

Nutrition, Food and Beverages & Dietary Health Requirements Policy

Policy Statement & Commitments

Nutrition is important for the health, wellbeing and development of all children. The Education and Care Services National Regulations requires Brunswick East Primary School Outside School Hours Care Service (BEPS OSHC Service) to have a policy on nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements and food allergies to guide procedures that ensure children are provided with healthy and nutritious snacks, and their individual dietary requirements are considered.

BEPS OSHC Service recognises that families need their religious and cultural beliefs, practices and lifestyle choices in relation to food to be respected, and also need input into and feedback about what and when their child eats. BEPS OSHC Service aims to meet these needs to ensure that children have a balanced diet with their food preferences respected through regular snack times during which they can eat at their own pace.

Children are especially prone to food borne illness because their immune systems are still developing and they cannot fight infection as well as adults can. The main causes of food borne illness are inadequate cooking, improper holding temperatures, contaminated equipment, unsafe food sources and poor personal hygiene.

BEPS OSHC Service is committed to:

- promoting healthy eating habits
- providing nutritious menu options
- respecting and supporting any special dietary requirements of individual children
- reflecting the cultural diversity of the community in breakfast, snack times and cooking activities
- educating children and their families about healthy food choices and healthy eating habits
- ensuring the nutritional needs and/or dietary requirements of children are appropriately catered for, while they are attending BEPS OSHC Service
- providing a flexible approach to serving and consuming food for children attending BEPS OSHC Service
- Complying with all legislative requirements.

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Planning to Support the Nutritional Needs of School-age Children

When planning the menu BEPS OSHC Service aims to meet the nutritional needs of the school age children by:

- providing balanced snacks, consistent with the five major principles of the Australian Government's *Dietary Guidelines 2013*, available online at <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-dietary-guidelines-1-5>
- providing snacks that meet recommended daily nutritional needs of school-age children are adequate in quantity, and take into account the child's growth and developmental needs, and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements
- wherever possible, using fresh seasonally available produce
- providing attractive and well-presented snacks that are appetising and provide variety in colour, texture and taste.
- incorporating nutrition education, appropriate to the age of the children, into the children's program, and encouraging families' involvement in the nutritional program. The importance of good, healthy food, and hygienic and safe food handling and storage practices are discussed with children as part of the daily program
- consulting with families about their child's individual needs, including likes and dislikes in relation to food and any special dietary requirements, with consideration to cultural perspectives and known allergies
- maintaining food preparation facilities in a hygienic condition.

Procedures for Menu Planning

BEPS OSHC Service understands it has a duty of care to ensure that children's nutritional needs are met and food is prepared and stored safely within BEPS OSHC Service. Good nutrition is essential to healthy living and enables children to be active participants in play and leisure.

BEPS OSHC Service refers to the Australian Dietary Guidelines when considering menu planning and serving suggestions for children before and after school.

The educators respect that children, like adults, do have different food preferences. Children are exposed to a wide variety of foods and are encouraged to taste all of the foods offered; however they are never forced to eat.

- Menus are planned with input from children, families, food preparation staff, and educators.
- Menus are planned for the term and displayed on the notice boards in the OSHC room and school hall and kitchen. Families and the school community are welcome to view them at any time.

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- The menu will reflect a wide variety of cultures, and especially the cultural backgrounds of families and the local community.
- Any special dietary considerations are always taken into consideration when planning menus with children allergies etc. catered for.
- Menu information that accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by BEPS OSHC Service each day is displayed on the noticeboards in the OSHC room and school hall and kitchen.
- Recipes for all cooking experiences will be available to families.
- Parents and children are encouraged to forward any ideas, suggestions and recipes for consideration in the planning of the menu.

Procedures for Managing Special Dietary Requirements

It is parents' responsibility to inform educators of any foods their child is not able to eat for any reason. They can by add the relevant information to the child's enrolment form and advising educators of any changes to this requirement as the need arises. Children with special dietary needs and/or allergies will be catered for accordingly, with strict adherence to each of their requirements and special diets.

- If a child is on a special diet, their parent/guardian will be asked to provide a list of suitable foods and the child's food preferences. On enrolment they will also be asked to complete a Special Diet Record, which details the foods their child must avoid, and updated as necessary.
- For a child with diabetes, a Diabetic Health Support Food Plan should be completed by their parent/guardian, including maintenance of a hypo-kit for children at risk of hypoglycemia. (See BEPS OSHC Service Diabetes Policy.)

Procedures for Snack Times

Snack times in OSHC provide positive learning experiences for children who are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits. Families are consulted and asked to share family and multicultural values and experiences to enrich the variety and enjoyment of food planned to meet each child's daily nutritional needs.

