

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten Inc
49 Allnutt Street Quirindi NSW 2343
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P: 02 6746 1894
E: admin@quirindipreschool.nsw.edu.au
ABN: 30 019 580 932



NUTRITION AND FOOD SAFETY POLICY

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten has a *Nutrition 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.

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten recognises the importance of safe food handling and healthy eating to promote the growth and development of young children and is committed to supporting the healthy food and drink choices of children in our care. We acknowledge that the early childhood setting has an important role in supporting families in providing healthy food and drink to their children.

We are committed to implementing the healthy eating key messages outlined in the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. We support and promote the NSW Health initiative [Munch & Move](#) program.

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 LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
S. 3A	Paramount consideration

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S. 166A	Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct Offence relating to inappropriate conduct
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

PURPOSE

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten is committed to supporting healthy eating and positive food practices for children, recognising the important role nutrition plays in children's growth, development and wellbeing.

We work in partnership with families and align with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines* to promote healthy food and drink choices and foster lifelong healthy eating habits.

This policy outlines our commitment to:

- promoting nutritious and balanced food and drink choices
- creating positive, inclusive and culturally responsive mealtime environments

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- supporting children to develop healthy relationships with food
- ensuring safe and hygienic food handling practices.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, approved provider, nominated supervisor, visitors, students, volunteers and management of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten ensures that the safety, health and wellbeing of children are the paramount consideration in all decision-making. This principle underpins all practices relating to nutrition, food safety, and mealtime environments ensuring that children are protected from harm and supported in their wellbeing at all times.

All food prepared by the Service or families will endeavour to be consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines and provide children with a nutritious and balanced meal or lunchbox. Consideration will also be made to each child's dietary requirements, allergies, medical conditions, cultural practices, and family practices to ensure their safety and inclusion.

Food will be prepared, handled and stored in accordance with the NSW Food Safety Standards, with a strong focus on minimising risks to children.

All kitchens and food preparation areas will comply with Food Standards Australia and any relevant local jurisdictional requirements (i.e., local council registrations and inspections). All staff involved in the stages of food handling have the skills and knowledge to ensure food safety is a priority.

In line with updates from the Food Standards Code and Food Act 2003 (Standard 3.2.2A)

- a qualified Food Safety Supervisor will be appointed and available to oversee food preparation at the Service
- the Food Safety Supervisor and all food handlers will complete approved food safety training

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NUTRITION

As Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten is a lunchbox service, families are encouraged to provide healthy and nutritious foods and drinks that support children's growth, development and learning throughout the day.

The Service will:

- provide information to families about healthy lunchbox choices in line with the Australian Dietary Guidelines
- encourage children to eat nutritious foods provided in their lunchboxes, such as sandwiches, fruit, vegetables, cheese and yoghurt before less nutritious foods
- strongly discourage foods and drinks high in sugar, salt and saturated fats including lollies, chocolates, energy drinks and excessive processed snack foods
- recognise that some children may require particular foods due to sensory processing needs, medical needs or additional needs and will work collaboratively with families to support children's wellbeing and inclusion
- ensure children have access to fresh drinking water at all times
- support safe food storage practices for lunchboxes brought from home.
- Encourage and Support breastfeeding, bottle feeding or solid feeding by providing a suitable place in our service to allow families with children enrolled at Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten to feel comfortable to breastfeed, bottle feed or solid feed their sibling when visiting the service.

THE 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 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

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- display a notice 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))
- ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day in both the indoor and outdoor environment
- ensure food and beverages are offered to children regularly during the day
- ensure enrolment forms include information relating to 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 medical 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
- appoint a Food Safety Supervisor to oversee food handlers
- ensure the Food Safety Supervisor hold a valid Food Safety Supervisor certificate and training
- require all staff handling food attend basic safe food handling training, including an appropriate Food Safety and Food Hygiene Certificate
- comply with Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A requirements
- encourage and provide opportunities for staff and educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about early childhood nutrition and food safety practices
- notify parents/guardians 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*.

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- 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 water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day in both indoor and outdoor environments
- be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances, and special dietary requirements and consult with families and management to ensure individual medical management plans and risk minimisation plans are developed and implemented.
- ensure all children remain seated while eating and drinking
- actively supervise children during mealtimes to ensure safety and wellbeing
- participate in regular professional development to maintain and enhance knowledge about early childhood nutrition and food safety practices
- participate in safe food handling training as required, including completion of an appropriate Food Safety and Food Hygiene Certificate
- follow the [Australian Dietary Guidelines](#) for serving sizes and different types of food
- consider the needs of various age groups at the service- meal times may be offered progressively or at different times
- provide age and developmentally-appropriate utensils and furniture for each child
- ensure food is not used as a form of punishment reward or bribe
- ensure children are not force fed, coerced or pressured to eat food they do not want or choose to eat, recognising that such practices may constitute inappropriate conduct and pose a risk to children's safety, wellbeing and dignity

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- encourage children to be independent and develop social skills at mealtimes
- promote healthy eating habits through intentional teaching and inclusion of nutrition in the educational program
- communicate with families about their child's food intake and discuss any concerns respectfully
- encourage families, where appropriate, to support consistent healthy eating practices at home
- ensure pets or animals are not present in 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. Children under five years of age are considered a high-risk group as their immune systems are still developing and they produce less of the stomach acid required to kill harmful bacteria than older children or adults (Foodsafety.gov. 2019).

During warmer weather, the risk of foodborne illnesses increases. Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten 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 hand washing 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

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- use insulated containers to keep perishable food cool and avoid leaving food exposed to direct sunlight.

