

NUTRITION, ORAL HEALTH AND ACTIVE PLAY POLICY

QUALITY AREA 2 – VERSION 2.0



PURPOSE

This policy provides guidelines for Denzil Don Kindergarten to:

- Ensure national and state guidelines and recommendations regarding nutrition, oral health and physical activity are met.
- Ensure that the dietary, developmental and cultural needs of children and families are considered when implementing nutrition, oral health and active play activities.
- Encourage children to explore and enjoy food and snacks to nourish their bodies, satisfy hunger, and meet energy needs.
- Support children's needs by considering sensory processing differences and promoting body autonomy.
- Promote positive health by modelling positive self-talk, providing access to fresh drinking water, encouraging participation in physical activity and active play, and supporting good oral health practices.
- Create a supportive and inclusive environment for learning and exploring food and good oral health without restriction or judgement for children, staff, families and external visitors.
- Ensure the safe storage and preparation of food.

POLICY STATEMENT

The safety, health, wellbeing, rights and best interests of every child guide all decisions, actions and practices of Denzil Don Kindergarten staff.

VALUES

Denzil Don Kindergarten is committed to:

- Developing and implementing policies and procedures that promote health and wellbeing, meet national and state guidelines and recommendations for food preparation, nutrition, oral health and active play.
- Maintaining safe, inclusive and well-maintained buildings, grounds and facilities that support healthy eating, oral health and active play.
- Creating a culture in which all community members are respectfully supported to have access to a diverse and nutritious range of foods, maintain good oral health and be active
- Providing children with formal and informal opportunities to learn about food, nutrition, oral health and health messages about physical activity
- Engaging families, the service community and expert organisations in the promotion and implementation of nutrition, oral health and active play initiatives.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, all service staff (educational and non-educational), students, volunteers, parents/carers, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Denzil Don Kindergarten.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities under this policy:
Provide a variety of nutritious foods in your child's lunchbox, including foods that are diverse in texture, colour, flavour and cultural origin
Support your child's energy levels and ability to focus and learn at kinder day by avoiding foods high in added sugar, salt and saturated fats - such as lollies, chocolates, chips, sugary drinks and takeaway foods – in your child's lunchbox. These foods are best enjoyed outside of kindergarten
Communicate regularly with service staff regarding your child's nutritional requirements and dietary needs, including food preferences or sensory processing needs
Participate in active travel to and from the service, when possible
Provide details of specific dietary requirements, including cultural and religious practices, neurodevelopmental differences, or food allergies and intolerances, on your child's enrolment form, and discuss them with your educators prior to your child starting kindergarten, and if requirements change during the year
Participate in developing risk minimisation plans with your child's teacher if your child has a medical condition that can be impacted by food (Regulation 90/162)

Service Responsibilities: R indicates legislation requirement	Approved provider & persons with management or control	Nominated Supervisor and Person in Day-to-Day Charge	All staff (educational & non-educational)	Contractors, Volunteers & Students
Ensure the service environment and educational program support children and families to engage in positive practices related to eating, oral health and active play (<i>Child Safe Standard 2</i>)	R	√	√	
Embed developmentally appropriate opportunities to learn about food, oral health and physical activity in the education program, throughout the year (<i>Child Safe Standard 2</i>)	R	√	√	
Ensure that developmentally appropriate adult-guided and child-initiated active play is planned daily (<i>Child Safe Standard 2</i>)	R	√	√	√
Provide cooking and food experiences that support children to develop food literacy and food exploration (<i>Child Safe Standard 2</i>)	R	√	√	√
Use food language that describes food in a way that promotes positive self-talk by focussing on the things our bodies can do and celebrating difference		√	√	√
Use mealtimes as a time to engage with the children, supporting their individual sensory preferences, and promoting body autonomy. Provide children agency over what, how much, and the order in which they eat the food in their lunchbox		√	√	√
Use gentle, respectful and educational language to guide children to make food choices with sustained energy – “Go-Go Fast” and “Go-Go Slow” food language – to build their knowledge and understanding of the different energy properties of food		√	√	
Provide adequate supervision (<i>see Definitions</i>) for all children at all times, including at mealtimes (<i>Child Safe Standard 2</i>)	R	R	√	√
Encourage children’s independence at mealtimes (e.g. opening lunchboxes, self-feeding, serving and using utensils) in a culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate way		√	√	√
Ensure that family cultural and religious practices are accommodated to support children’s learning and development (<i>Regulation 79</i>)	R	R	√	
Recognise families and service staff as role models and therefore, encouraging children to bring foods and drink that are in line with this policy (<i>Child Safe Standard 2</i>)	R	√		
Provide and promote a variety and enough nutritious foods at regular intervals that are varied in textures, colours, flavours and are culturally diverse, in line with this policy (<i>Regulation 79</i>) (<i>Child Safe Standard 2</i>)	R	√		
Ensure the implementation of adequate health and hygiene procedures, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service. (<i>see Hygiene Policy and Food Safety Policy</i>) (<i>Regulation 77</i>)	R	√	√	√
Ensure measures are in place to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or diabetes. (<i>see Anaphylaxis Policy, Asthma Policy, Diabetes Policy and Food Safety Policy</i>) (<i>Regulation 77, Regulation 168–172</i>) (<i>Child Safe Standard 2</i>)	R	√	√	√

