

# Early Learning Education & Outside School Hours Policy Document

## Nutrition, Health & Dietary Requirements

### Policy Hierarchy link

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Sections -

168(2) Policies and procedures.

77 - Health, hygiene and safe food practices,

78 - Food and beverages,

79 - Service providing food and beverages and

80 - Weekly menu.

National Quality Standard:

Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice - Standards 1.1, 1.2

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety - Standards 2.1, 2.3

Quality Area 3 - Children's Health and Safety - Standards 3.1,3.2

Quality Area 4 -Staffing Arrangements - Standards 4.1, 4.2

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children - Standards 5.1, 5.2

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with Families and Communities - Standards 6.1

Quality Area 7: leadership and Service Management- Standards 7.1, 7.3

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (NSW)

Food Act 2003 (NSW)

Australian Food Safety Standards

Early Childhood Services: Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years

OSHC: Australian Movement Guidelines for 5-17yr olds

Version	Authorised by	Effective Date	Revision Date
3	SCECS Management	September 2025	September 2028

## 1. BACKGROUND

Healthy eating is essential to maintaining good health. Healthy eating and physical activity help children grow, learn and build strong bones and muscles. As a caregiver, service staff have a great opportunity to influence the healthy eating choices of children in their care. The Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia recommend children “enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods”. Eating a variety of nutritious foods means consuming different food types in appropriate amounts to obtain all the required nutrients without excess energy intake. Services play a significant role in helping children develop positive attitudes and habits for healthy eating. Services also offer an ideal opportunity to offer instruction relating to food handling and hygiene.

Physical activity is vital for young children’s health, wellbeing and development and lays the foundation for a healthy active life. Our Service recognises the important role educators and staff have in promoting children’s physical activity in appropriate ways ensuring children’s comfort and wellbeing requirements are being met.

Early Childhood Services: All babies and young children benefit from a mix of physical activity, inactivity and sleep. We are committed to supporting the Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour into our curriculum.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

SCECS recognises its responsibility to provide high quality nutritional food, essential for the proper growth and development of children. The service is committed to implementing the healthy eating and movement key messages outlined in *Munch and Move*. The service will support the *National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings* as outlined in the *Get Up and Grow* resources, and the *Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines* as a basis for the service’s policy and practices regarding nutrition and movement. We are compliant with the food handling practices contained in Australian Food Safety Standards. Our educators and staff are asked to model best practice at all times.

## 3. HOW THE POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

### 3.1 General

- 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 alternatives.
- Plan and display a weekly menu that meets the needs of the children in care that week.

- Vary the meals and snacks on the menu to keep children interested and to introduce children to a range of healthy food ideas.
- Food and beverages supplied take into account the cultural, religious and health requirements of the children and families accessing the service.
- Children are encouraged to try new foods, but no child will be forced to eat something they do not like or which is inconsistent with their religious, cultural or dietary needs.
- Food will not be used as a punishment or reward.
- Food and beverages are prepared, served and stored hygienically in accordance with the Australian Food Safety Standards.
- Provide opportunities in the daily program for children to be active every day through a balance of planned and spontaneous active play experiences that are both educator led and child initiated (including everyday physical tasks), in the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Educators discuss healthy eating and nutrition as part of the program.
- Drinking water is always available.
- Be fully aware and proactive in ensuring children with food allergies, food intolerances and special diets are catered to. Consult with families to develop individual management plans

### 3.2 Examples Of Service Procedure

- Meals will include fruit, vegetables, milk, yoghurt or cheese. Whole grains such as bread, rice, pasta, crackers will be included in the menu, as well as lean meat, poultry, pork, fish, eggs, legumes and other alternatives. Multicultural foods will also be given on selected days. The menu will be displayed on the service notice board.
- Children are not to bring food to the service due to health and medical considerations.
- Families will be provided with the service's nutrition policy as part of the family enrolment package and through posters and pamphlets located prominently at the service.
- Opportunities for physical activity are offered in the program daily.

