 (Standard 3.2.2A). The revised requirements involve the appointment of a Food Safety Supervisor who must be available to supervise food handlers at the Service. It is a requirement that both the Food Safety Supervisor and all food handlers attend food safety training. Additionally, records must be maintained relating to receiving, storage, processing, displaying and transportation of food. These records must be retained for a period of 3 months.

### NUTRITION:

Promote healthy food and drinks based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents.

Our Service will:

Where food is provided by the Service:

- Provide children with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, lean meats, and high protein alternatives.
- Plan healthy snacks on the menu to complement what is served at mealtimes and ensure the snacks are substantial enough to meet the energy and nutrient needs of children.
- Display our menu in Centre and online.
- Vary the meals and snacks on the menu to keep children interested and to introduce children to a range of healthy food ideas.
- Regularly review the menu to ensure it meets best practice guidelines.
- Celebrate diversity by valuing and including foods of different cultures.

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.
- 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 the Service include confectionary (lollies, sweets, chocolate, jelly), deep fried foods (chicken nuggets, fish fingers) and sugary drinks.
- During Vacation Care, GPAC will provide the food for the day and not families, unless otherwise stated on the program.

#### Management/Nominated Supervisor/Educators 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 new staff and Educators are aware of food practices and procedures as outlined in this Policy during induction and orientation.
- Ensure that a notice is displayed prominently in the main entrance of the Service stating that a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is being cared for or educated at the Service, and provide details of the allergen/s (Reg. 173(2)(f)) [note: this notice should not identify the child]
- Ensure water is readily available for children to drink.
- Be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances, and special diets and consult with families to develop individual risk minimisation and communication plans.
- Ensure children remain seated while eating and drinking.
- Supervise children whilst eating and drinking.
- Encourage and provide opportunities for staff and Educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about childhood nutrition.
- Appoint a Food Safety Supervisor to oversee food handlers.
- Ensure the Food Safety Supervisor and all staff and food handlers attend basic safe food handling training, including an appropriate Food Safety and Food Hygiene Certificate.
- Keep an up-to-date *Food Safety Certificate Register* to provide evidence of safe food handling training for all food handlers.
- Follow the guidelines for serving different types of food and the serving sizes in the guidelines.
- Display 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.
- 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.
- Ensure parents/guardians are notified as soon as practicable but within 24 hours if their child is involved in a serious incident/situation at the Service. Details of the incident/situation are to be recorded on the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record.
- Notify the Regulatory Authority of any serious incident or complaints alleging the safety, health or wellbeing of children has been compromised within 24 hours of the incident or the time that the person becomes aware of the incident or complaint

- Conduct a review of practices following a serious incident, such as a food poisoning outbreak, including an assessment of areas for improvement.

#### Educators/Food Handlers will :

- Ensure children remain seated while eating and drinking
- Be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances, and special 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 our *Medical Policies*
- 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 18 months, including the completion of an appropriate Food Safety and Food Hygiene Certificate
- Keep records relating to the safe handling of food, where required
- Consult with children, families, Educators and dietitians regarding the review of the Service menu
- Follow the guidelines for serving different types of food and the serving sizes in the guidelines
- Use the Australian Government “eat for health” calculator- [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)
- Display 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
- 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). Our Service will strictly adhere to food hygiene standards to prevent the risk of food poisoning.

During warmer weather, the risk of foodborne illnesses increases. Our Service will strictly adhere to food hygiene standards to prevent the risk of food poisoning including:

- Maintaining proper temperature control for perishable foods
- Ensuring refrigerators are set to recommended temperature of 5 °C or below, regularly monitoring and recording temperatures to guarantee food safety
- Emphasising hand hygiene for staff and children and encourage frequent handwashing before and after meals
- Implementing food safety practices to minimise the risk of cross-contamination

- Ensuring staff are aware of heightened increase in allergic reactions and maintain consistent allergen management
- Consider the impact of the sun on food safety when eating meals outside
- Use insulated containers to keep perishable food cool and avoid leaving food exposed to direct sunlight.

#### Buying and transporting food:

- 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.
- Most the food brought into the Service is purchased online and delivered. Ensure a staff member is available to immediately unpack and store chilled, frozen and hot food items upon delivery.
- When buying and transporting food staff will ensure food 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.

#### Storing food

- 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 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.

- 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 separate to food items.