Ensure that all service staff are aware of, and plan for, the dietary needs of all children (<i>Regulation 79</i>)	R	R	√	
Ensure all service staff are aware of a child's food allergies, medical conditions or neurodevelopmental differences on enrolment or on initial diagnosis, and how this will be implemented at meal and snack times (<i>Regulation 90/162</i>)	R	R	√	
Ensure risk minimisation plans are developed for children with medical conditions that can be impacted by food (<i>Regulation 90/162</i>)	R	R		
Encourage families to provide nutritious foods that support children's learning and development, in line with ACECQA guidance and the Australian Dietary Guidelines which recommend offering a balanced variety of foods from the five food groups, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein sources, and dairy or suitable alternatives		√	√	√
Ensure that fresh drinking water is readily available, indoors and outdoors, including at snack/mealtimes and acknowledging that this may look different for some children (<i>Regulation 78</i>)	R	√	√	√
Provide families with developmentally appropriate information and strategies for eating and feeding differences, oral health and active play and how to access relevant services – Ensuring information is up to date and from credible organisations (<i>Child Safe Standard 6</i>)	R	√	√	
Develop links with local health services, community organisations and businesses that provide expertise, resources and support for eating, oral health and active play (<i>Child Safe Standard 6</i>)	R	√	√	
Ensure the layout of the grounds and buildings is inclusive of the diversity and abilities of all children and supports physical activity and movement (<i>Child Safe Standard 3</i>)	R	√		
Ensure the service premises, equipment and furniture used by the children is safe, clean and in good repair, and that children can navigate the service safely (<i>Regulation 103</i>)	R	√	√	√
Actively support and encourage active travel to and from the service or when possible, excursions (<i>Regulations 100 -102 relating to excursions</i>)	R	√	√	√
Provide developmentally appropriate road safety education	R	√	√	
Support students and volunteers to comply with this policy while at the service (<i>Regulation 168</i>)	R	√		

BACKGROUND & LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

Nutritious foods play a vital role in supporting children's growth and development. Research indicates that eating a variety of foods can also support mental health and enhance concentration, memory, and academic performance. Enjoying a wide range of foods from all food groups further supports oral development and helps maintain good oral health.

There are many benefits to promoting health and wellbeing at kindergarten, including the positive impact on each child's learning and development. Developing an awareness of healthy eating habits, oral hygiene practices and the importance of movement and active play from an early age can help establish lifelong healthy behaviours.

Educators are well placed to build this awareness among children and their families, in a developmentally appropriate way, while respecting lifestyle choices, cultural and religious values.

LEGISLATION & STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 including Regulations 77–78, 79–80, 100-102, 168-172
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Food Act 1984 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard including Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety, Quality Area 3: Physical Environment, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Community
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms, see the Definitions File located online: <https://denzildonkinder.org.au/policies/> OR in the Policies Folder in the kindergarten office.

Adequate supervision: all children in all areas of the service, always being in sight and/or hearing of an educator including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. The legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios are 1:11 and must be always observed. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

SOURCES & RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- ACECQA: [Approved learning frameworks](#)
- Australian Department of Health: [Grow and Go Toolbox](#)
- [Australian Dietary Guidelines](#)
- Cancer Council Victoria: [The Achievement Program](#)
- [Cancer Council: Healthy lunch box](#)
- Department of Health, Disability and Aging: [For infants, toddlers and preschoolers \(birth to 5 years\)](#)
- Department of Health, Disability and Aging: [Physical activity and exercise guidelines for all Australians](#)
- Department of Health: [Food Safety](#)
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand: www.foodstandards.gov.au
- National Eating Disorders Collaboration. [Eating Disorders and Neurodivergence](#)
- National Health and Medical Research Council: [Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services \(6th edition, 2024\)](#)
- NSW Government: [No pressure lunchboxes](#)
- Oral Health Victoria: www.ohv.org.au
- The Embrace Collective: [Resources](#)
- Victorian Government: [Better Health Channel](#)
- Victorian Government: [Healthy Eating Advisory Service](#)

RELATED POLICIES

- Anaphylaxis and Allergic Reaction
- Asthma Management
- Educational Program
- Dealing with Infectious Diseases
- Dealing with Medical Conditions
- Diabetes
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Excursions, Regular Outings and Service Events
- Food Safety
- Hygiene
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Inclusion and Equity

- Road Safety Education and Safe Transport
- Sun Protection

EVALUATION

To assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, we will:

- seek feedback from all parties affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before any significant change is made to the policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk ([Regulation 172 \(2\)](#)).

SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION

- NIL

AUTHORISATIONS

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Denzil Don Kindergarten on 18/05/2026.

REVIEW DATE: 18 / MAY / 2028