

Early Learning and Care

Fact Sheet: 5 Nutrition



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

Our service aims to offer a program that ensures the health, nutrition and wellbeing of all children. Healthy eating habits are vital to good health and start to develop from an early age.

Parents/guardians are to be instructed not to send food which may endanger those with special dietary needs (e.g. peanut butter or food containing peanuts).

Social interactions will be encouraged during meal and snack times. Educators will sit with children at meal times discuss food being served, promote hygienic self-help practices, and use positive strategies to promote children's interest in foods and good eating habits.

Families will receive information about food and nutrition in the service's orientation and throughout the year with additional information sourced from recognised health authorities

Families' religious and cultural beliefs will always be respected.

Special occasions will be celebrated with culturally appropriate food where possible and through negotiation with families.

Food and nutrition activities are incorporated into children's planned learning experiences. Activities will include children's shows about healthy foods, dental health activities, stories, visual displays of foods, home corner food props and talking to children about what foods help their body grow.

Individual needs for quantity and timing will be considered in meal schedules and planned in the best interests of the children.

Our service encourages positive eating experiences, through:

- Eating experiences, in happy and social environments
- Activities that promote an understanding of healthy eating practices and cultural influences
- Access to clean drinking water at all times
- Menus and food that is healthy, diverse and balanced
- Menus and food which will expose the children to cuisine from different cultures
- The provision of nutritional food and snacks (if applicable to the centre)

Food supplied from the centre will be nutritious and prepared and stored in a safe and hygienic manner, complying with all laws and regulations, including the *Food Act 2006*.

Our service will display a menu that will meet the requirements as outlined in Nutrition Australia's Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.

A dietary chart shall be placed in the kitchen area with a list of children who have special dietary requirements. This list will be updated regularly:

- Details of restrictions will be noted on the enrolment from management plan and passed on to staff.
- Where food experiences are offered for all children, the food prepared will take into account all allergy restrictions with recipes customised accordingly.

Menu feedback will be sought from parents, staff and children. Ideas for new food experiences will be included in menu plans. Menus will reflect the multicultural nature of the community.

Children may participate in food preparation and interest activities around food and this will be included in the menu planning.