OSHC NUTRITION POLICY

St Joseph’s Kingswood is all about our children. We create and uphold a nurturing environment for our children, families, teachers, volunteers, and the wider parish. We are a Catholic community of educators and learners who strive for excellence in education, and we are innovative and collaborative in our approach. Our life long purpose is to maintain a sense of belonging for all our children encouraging them to reach their full potential.

Introduction:
St Joseph’s OSHC is responsible for providing a safe, healthy, caring and nurturing environment for children in care. We aim to not only provide adequate nutrition but also to promote and encourage the establishment of good food habits early in life. Fostering healthy eating habits and activity patterns in childhood can reduce the prevalence of lifestyle diseases. The Service believes that well-nourished and active children are more likely to be alert, vigorous and happy.

We have a unique opportunity to develop positive food attitudes and practices through role modelling and teaching. Consequently, meal times are viewed as part of the children’s daily learning experiences. Eating with other children helps promote self-reliance and social skills. It encourages children to acquire a greater knowledge of and liking for a variety of foods.

While the Service recognises that parents have overall responsibility for their child’s nutrition, the Service believes it has an obligation to provide adequate nutrition proportionate to the time spent in care. Guidelines for this are given to the Centre through the Australian Dietary guidelines for Children in Long Day Care, National Accreditation Council and South Australian legislation.

Aims:
1. To meet the nutritional needs of the children whilst in care by ensuring that each child receives sufficient and adequate food to enable full participation in the day’s activities.
2. To encourage good eating habits by providing a nutritionally balanced diet based on the Australian Dietary guidelines for Children.
3. To offer access to drinking water all day.
4. To encourage parents and students to participate in the nutrition program.
5. To reflect our multicultural diversity in the menu by including foods and dishes from many cultures.
6. To take account of children on special or different diets eg religious or medical reasons, or a vegetarian lifestyle.
7. To serve attractive, well presented meals which allow choice, in a relaxed and pleasant environment which encourages independence and the development of social skills.
8. To maintain high levels of hygiene by encouraging hand washing before eating and observing the requirements of safe food handling.
9. To provide up-to-date resources and information on nutrition for parents, staff and children and to integrate nutrition education into the curriculum.
10. To evaluate regularly, with parents and children, the nutrition program and food service.

**Menu Planning**

1. Students can bring their own breakfast to BSC if required. Afternoon snack is provided daily for students in ASC. Regular meals and snacks are provided during Pupil Free days. ASC Snack always includes fresh fruit and vegetables and wholegrain carbohydrates. Other food provided will vary daily as per the weekly menu.

2. The Service respects the view of those parents who wish to exclude their children from the meals provided for religious, cultural and/or lifestyle reasons. Parents have the option to provide meals and food from home.

3. The menu takes into account;
   - the nutritional needs for healthy eating and physical activity
   - the availability and cost of different foods
   - considerations of the colour, flavour, texture and taste of foods to provide a wide variety of meals which are attractive to children.
   - the dental health of the children by avoiding foods which are sugary and sticky and cause dental decay
   - the program and events planned for the week
   - The menu is on display for families in the Hall and OSHC Room.
   - water is available to drink at all times.
   - low salt foods are used and no salt is added to foods
   - foods containing calcium and iron are offered daily
   - artificial colourings & flavours are avoided

4. As many children have allergies to nuts in particular, this is a nut free service. All food offered by the service will not contain nuts & all parents are asked not to provide food containing nuts for their children. Children should not share home food cooked with others. This also applies to staff.
**Meal Times**
1. Meal times are considered part of the educational curriculum and overall learning environment of the Service. Meal times are an enjoyable part of the children’s daily learning experiences.

2. Children can be involved in mealtime through tasks such as serving and cleaning up.
3. Children will be encouraged to try different food but will never be forced to eat.

4. During meals and snacks, children sit in groups in a social atmosphere. Children are required to remain seated whilst eating and care is taken to ensure children are well-supervised.

**Parental Involvement**
We encourage parents to:
- promote sensible eating habits with their children
- be a part of the educational programming by joining cooking activities or special events
- provide the Service with favourite recipes
- give feedback on the snacks/meals provided
- make the Service aware of any dietary requirements upon enrolment
- refrain from bringing nuts

**Food Storage and Preparation**
1. Hygiene standards, as per legislation, are adhered to at all time. The kitchen, including food preparation areas are kept hygienically clean.
2. Regular audit and maintenance of facilities is undertaken to reduce the risk of hazards.
3. Educators and children are encouraged to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after meals or when preparing food.
4. Food scraps are disposed of in a hygienic manner.

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