#### Preparing and serving food:

- 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.
- 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:
  - Blue: allergens
  - Green: fruit and vegetables
  - Red: raw meat
  - Brown: cooked meat
  - Yellow: raw poultry
  - White: bakery and dairy
- 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 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:

- 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.
- All rubbish or left-over food is to be disposed of immediately in lidded bins and bins emptied daily and bins cleaned with disinfectant weekly.
- 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:

- 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.
- Gloves must be removed and discarded before using the toilet, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief, eating, drinking or touching the hair, scalp or body. They will then be replaced if food preparation continues.

#### 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, raw 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 attend relevant training courses and pass relevant information on to the rest of the staff.

### Creating a positive learning environment:

- 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.

### Our program:

- 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.
- 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:

- Have available 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 the Service 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 the Service and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home.
- Communicate regularly with families and provide information and advice on appropriate food and drink to be included in children's lunchboxes - especially during Vacation Care. This information may be provided to families in a variety of ways including factsheets, newsletters, during orientation, information sessions and informal discussion.



## CONSIDERATIONS:

Changes to the Food Standards Code have included new food safety requirements under the Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A.

The new requirements comprise of 3 key elements including:

- Food Safety Supervisor
- Food Handler Training
- Record Keeping

See [Safe Food Australia](#) (guide to the food safety standards in the Food Standards Code) or email [information@foodstandards.gov.au](mailto:information@foodstandards.gov.au). Food regulators also have information to help food businesses in their jurisdiction understand the requirements of this standard. See the web links below:

- [New South Wales](#)

## NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

| QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY |                                 |  |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| 2.1  | Health                          | Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted                        |
| 2.1.2  | Health practices and procedures | Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented |
| 2.1.3  | Healthy lifestyles              | Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child           |

| EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS |  |
|--|--|
| 77   | Health, hygiene and safe food practices  |
| 78   | Food and beverages   |
| 79   | Service providing food and beverages   |
| 80   | Weekly menu  |
| 90   | Medical conditions policy  |
| 91   | Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents                                  |
| 160  | Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care Educator |
| 162  | Health information to be kept in enrolment record                                    |



|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 168 | Education and care service must have policies and procedures |
| 170 | Policies and Procedures to be followed                       |
| 171 | Policies and procedures to be kept available                 |
| 172 | Notification of change to policies or procedures             |

#### **Other Service Policies/documentation**

- Family Handbook
- Staff Handbook
- Anaphylaxis Management Policy
- Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Excursions Policy
- Communication with Families Policy
- Governance and Management Policy
- Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- Management if Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Policy
- Dealing with Medical Conditions and Medication Administration Policy

#### ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

Approval date: \_\_\_\_\_ July 2025 \_\_\_\_\_

Date for review: \_\_\_\_\_ January 2027 \_\_\_\_\_

*Revised March 2021 KK and March 2021 KG Jacky inhouse nutritionist  
Revised Nov 2023 new food handling requirements 8 December 2023 Revised 8.7.2025*

## Source:

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [\*Guide to the National Quality Framework\*](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2021). [\*Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements Policy Guidelines.\*](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. [\*My Time, Our Place- Framework for School Age Care in Australia. V2.0, 2022\*](#)

Australian Government Department of Health *Eat for Health- The Australian Dietary Guidelines*  
<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines>

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[\*Education and Care Services National Regulations.\*](#) (Amended 2023).

*Food Act 2003*

Food Authority NSW. (2023). [\*Food safety requirements for children's services in NSW.\*](#)

*Food Regulation 2015*

Food Safety Standards (Australia only). (2024): <https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/business/food-safety-standards>

*Food Standards Australia and New Zealand Act 1991*

Food Standards Australia New Zealand. (2023). Safe Food Australia – A guide to the food safety standard (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.):  
<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/publications/Pages/safefoodaustralia3rd16.aspx>

National Health and Medical Research Council. Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013):  
<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-dietary-guidelines>

National Health and Medical Research Council. Department of Health and Ageing. Infant Feeding Guidelines. (2013):  
[https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the\\_guidelines/n56b\\_infant\\_feeding\\_summary\\_130808.pdf](https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the_guidelines/n56b_infant_feeding_summary_130808.pdf)

National Health and Medical Research Council. Eat for health: <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/>

NSW Food Authority: <http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/>

The Australian Dental Association: <https://www.ada.org.au/Home>

The Department of Health. Get Up & Grow: [\*Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood – Staff/Carers Book\*](#)

Victoria State Government Education and Training Nutrition Australia [\*Healthy eating in the National Quality Standard A guide for early childhood education and care services\*](#)

[\*Australian Dietary Guidelines\*](#)