



## P-2.3 Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements & Food Safety

### POLICY STATEMENT

As per *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, our Service has a *Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements and Food Safety Policy* and procedures in place to ensure quality practices relating to nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements, as well as safe food practices are followed at all times.

Our Service recognises the importance of safe food handling and healthy eating to promote the growth and development of young children and is committed to supporting the healthy food and drink choices of children in our care. We acknowledge that the OSHC setting has an important role in supporting families in providing healthy food and drink to their children.

We are committed to implementing the healthy eating key messages outlined in the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating (Eat for Health). We support and promote the NSW Health's *Eat Smart, Play Smart Manual*, and *Eat for Health* resources.

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

#### QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child

### EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
78	Food and beverages
79	Service providing food and beverages
80	Weekly menu
90	Medical conditions policy
91	Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedure to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

### RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy Excursion Policy	Governance and Management Policy Work, Health and Safety Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy
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### DEFINITIONS

DEBASCA	Denistone East Before and After School Care Association
ACECQA – Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
Dietary requirements	Food and beverages provided by a service must have regard to individual children's dietary requirements, meaning: • each child's growth and development needs • any specific cultural, religious or health requirements. (Reg 79)
Food Safety	Safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children. (Reg 77)

Ref. No.	Issued	Version No.	Supersedes	Approved by	Next Revision Due
P-2.3	May 2025	5	4	Management Committee	May 2027



## P-2.3 Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements & Food Safety

Risk Minimisation Plan	Developed in consultation with families of children with a specific health care need, allergy, or relevant medical condition to list practices & procedures to minimise the risks to the children.
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### PURPOSE

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) services are required by legislation to ensure the provision of healthy foods and drinks that meet the requirements for children according to the *Australian Dietary Guidelines*. It is essential that our Service partners with families to provide education about nutrition and promote healthy eating habits for young children to positively influence their health and wellbeing. Dietary and healthy eating habits formed in the early years are shown to continue into adulthood and can reduce the risk factors associated with chronic adult conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Our Service recognises the importance of healthy eating for the growth, development, and wellbeing of young children and is committed to promoting and supporting healthy food and drink choices for children in our care. This policy affirms our position on the provision of healthy food and drink while children are in our care and the promotion and education of healthy choices for optimum nutrition.

We believe in providing a positive eating environment that reflects dietary requirements, cultural and family values, and promotes lifelong learning for children, as we commit to implementing and embedding the healthy eating key messages outlined in the NSW Health's *Eat Smart Play Smart* program into our curriculum and to support the *National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings*.

Our Service is also committed to ensuring consistently high standards of food preparation and food storage and transportation are adhered to.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all DEBASCA stakeholders.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for implementation of this policy lies with the Director or other authorised representative approved by the Director and the Management Committee.

### TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Personnel having responsibilities under this procedure will receive induction and be appropriately trained.

### IMPLEMENTATION

1. Our Service has a responsibility to help children to develop good food practices and approaches, by working with families and educators.
2. All food prepared by the Service will endeavour to be consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Eat Smart Play Smart manual.
3. Food will be served at various times throughout the day to cater for all children's nutritional needs.
4. Mealtimes reflect a relaxed and pleasant environment where educators engage in meaningful conversations with children. This assists in creating a positive and enjoyable eating environment.
5. Food will be prepared in accordance with the Food Safety Program. All kitchens and food preparation areas will comply with Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) and any relevant local jurisdictional requirements (i.e., local council registrations and inspections).
6. Child enrolment records must include any special considerations for the child, such as cultural or religious dietary restrictions, as well as any health related dietary restrictions (regulations 160 and 162).
7. Recent changes to the Food Standards Code and Food Act 2003 (Standard 3.2.2A) involve the appointment of a Food Safety Supervisor who must be available to supervise food handlers at the Service.
8. It is a requirement that both the Food Safety Supervisor and all food handlers attend food safety training.
9. Additionally, records must be maintained relating to receiving, storage, processing, displaying and transportation of food. These records must be retained for a period of 3 months.

Ref. No.	Issued	Version No.	Supersedes	Approved by	Next Revision Due
P-2.3	May 2025	5	4	Management Committee	May 2027



## P-2.3 Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements & Food Safety

### PROCEDURE

#### 10. Nutrition and Menu:

- 10.1. A menu will be developed under the guidance of the principles set out in the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents and Play Smart Eat Smart manual, and be on display for families and children. The menu will be an accurate representation of food and drink that is being served.
- 10.2. The menu will be nutritious and varied, according to current dietary recommendations.
- 10.3. The majority of food will be from the five food groups (dairy, protein, grains, cereals, fruit and vegetables, meats, legumes) with sweets and treats available only occasionally.
- 10.4. Wherever possible, fresh local produce will be used.
- 10.5. Wherever possible, meal times are seen as a social event where children and adults can relax, talk about their day and experience a variety of foods. Educators will demonstrate good healthy and hygienic eating habits while with the children, where it does not compromise their supervision.
- 10.6. Education of healthy eating habits will be developed through ongoing examples, specific activities, notices, posters and information flyers to parents.
- 10.7. Educators regularly preparing food or contributing to menu planning will receive professional development on nutrition and food safety practices.
- 10.8. Children's cooking activities will be encouraged to develop life skills. At all times, safe and hygienic practices will be followed.
- 10.9. regularly review the menu to ensure it meets best practice guidelines
- 10.10. develop the menu in consultation with children, educators and families
- 10.11. consult with health professionals to support the menu development including Dietitians for children with special dietary requirements such as vegetarian and vegans, dentists and speech therapists
- 10.12. respect and accommodate children's cultural or religious dietary practices as requested by families

