

# FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY

## Rationale:

To provide an environment where safe and healthy food choices are promoted, encouraged and made available to all children. To provide an environment where children, parents/whānau develop knowledge and skills about keeping themselves healthy, and a positive attitude towards food and nutrition.

## PROCEDURE:

- At Just Kids (Bickerton) and Just Kids (Merrington) we work in partnership with Kidscan to provide our children with safe, healthy and nutritious meals. Each meal is approved by the NZ Heart Foundation and contains a balance of protein, carbohydrates and vegetables.
- At Just Kids Pages Rd we work alongside parents/whānau to provide our children with safe, healthy and nutritious food – tamariki bring along their own lunch boxes from home.
- At all of our Just Kids we also provide a safe, healthy and nutritious morning and afternoon tea
- At Just Kids we promote and follow best practice, as set out in the Ministry of Health: Reducing food-related choking for babies and young children in ECE services. All of the food we provide at the centre adheres to these guidelines.
- The following food will be excluded from any meals that we provide at all of our Just Kids centres:
  1. Whole nuts or pieces of nuts
  2. large seeds, like pumpkin or sunflower seeds
  3. hard or chewy sweets or lollies
  4. crisps or chippies and corn chips
  5. hard rice crackers
  6. dried fruit
  7. sausages, saveloys and cheerios
  8. popcorn
  9. marshmallows.
- It is also recommended that other high risk foods such as raw apple and carrot will be prepared so that they are safe for children to eat i.e. cooked/grated etc
- We expect parents/whānau to be familiar with the Ministry of Health recommendations
- All parents will be emailed upon enrolment a copy of the Ministry of Health document: ***Reducing food related choking for babies and young children at early learning services***  
<https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/reducing-food-related-choking-babies-and-young-children-early-learning-services>
- If a child sleeps through a meal time, they will be offered food when they wake.
- All food which is prepared at the centre will be prepared, served and stored hygienically. There is a fridge/freezer available to store cold goods.

- We have set times for all of meals and all children will be seated and a teacher will sit alongside each table supervising all children while eating.
- Tikanga practices will include having separate tables for kai use, no sitting on kai tables, we will say karakia before kai times, separate areas for hand washing and food preparation, and food utensils will be used for that purpose only.
- All children will be encouraged to wash their hands before eating kai. Those children requiring assistance will be given some. Infants & some toddlers will have their hands washed with a clean face cloth.
- All children will have access to a clean face cloth to wash their hands and face after kai.
- All food served to the children at the centre will be recorded in the daily diary, this information is available to parents and will be kept for at least 3 months. If birthday treats are sent from home, we will ask parents/whānau to provide us with a full ingredients list which will be kept on record in the food diary. We ask that birthday cakes/muffins etc are not decorated with food items that pose a high choking risk.
- When eating children will always be seated and supervised by a teacher.
- Each classroom will have a chart on display alerting teachers to any children with food allergies. The charts will include a photo of the child & their particular allergies. It is parent's responsibility upon enrolment to inform staff about any allergies their child may have & to update this information as required. Parents will fill out an Individual Health plan for their child if appropriate.
- All qualified teachers will hold a current first aid certificate.

### **O2's Children:**

- At Just Kids Bickerton a rolling morning/afternoon tea and lunch will run; all children will be offered the opportunity to have kai for approximately ½ hour for morning/afternoon tea and for approximately 45mins to an hour for lunch. Teachers will set up the kai tables with enough seats for approximately 6 children at a time. This will help to encourage children's decision making and turn taking skills. Small groups of children at a time also enable quality interactions and conversations relating to food to take place between children and teachers.
- At Just Kids Merrington and Pages all children are seated for morning/afternoon tea and lunches at the same time.
- All children will be seated for lunch for approximately ½ hour.
- Assistance will be given to children when required. At all times children's independence and self-help skills will be encouraged and modelled keeping in line with their individual needs.

### **U2's Infants & Toddlers:**

- Infants and toddlers will have access to milk and food based on their individual needs and routines. Any infant milk or food given to children under 12 months of age is approved by their parents/caregivers.
- We have a bottle feeding policy in place (refer to this for further information).
- Infants under the age of 6 months and any other children who are unable to drink/eat or sit independently will be held and lap fed.

- Morning and afternoon tea will be provided at approximately 10am & 2pm. Lunch will take place at approximately 11.30am. These routines are flexible and will cater to the varying needs and routines of the individual children.
- Bibs are available for use during each kai time and will be washed after each use.

### **Education:**

- All staff and children will follow the correct procedure for hand washing before and after being in contact with food.
- Fresh produce is grown and harvested at Just Kids Merrington and Pages preschools with the children. At times some of this produce will be sent home with the children for their families.
- Teachers often talk with children about different fruits and vegetables and encourage children to try different foods.
- Teachers talk with children about healthy food options, and how these fuel our growing bodies.
- Games, puzzles, activities and posters promote and encourage knowledge about healthy food and nutrition within our environment.
- Food and nutrition pamphlets/posters are often available for our families to take home.

### **Drinks:**

- There is an ample supply of portable drinking water available to the children at all times. Children are also encouraged to bring along their own drink bottles.
- We ask that juice and flavoured milk be kept at home.
- No children will have access to any fluids while in bed.

**Legislation which guides this policy:** Licencing Criteria for early Childhood and Care Centre's, 2008 *Food and drink HS19, HS20*

Date: March 2022

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