

## Nutrition / Kai Policy and Procedures



Licensing Criteria: Health and Safety HS19-22

### Rationale

The early years are the optimal time to begin to grow children's dispositions towards healthy eating. At our kindergarten the health and nutrition of our tamariki, kaiako and whānau is a priority and we strive to support this through nutrition and physical activity.

Te Whāriki ECE Curriculum: Well-being Mana Atua Goal 1 – Children experience an environment where their health is promoted.

### Objectives

- To support tamariki to understand the connection between healthy food and water and having energy and a healthy body.
- To assist tamariki to develop self-help and self-care skills for eating, drinking and food preparation
- To ensure there are hygienic procedures around food handling.
- To provide regular education for tamariki and whanau around nutrition and healthy eating through community health services, food focused learning and role modelling of positive attitudes to eating and drinking by kaiako.
- To ensure children develop skills and practices for safe consumption of food as outlined in the guidelines, Reducing food-related choking for babies and young children at Early Learning Services(December 2020)

### Procedures

#### General Information:

- We will provide an environment that celebrates the cultural diversity that exists around food and encourage families to share their strengths, skills and experiences of their culture.
- Parents will be encouraged to breastfeed their infants and young tamariki here at kindergarten and a quiet and comfortable space will be provided for them to do so.

- All families will be given a copy of the 'Reducing food-related choking guidelines' (2020) at the time of the child's enrolment and confirmation of this will be documented on their enrolment form.
- As per these guidelines kaiako will exclude certain foods when feeding children from kindergarten provisions and ask families not to bring these foods in as part of any shared kai experience. See Appendix 1.(located on kitchen wall)
- A copy of The Heart Foundation's "Healthy Food Guidelines" will also be given to whānau and discussed at the time of enrolment.
- To ensure optimum health and development of tamariki, whānau will be encouraged to pack a healthy lunchbox with a reasonable amount of nutritious food that will sustain the child for the duration of the 6 hour session.
- Information about food allergies or intolerances will be established and discussed upon the child's enrolment and the appropriate medical forms completed at this time if applicable (see service's response to illness, injury and incident procedure). Once an individual healthcare plan has been put into place, this will be shared and signed by all Kaiako and whānau.
- Kaiako will decide on whether to ban a particular food item from kindergarten depending on the severity of the allergy, and whānau will be informed as needed when a ban is in place.
- This action will be avoided whenever possible, Instead the child will be encouraged to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe by not sharing food and checking the ingredients in food prior to eating anything other than what is provided by their own whānau.
- A list detailing information about individual dietary requirements will be displayed on the wall beside the microwave for quick reference prior to serving food.
- Kaiako will support tamariki to develop their self-help skills through modelling and encouraging. Such skills will include opening/closing their own lunch boxes, pouring drinks and washing their hands.
- Self-regulation (learning to eat when they are hungry) will be promoted throughout the curriculum as well as providing opportunities where everyone can come together to share food for enjoyment and purpose. In some cases, a tamaiti may need to have their kai separated into two snack boxes as they learn to self-regulate. Whānau and kaiako will work together to create a plan that best suits their child.
- Kaiako will be encouraged to attend professional development opportunities surrounding health and nutrition whenever possible.

#### **Lunch and morning /afternoon tea provision:**

- Although tamariki will be encouraged to bring their own water bottle, there will be town supply drinking water and cups available on a water trolley for tamariki to access independently throughout the day. Tamariki will be encouraged to pour any left-over water onto house plants.
- Sustainability is a fundamental element of our teaching philosophy and in order to support this, the use of compartmental lunch boxes and reusable food wraps will be encouraged here at kindergarten.
- We value the need for uninterrupted play and will therefore offer rolling kai times throughout the morning until 11.30 am.
- It is an expectation that all tamariki will sit down while eating and drinking and they will be supervised by an adult at all times. Kaiako will be mindful to sit with children in the designated eating areas provided. If the inside kaiako is called away for any reason and can not supervise the kai table they will request that Tautoko comes in to support and take over. If supervision is impossible for any reason, the kai table may need to be shut down temporarily until a kaiako can begin supervision again.
- Supervision of the kai table is made a priority and kaiako are mindful to utilize their listening skills as well as their sight to ensure the well being of tamariki while they are eating kai.
- Tamariki will gather to eat together at 12.00 for lunch and again at 2.10 pm for afternoon tea under kaiako supervision.
- Tamariki will be encouraged to keep some kai back for afternoon tea time. We will have some healthy emergency kai available should a child still be hungry and need something extra at this time. By eating together at the end of the day, we can revisit the day's learning, pass on any important messages and ensure that tamariki are ready to go home and have eaten enough kai to get them through the afternoon.
- Kaiako will listen with sensitivity to any concerns parents may have surrounding their child's consumption of water and food and will add the child's name to the reminder list if necessary. We will respond by monitoring the child closely and actively encouraging them to eat and drink without causing the child to become anxious.

### **Kai Science and Technology Curriculum**

- A variety of fruit and vegetables will be grown in the kindergarten garden that can be eaten either raw or used as the main ingredient in our food focused science and technology curriculum.

- The kindergarten garden will be a space for food inspiration and exploration. Tamariki will be encouraged to taste food from the garden when it is ready and develop their skills in harvesting, planting and cooking to support healthy eating practices.
- To reduce the risk of choking when tasting food from the garden, tamariki will be encouraged to take their kai to the kitchen for preparation and then asked to sit down at the table when eating, near a supervising adult. If food poses a risk of choking it will be cut and peeled if necessary.
- Before preparing or eating food, kaiako will role model hand washing techniques and encourage tamariki to learn how to keep themselves and others safe and healthy and avoid the spread of germs and cross-contamination,
- Kaiako will refer to the list beside the microwave detailing information about individual dietary requirements prior to serving any food other than the child's own.
- We will be inclusive and supportive of all dietary requirements and cultural attitudes to eating when engaging in food technology with tamariki.
- All food provided for tamariki (other than that supplied by the child's family for their personal consumption) will be recorded in the Service food register and kept on file for a minimum of 3 months.

#### **Celebration Kai:**

- We believe that children should be affirmed as individuals and we see richness and value in coming together as a kindergarten whānau to celebrate the significant milestones in their lives. Some families may choose not to celebrate birthdays and this choice must be respected.
- When a tamaiti turns 4, this milestone can be recognized through shared kai at the end of the day although we do not actively promote this practice. If whānau request that there be a small celebration, it will be agreed that they provide either a platter of fresh fruit that adheres to the food related choking guidelines or another healthy alternative.
- A special celebration will be held when the tamaiti turns 5 or is leaving kindergarten for whatever reason, and whānau may either choose from our range of healthy recipes to prepare and cook some special kai to share with their peers. or bring some healthy kai in from home to share.
- If a family is unable to supply celebration kai for this occasion, kaiako will source and provide a healthy alternative to share on request.

- Tamariki will be discouraged from eating more than one portion of any prepared kai or baking that contains refined sugar. (see also Celebration policy and procedures)

## Review

Policy will be reviewed every 3 years as per our review schedule or when a change is required.

Ratified	
Date Reviewed	October 2024
Next Review Date	October 2027
Consultation undertaken	Yes

## References

- Te Whāriki Early Childhood Curriculum 2017 Well Being Strand.
- Education (Early Childhood services) Regulations 2008 Reg 46  
Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood and Care Services 2008
- Ministry of Health Food Related Choking Guidelines 2020