



NUTRITION, FOOD, BEVERAGES, DIETARY REQUIREMENTS POLICY

(Required regulation)

Policy Statement

New Lambton District OOSH (NLDOOSH) recognises the value and importance of good nutrition, particularly for children. We aim to provide nutritious and varied food options in a way that encourages enjoyment of many different foods. Children will be encouraged to develop good eating and hygiene habits through examples and education, and individual food needs will be accommodated.

Eating times at NLDOOSH are a social event where children and educators can relax, talk about their day and experience a variety of foods. Food is never used as a reward or punishment and every child has the right to access food.

All family and multicultural practices are acknowledged and addressed in the provision of food and families are encouraged to share recipes, meal ideas, and traditions to enrich the variety of food enjoyed by the children. This helps to develop understanding and respect of diversity.

This policy establishes principles that ensure the high standards of hygiene that will be maintained throughout preparation, serving, consumption and storage of all foods as well as the nutritional guidelines in place to support our children's health.

Procedures

Nutrition

- a. The Department of Health's Australian Guide to Healthy Eating as well as current nutrition knowledge and research are used in the creation of our menus and recipes. Our menu is varied to encourage children to experience a range of different food items.
- b. Our weekly menu is displayed for children and parents/ guardians to view inside the OOSH building and on our website. The children and parents/ guardians are encouraged to contribute menu ideas.
- c. Basic principles used in the design of our weekly menu include:

- have fruit and vegetables available and encourage their consumption
- base menu items on a wholegrain carbohydrate source
- serve dairy products regularly and a high protein option at breakfast
- Avoid the use of cured red meats and serve meat only rarely, supplementing its use with vegetables and/or legumes
- Limit “Celebration Meals” where foods high in salt, fat and/or sugar are served. If these foods are served, it should be limited to 1-2 times per term as part of the regular menu
- All baking recipes should be altered to reduce the sugar content and increase the fibre, fruit and vegetable components. Saturated fat should be reduced by using “Nuttalex” spread or mild oil instead of butter.

Food handling and hygiene

- a. Our staff food handling procedures detail industry standard hygiene practices for the preparation, serving, storage and management of food. All staff working in the kitchen must have a “Food Safety Basic Handler” training.
- b. All perishable foods are stored in the refrigerator and the temperature of the refrigerator is monitored to ensure it is less than 5° Celsius. All cold deliveries are temperature tested and refrigerated immediately.
- c. All cold food items are discarded if left out for longer than 2 total hours. All hot foods are heated to 60° celcius or above then allowed to cool before being served.
- d. Hand hygiene refers to both the washing of hands with soap and water and drying with paper towel or the use of alcohol-based hand sanitiser. The process should take around 60 seconds to complete.
- e. Hand hygiene should be performed on the following occasions:
 - when beginning food preparation work in the kitchen
 - after touching rubbish or a bin
 - after touching raw food such as chicken or eggs
 - after wearing washing up gloves
 - after touching dirty dishes
 - after changing tasks
 - before touching ready-to-eat-food- it is best to use gloves or utensils
 - before and after putting on gloves
 - after eating
 - when finishing food preparation work in the kitchen.
- f. Hair that is long enough to be tied back should be secured behind the head so that it does not hang over the shoulders.

- g. Any cuts on the hands and lower arm should be covered with a dressing. For cuts on the hand a glove should be worn over the dressing.
- h. Covered in shoes should always be worn in the kitchen and loose clothing that could catch on equipment should not be worn. Long sleeves should be rolled back to expose the wrists.
- i. Staff should not handle food if they are suffering from a contagious disease, including colds, and ensure they are recovered before recommencing food handling duties.
- j. Children's cooking activities are encouraged. Children involved in food preparation will be supervised by staff and hygiene standards maintained.
- k. The Food Preparation Officer is responsible for ensuring food service and storage areas are in a clean and hygienic state.

Dietary requirements, allergies and anaphylaxis

- a. All children's individual needs such as allergies, intolerances, religious and cultural will be accommodated in the menus.
- b. Parents/ guardians are responsible for notifying the centre of any special food requests or dietary requirements at the time of enrolment or immediately after the need is identified.
- c. NLDOOSH is a Nut exclusion zone. The exclusion includes peanuts and tree nuts (cashews, pistachios, hazelnuts, almonds etc.), Nutella and other nut spreads, nut milks as well as some chocolates and cereals.
- d. All permanent educators are trained in the management and first aid of people with dietary conditions.
- e. Educators will keep a list of all children's allergies or food restrictions near the food preparation area to ensure all staff are aware of these requirements. The degrees of restrictions are as follows:
 - **Anaphylaxis**- requires complete avoidance of target food including touching, or smelling the food.
 - **Coeliac Disease**- requires complete avoidance of wheat, barley, rye and oats even though a noticeable reaction may not occur.
 - **Allergy**- requires complete avoidance of target food.
 - **Intolerance**- requires avoidance of target food to varying degrees- consult parent.
 - **Other Food Avoidance**- follow parent instructions.
- f. Where possible the meal provided will accommodate dietary requirements, such as using Gluten free soy sauce in all the fried rice, so that all children are able to eat the same meal.
- g. Where possible meals will be served in components so that children with dietary restrictions can eat most of the meal eg. Making cheese and salad rolls individually for each child so that the children who do not have dairy can avoid cheese.

- h. Staff will take careful note of food labels when serving children with dietary restrictions to ensure the food is suitable. Staff are responsible for reading and understanding the medical/allergies list prior to the start of each shift as well as insuring any arrangements to manage the condition are in place.

Safety

- a. Children will be encouraged to be seated whilst eating and drinking meals provided by NLD OOSH to avoid choking accidents.
- b. Educators will supervise children who are eating and drinking meals provided by NLDOOSH.
- c. Staff are responsible for ensuring that any resources used in the preparation, serving and storage of food and beverages are well maintained and for reporting any maintenance issues to the Work Health and Safety Officer.

Considerations

Name	Reference
Education and Care Services National Regulations	77, 78, 79, 80, 90, 91, 94, 162, 168(2)(a)(i), 171
National Quality Standard	2
National Law	167
Other NLDOOSH policies/ documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Kitchen Procedure • Cleaning Procedure
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>V 2 My Time, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia</i>, Council of Australian Governments 2011 • <i>The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating</i>, The Department of Health, Australian Government 2013 • <i>Food Safety standards 3.2.2A</i>

Section 6 – Policy status

Policy developed	May 2012
Last reviewed	August 2025
Due for review	February 2027
Policy Owned by	New Lambton District OOSH Inc