BUYING AND TRANSPORTING FOOD

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten 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 selecting 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

ONLINE SHOPPING

- ensure food items are delivered in packaging that keeps food out of 'danger zones' as described above and within delivery window as provided by the company
- ensure products selected are high quality
- ensure products are unpacked promptly upon receiving goods
- use online service companies that provide quality assurance and guarantees

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STORING FOOD

Quirindi Preschool Director 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 -18°C or below
- 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' or expiry date
 - the date the food was opened or prepared
 - details of any allergens present in the food
- transfer the contents of opened cans into appropriate food-safe containers
- ensure all bottles and jars are refrigerated after opening
- cool cooked food safely before refrigeration (e.g. in shallow containers) and refrigerate as soon as steam has stopped rising to minimise time in the temperature danger zone
- not reuse disposable single-use containers (e.g., Chinese food containers)
- store dry foods in labelled and sealed, air-tight containers if not in original packaging
- store dry foods off the floor (minimum 30 cm) in cupboards or pantry areas

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- 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 separately from food items

PREPARING AND SERVING FOOD

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten will:

- ensure that all cooked food reaches a minimum internal temperature of 75° C
- ensure cooked food is served promptly or maintained at 60° C or above until ready to serve
- ensure that prepared cold food is stored in the refrigerator maintained at below 5° C until serving
- discard any potentially hazardous food left in the temperature danger zone 2 hours or more and do not reheat
- keep cooked and ready-to-eat foods separate from raw foods at all times
- defrost food safely in the refrigerator or microwave, not at room temperature
- wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under clean running water before preparation
- ensure unused washed fruit or vegetables are thoroughly dry before returning to storage
- discard any food that has come into contact with the floor
- minimise cross-contamination by ensuring separate utensils and colour-coded cutting boards
- ensure colour-coded systems are clearly displayed and consistently followed. Our colours are:
 - Blue: raw fish/seafood
 - Green: fruit and vegetables

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- Red: raw meat
- Grey: 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 allergen-safe practices are implemented, including use of separate, clearly identifiable utensils and equipment
- ensure all educators and staff are aware of children who have severe allergic reactions to certain foods as per ASCIA Action Plans
- 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
- implement a two person check to ensure the '*right child gets the right meal*' for example: a checklist is developed to record children's names, their allergies, health needs
- ensure that unwell staff do not handle food
- store left-over food promptly in the refrigerator or discard as appropriate
- ensure the safe handling of breastmilk, including during transportation, storage, thawing, warming and during preparation.

CLEANING

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten will:

- ensure that food preparation areas and surfaces are cleaned both before, after, and during any food preparation

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- 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

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten will ensure:

- clean clothing is worn by food handlers (such as an apron or appropriate jacket)
- long hair is tied back or covered with a net
- 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
- gloves to be worn when handling food and tongs used
- 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.

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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

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten 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
- endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- create a relaxed and unhurried mealtime environment that supports children to eat, communicate and enjoy social interactions
- encourage children to assist to set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink, providing opportunities for them to develop independence and self-esteem while promoting children's agency and decision-making
- respect each child's appetite and cues for hunger and satiety and not pressure or insist that a child eat

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- be patient and supportive of children who are developing eating skills, including those who may be messy or slow eaters
- encourage children to try different foods without coercion or pressure
- ensure food is not used as a reward, bribe or withhold food for disciplinary purposes, recognising that such practices may constitute inappropriate conduct
- role-model and discuss safe food handling with children.

SERVICE PROGRAM

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten will:

- foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the educational 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 experiences, including indoor and outdoor cooking experiences such as campfire or camp oven cooking, will be actively supervised by educators and conducted using safe and hygienic food handling practices.

COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES

Quirindi Preschool Kindergarten will:

- provide a copy of the *Nutrition and Food Safety Policy* to all families upon orientation at the Service

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- provide opportunities for families to contribute to the review and development of the policy
- request up-to-date information regarding children's allergies, intolerances, medical conditions and dietary requirements, and work in partnerships with families to ensure these needs are safely met
- communicate regularly with families about food, nutrition and learning experiences within the Service
- provide current information and guidance to support families in providing 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. 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 not required for a balanced diet) with families, and where necessary, implement agreed strategies to support alternatives while maintaining children's dignity and wellbeing.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Nutrition and Food Safety Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management, and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days.

SOURCES

Australian Breast-Feeding Association Guidelines: <https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/>

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-03/Guide-to-the-NQF-March-2023.pdf> *Guide to the National Quality Framework*

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Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [*Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements Policy Guidelines.*](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). [*Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. V2.0.*](#)

Australian Government Department of Health *Eat for Health- The Australian Dietary Guidelines*

Food Act 2003

[*Children \(Education and Care Services\) National Law \(NSW\)*](#)

[*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*](#)

[*Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*](#)

[*Education and Care Services National Regulations \(NSW\) \(2025\)*](#)

Food Authority NSW. (2025). [*Food safety requirements for children's services in NSW.*](#)

Food Safety Standards (Australia only). (2025). [*Food Safety Standards \(Chapter 3\)*](#)

National Health and Medical Research Council. Department of Health and Ageing. [*Eat for Health. Infant Feeding Guidelines. \(2013\)*](#)

NSW Government. (2026). [*Munch and Move*](#)

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*](#)

[*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Kirstyn Sampson	Director/N.S	18/5/26
POLICY REVIEWED	MAY 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MAY 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V18.05.26		
MODIFICATIONS			

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PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS
