**Happy Little Butterfly**

**Early Learning Centre**

# Nutrition/Food/Beverages/Dietary Requirements (Centre Prepared) Policy

**Aim**

Children in long day care can receive 50% - 70% of their daily food intake whilst at the service. It is therefore essential that the service provides information to parents/guardians so that adequate nutrition is provided to the children in proportion to the time spent in care. **Happy Little Butterfly Early Learning Centre** aims to provide food and beverages, as well as food and nutritional education that is consistent with the national dietary guidelines for children and adolescents and national infant feeding guidelines. The service will follow state regulation, food safety principles, national dietary guidelines that are appropriate to the child’s age, cultural background or medical needs.

**Legislative Requirements**

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2017
National Quality Standards 2018

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017

 Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991

 Food Standard Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994

 Food Act 2003 (NSW)

 Food Regulation 2015 (NSW)

**Who is affected by this policy?**

Children

Staff

Educators

Families

Management

**Implementation**

It is the Service’s responsibility to help children and parents/guardians develop good food attitudes and habits.

In order to achieve this, **Happy little Butterfly Early Learning Centre** will:

* Provide a menu consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines.
* Provide water and milk as the only beverages served throughout the day.
* Provide water at all times to the children throughout the day.
* Cater to the individual needs of children in relation to culture, vegetarianism, allergies and any medical conditions.
* Present food in an attractive manner.
* Develop an awareness of cross-cultural eating patterns and related food values.
* Provide safe food, i.e. hygienically sound and with reduced risk of choking.
* Ensure meal times are relaxed, pleasant and timed to meet the needs of the children.
* Discuss food and its nutritional value with the children.
* Prohibit the use of food as punishment, reward or bribe.
* Prohibit any form of force feeding.
* Encourage independence and social skills at meal times.
* Establish healthy eating habits in the children by the incorporation of nutritional education into the program.
* Communicate with parents/guardians about their child’s food intake, i.e. to display the menu for the nursery, report any concerns regarding children’s eating habits.
* Inform parents/guardians of children’s nutritional needs through posters and information.
* Provide safe drinking water to children and educators/staff at all times, and ensure children have adequate fluid intake during their care.
* Parents/guardians are encouraged to follow up the “healthy eating” message at home. This policy and information provided to parents/guardians throughout their child’s enrolment will support the parents/guardians in doing this.
* Motivate educators/staff to present themselves as role models, maintaining good personal nutrition, and to eat with the children at meal times.
* Provide nutrition and food safety training opportunities for all educators/staff including awareness of culturally diverse foods and preparation.
* Provide training to educators/staff in regards to understanding and handling eating behaviors of children (including refusal of food by children).

**The special needs of infants will be considered, the Service will:**

* Encourage and support mothers with infants to continue to breast feeding as long as possible.
* If infants need extra fluids, cooled boiled water will be provided.
* Provide a supportive environment for breast feeding mothers to use while visiting the Service.
* Encourage introduction of solid foods at between four to six months.
* Provide gluten free cereal, pureed vegetables, and pureed fruits as first solids.
* Introduce iron containing foods such as meat, poultry, fish, legumes and whole grain cereals between 6 to 9 months.
* Provide a suitable range of food textures according to age and development of the infant.
* Encourage the use of a cup rather than a bottle from 12 months of age.

**The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will ensure that this policy in maintained and implemented at all times.**

**Sources**

**Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2017
Guide to the National Quality Standards 2018**

**Work Health and Safety Act 2011
Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017**

**Healthy Kids** [**www.healthykids.gov.au**](http://www.healthykids.gov.au)

**Better Health Chanel** [**www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au**](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)

**NSW Health** [**www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au**](http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au/)

**NSW Food Authority** [**www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au**](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

**National Health & Medical Research Council** [**www.nhmrc.gov.au**](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)

**Review**

The policy will be reviewed annually. Review will be conducted by management, employees, parents and any interested parties.

**Reviewed: January 2020 Date for next review: January 2021**