### 3.3 Other Considerations

- The service provides all the food and beverages for the childrens' consumption.
- It is recognised that, on occasion, food and beverages supplied at the service may diverge from the guidelines for special purposes and celebrations and that families will be advised of such occasions.
- The service focuses on a supply of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Children are encouraged to eat their meals together as a time of social interaction.

- Children are to remain seated while eating and drinking.
- Children are supervised whilst eating and drinking.
- Children will be encouraged to participate in meal/snack preparation and clean-up as part of the service's life skills focus.
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#### 4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Authority/ responsible for
Approved Provider - SCECS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011.</li> <li>• Allocate finances for training and food safety.</li> <li>• Allocate finances to ensure provision of nutritionally balanced and culturally sensitive meals as required.</li> <li>• Ensure the service implements adequate health and hygiene practices and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimize risks to children being educated and cared for by the service.</li> <li>• Ensure the educators have appropriate knowledge of the Munch and Move program along with the Australian Movement Guidelines for children.</li> </ul>
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure adequate health and hygiene practices and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food are implemented at the service to minimize risks to children.</li> <li>• Ensure children being cared for by the service have access to safe drinking water at all times, and are offered food and drink at regular intervals.</li> <li>• Ensure the practices detailed in the Food Safety Program are adhered to.</li> <li>• Ensure that food and beverages offered by the service are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- nutritious and adequate in quantity</li> <li>- chosen with regards to the dietary requirements of individual children</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensure the weekly menu is displayed in a location accessible to parents and that it accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by the service each day.</li> <li>• Ensure the program includes daily physical activity according to the national guidelines.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure families have access to the latest information regarding healthy eating, nutrition and movement guidelines.</li> </ul>
All educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adhere to the strategies and practices of the Nutrition, Health and Dietary Requirement Policy and the Food Safety Program.</li> <li>● Ensure children's individual dietary needs are adhered to.</li> <li>● Provide positive mealtime experiences for the children.</li> <li>● Respect the individual needs and choices of children.</li> <li>● Adhere to the Australian Movement Guidelines when developing and delivering the program.</li> <li>● Actively supervise children during mealtimes.</li> <li>● Adhere to the health and hygiene practices and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food at the service to minimise risks to children.</li> <li>● Actively taking opportunities to discuss healthy eating with children.</li> <li>● Encouraging children to participate in meal and snack preparation and the associated clean-up activities.</li> <li>● Modelling practice that reflects the service policy.</li> </ul>
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communicate regularly with educators/staff regarding children's specific nutritional requirements and dietary needs, including food preferences.</li> <li>● Contribute menu ideas and recipes.</li> </ul>

## 5. RESOURCES/RESFERENCES

- *Munch and Move* - <https://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/teachers-childcare/munch-and-move.aspx>
- *Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (Birth to 5 Years)* - [Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years \(birth to 5 years\): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep.](#)
- *Australian Movement Guidelines for children and young people 5-17yrs:* <https://www.health.gov.au/topics/physical-activity-and-exercise/physical->

[activity-and-exercise-guidelines-for-all-australians/for-children-and-young-people-5-to-17-years](#)

- *National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings - Get Up and Grow* resources - <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-resource-order-guide>
- *Australian Food Safety Standards* - <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/safetystandards/Pages/default.aspx>
- *Nutrition Australia* - [www.nutritionaustralia.org](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org)
- *Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)* - [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- *Supporting Nutrition for Australian Children* - <https://snacwa.com.au>

## 6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this policy every three years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled in the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

The authorisation and amendment history for this document must be listed in the following table:

Version	Authorised by	Effective Date	Sections modified
2	Sara Hole	January 2025	Reference to the Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years and the Australian Movement Guidelines for Children and Young People added
3	Sara Hole	September 2025	Educators adhere to health and hygiene practices and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food at the service. The Food Safety Program is adhered to. The menu accurately describes the food and beverages provided by the service each day.