Snack times at BEPS OSHC Service provide an important developmental opportunity for the children both physically and socially. It is therefore considered that the educator's participation enhances the value of each child's snack time.

Snack times are an excellent time for the children to develop appropriate nutritional habits and healthy food practices. Children will be:

- offered a variety of foods

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- educated about safe and hygienic food handling skills
- supported to participate in sharing, socialising and taking turns.

The Coordinator and educators at BEPS OSHC Service ensure that children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day as per the following table.

Before School Care	Breakfast offered from arrival until 8.30am.	Includes toast (white and multi-grain breads) with a variety of toppings, a selection of cereals (on request or provided by family), and water.
After School Care	Afternoon tea offered 3.30pm-4.00pm.	Includes fresh fruit, a platter with a variety of fresh vegetables and other nibbles and a wide variety of main foods.

- Snack times are a relaxing time of the day for children to practise many independent skills encouraged by educators.
- Families will be encouraged to share aspects of their family life and culture in relation to snack times. The OSHC Coordinator will discuss with families which eating practices can be accommodated within BEPS OSHC Service and those which cannot due to health or hygiene concerns.
- Snack times are held in an informal manner where children may choose when to eat. Snack times are set to a regular schedule (as above) but individual needs are accommodated and children who are still hungry will be offered small nutritionally appropriate snacks.
- Safe drinking water is always readily available and is regularly offered to children:
 - Individual cups will be made available during Before School Care and After School Care
 - Water bubblers (outside) are available to all children throughout the day.
- Independence is encouraged during all meal and snack times. Children will be assisted where required, but will be supported to be independent and to help themselves wherever appropriate e.g. using tongs to serve themselves food.
- Children will not be required to eat food they do not like, or eat more than they want.

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The Role of BEPS OSHC Service is to:

- ensure that children are provided with nutritious balanced snacks
- provide a wide variety of foods
- limit fat, sugar and salt
- provide suitable eating environments
- model good eating behaviour
- discuss foods being eaten.

Procedures for Safe Food Handling, Preparation & Storage

All snacks are prepared using fresh ingredients and following the correct food-handling guidelines and conditions.

- All hazardous materials are stored away from food in a locked and labelled cupboard.
- Children use food tongs when choosing food.
- Foods that cause allergic reactions are put in separate containers with their own tongs to avoid cross-contamination.

BEPS OSHC Service follows strict safe food storage and preparation guidelines, found within the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, to ensure children's protection from food-borne illness, and at least one educator who has specific training in food preparation, handling and food safety program supervision is present at BEPS OSHC Service at all times.

- Food safety audits are undertaken in accordance with legislation.
- BEPS OSHC Service has a Food Safety Supervisor as required by the Food Act.
- BEPS OSHC Service has a Food Safety Program that is adhered to.
- BEPS OSHC Service Kitchen is registered with Moreland City Council as required by the Food Act.
- BEPS OSHC Service does an annual audit of its food safety program. The certificate is on display in the kitchen.
- Safe food-handling and hygiene practices are undertaken at all times.
- Children are not permitted in BEPS OSHC Service's kitchen, except under supervision during cooking activities or when helping clean up.
- Parents must ensure foods containing nuts or nut products (e.g. Nutella and peanut butter) are not brought to BEPS OSHC Service as they may cause life-threatening anaphylaxis to other children.

Accredited food safety training is completed and kept updated as necessary by educators at BEPS OSHC Service. A Food Safety Program, which is audited annually by an accredited Food Safety

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auditor, is maintained detailing safe food storage and handling procedures. Information about food-handling practices will be shared with educators throughout the year via meetings and memos, and information will also be made available to families.

- All foods will be prepared in a hygienic manner.
- Cleanliness will be observed when food is stored, handled and prepared.
- Thorough washing procedures will be observed.
- Jewelry is to be removed if necessary.
- Food and utensils will be protected at all times from contamination.
- Cutlery, plates, bowls and cups will be washed in the dishwasher.
- Tea towels will be washed daily.
- Gloves will be worn to cover any broken skin.
- Cleaning of the kitchen and food preparation area will be in accordance with the food safety plan.
- Records are kept of fridge and freezer temperatures, approved food suppliers, goods receiving, and cleaning roster.
- Stock is used by rotation so that 'used by' or 'best before' dates are used first.

Food from Home

- To ensure the protection of children, families are asked not to bring food into BEPS OSHC Service to be shared among other children due to the risk of allergies, food-borne bacteria and for cultural reasons.
- Where families provide for the nutritional requirements of their child on a regular basis, they will be encouraged to follow current recommendations from recognised authorities. BEPS OSHC Service will provide information for families on the recommended nutritional intake for their child.
- If there is an excursion planned for the day where children are required to bring their own lunch in a lunch box, families will be supported to make healthy food choices, and food will be stored in accordance with health and safety guidelines.

Procedures for Managing Food Allergies

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Food allergies in children are not uncommon. They may result in minor symptoms such as skin rashes or vomiting. In severe cases **anaphylaxis** (difficulty breathing, swelling of mouth and throat, circulatory collapse) may occur, endangering life. A child with a mild reaction to a food may go on to develop a severe reaction unexpectedly.

BEPS OSHC Service endeavours to ensure the health and safety of children with allergies while minimising their feeling of ‘difference’.

- Medical confirmation of a child’s allergies will be required, which includes symptoms of allergen exposure and any Medical Management Plan – refer to the BEPS OSHC Service Anaphylaxis Policy, and Dealing with Medical Conditions and Medication Policy. A checklist for children at risk of anaphylaxis is to be completed at time of enrolment.
- The OSHC Coordinator will conduct an assessment of the potential for accidental exposure to allergens while a child with food allergies is in the care of BEPS OSHC Service, and develop a risk minimisation plan in consultation with educators and the family of any child who has such allergies (as per the BEPS OSHC Service Dealing with Medical Conditions and Medication Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy and Diabetes Policy).
- Educators support families in seeking specialist advice (e.g. from the Allergy Clinic at the Royal Children’s Hospital) for a sensitive explanation of the potential seriousness of the allergy.
- Relieving educators are introduced to any children with allergies as they arrive, and are requested not to give any child food or milk unless the OSHC Coordinator gives their permission.
- As far as possible, food to which a child is allergic is not to be presented on the days on which that child is in attendance. If it is unavoidable that other children will be eating food that contains ingredients to which a child is allergic, then the food of the child with the allergy will be prepared and plated separately, covered, and labeled with the child’s name.
- Children’s allergies are to be clearly displayed in the hall kitchen and OSHC office. Parents are requested to complete the parent agreement attached to their child’s enrolment form requesting consent for the display of their child’s food allergy details.
- A **Risk Minimisation Action Plan** for each individual with anaphylaxis will also be displayed, in accordance with BEPS OSHC Service’s Anaphylaxis Policy.

First Aid for Allergic Reactions to Food

If a child ingests food to which they are deemed or appear allergic, educators encourage the child to spit it out and rinse their mouth out with water. Educators follow the guidelines for that child regarding medication/treatment.

- Educators follow steps for a medical emergency as per BEPS OSHC Service’s policies and procedures on the administration of first aid and medication.

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- Educators do not take responsibility for diagnosing allergies nor advising parents of treatment options; however, if an educator suspects an allergy or exposure to possible allergen that has resulted in a suspected allergic reaction; the Educators will talk to the OSHC Coordinator and develop a strategy to discuss this with the family.
- After any allergic reaction, notes must be made and witnessed as prescribed in the Education & Care Services National Law.
- Any medication given must be written up and signed by the parent. The Victorian Government Department of Education and Training must be notified as required by the Education & Care Services National Law.
- Relief educators are introduced to any children with allergies as they arrive, and are informed of the first-aid procedure if the allergen is ingested.

Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013

The Australian Dietary Guidelines use the best available scientific evidence to provide information on the types and amounts of foods, food groups and dietary patterns that aim to:

- promote health and wellbeing
- reduce the risk of diet-related conditions
- reduce the risk of chronic disease.

The Guidelines are for use by health professionals, policy makers, educators, food manufacturers, food retailers and researchers.

The content of the Australian Dietary Guidelines applies to all healthy Australians, as well as those with common diet-related risk factors such as being overweight. They do not apply to people who need special dietary advice for a medical condition, or to the frail and elderly.

More information is available at www.eatforhealth.gov.au

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

[General Service Information Policy](#)
[Dealing with Medical Conditions & Medications](#)
[Partnerships with Families](#)
[Record Keeping & Confidentiality Policy](#)

Sources & Legislative References

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National Health and Medical Research Council 2013, *Australian Dietary Guidelines*,
<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n55>

National Professional Support Coordinator Alliance 2012, *Getting started with policies for the NQF: Policies in Practice template – Healthy Eating & Food Handling*, www.pscalliance.org.au

<i>Education & Care Services National Regulations (2011) – Regulations:77, 78, 80, 91, 91, 92, 168</i>
<i>National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care (2010) – Elements: 2.2.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 4.2.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.1</i>
<i>Victorian Early Years Learning & Development Framework (2009) – Practice Principles 1, 2, 4, 5, 8</i>
<i>Framework for School Age Care in Australia (2012) – Outcomes 1, 2, 3</i>
<i>Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children & Adolescents (2013)</i>
<i>Victorian Food Act 1984</i>
<i>Food Standards Australia & New Zealand (1991)</i>
<i>Victorian Public Health & Wellbeing Act 2008</i>

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