#### 11. Food and Beverages

- 11.1. During term time, food will be provided for breakfast and afternoon tea.
- 11.2. During vacation care, food will be provided for breakfast and afternoon tea. Food may also be provided for morning tea and lunch, if stated on the program.
- 11.3. Fresh drinking water will be available at all times for children and Educators.
- 11.4. Children will be encouraged to sit whilst eating.
- 11.5. Children will be encouraged to get water themselves when required. They will be encouraged to bring a water bottle each day.
- 11.6. The denial of food will never be used as a punishment or to be used as a reward or bribe.
- 11.7. We encourage children to try new foods but do not force them to eat.

#### 12. Dietary Requirements

- 12.1. Parents should indicate upon enrolment any food allergies, intolerances, cultural/religious requirements or restrictions their child may have.
- 12.2. Children's individual needs such as allergies and dietary restrictions will be addressed in the menus. Staff will keep a list of all children's allergies or food restrictions along with a photo of the child near the food preparation area and office to ensure all staff adhere.
- 12.3. For each meal/snack we prepare, there will be dietary requirement alternatives and/or allergen safe options available to cater for the children in attendance that session of care.

#### 13. Where Food is brought from Home:

- 13.1. Provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and that are suitable for children's lunchboxes
- 13.2. encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious food provided
- 13.3. discourage the provision of highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt, and/or sugar, and low in essential nutrients in children's lunchboxes.

Ref. No.	Issued	Version No.	Supersedes	Approved by	Next Revision Due
P-2.3	May 2025	5	4	Management Committee	May 2027



## P-2.3 Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements & Food Safety

### 14. The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will:

- 14.1. Ensure educators and staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* in relation to this policy and relevant procedures to ensure awareness of safe food handling practices while promoting healthy eating
- 14.2. Ensure new staff and educators are aware of food practices and procedures as outlined in this policy during induction and orientation
- 14.3. Ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day
- 14.4. Ensure food and beverages are offered to children regularly during the day
- 14.5. Comply with Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A requirements
- 14.6. Ensure enrolment forms include information relating to child's food preferences, allergies, intolerances, cultural or religious considerations or medical condition which involve food or food practices.
- 14.7. Consult with families on enrolment to develop individual management plans, including completing Risk Minimisation Plans for children with medical conditions involving food allergies/requirements as per *Medical Conditions Policy*
- 14.8. Ensure children's individual dietary requirements as per enrolment information or medical condition plans are communicated to all staff and food handlers
- 14.9. Ensure any changes to children's individual dietary requirements are recorded and communicated to all staff and food handlers
- 14.10. Appoint a Food Safety Supervisor to oversee food handlers
- 14.11. Ensure the Food Safety Supervisor holds a valid Food Safety Supervisor certificate and training
- 14.12. Ensure all staff handling food attend basic safe food handling training, including an appropriate Food Safety and Food Hygiene Certificate
- 14.13. Keep an up-to-date *Food Safety Certificate Register* to provide evidence of safe food handling training for all food handlers
- 14.14. Keep records relating to receiving, storage, processing, displaying and transportation of food. These records must be kept for a period of 3 months
- 14.15. ensure the weekly menu is displayed in an accessible and prominent area for parents to view
- 14.16. ensure the weekly menu is accurate and describes the food and beverages provided each day of the week
- 14.17. ensure the service menu is reviewed on a regular basis. Amendments made to the service menu will be recorded.
- 14.18. encourage and provide opportunities for staff and educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about early childhood nutrition and food safety practices

### 15. Educators/Food Handlers will:

- 15.1. be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances, and special dietary requirements and consult with families and management to ensure individual management plans are developed and implemented, including completing Risk Minimisation Plans for children with medical conditions involving food as per *Medical Conditions Policy*
- 15.2. ensure all children encouraged to remain seated while eating and drinking
- 15.3. ensure all children are always supervised children whilst eating and drinking
- 15.4. participate in regular professional development to maintain and enhance knowledge about early childhood nutrition and food safety practices
- 15.5. participate in safe food handling training on a regular basis, including the completion of an appropriate Food Safety and Food Hygiene Certificate, as required
- 15.6. keep records relating to the safe handling of food, where required
- 15.7. consult with children, families, educators and dietitians regarding the review of the service menu
- 15.8. follow the guidelines for serving different types of food and the serving sizes in the guidelines
- 15.9. ensure age and developmentally appropriately utensils and furniture are provided for each child
- 15.10. talk to families about their child's food intake, where required, and voice any concerns about their child's eating
- 15.11. Ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day
- 15.12. Ensure young children do not have access to foods that may cause choking
- 15.13. Use the Australian Government "eat for health" calculator- [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)
- 15.14. Display nutritional information for families and keep them regularly updated

Ref. No.	Issued	Version No.	Supersedes	Approved by	Next Revision Due
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## P-2.3 Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements & Food Safety

- 15.15. Consider the needs of various age groups at the service- meal times may be offered progressively or at different times
- 15.16. Not allow food to be used as a form of punishment or to be used as a reward or bribe
- 15.17. Not allow the children to be force fed or being required to eat food they do not like or more than they want to eat
- 15.18. Establish healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into our program
- 15.19. Ensure pets or animals are not present within the kitchen or food preparation areas
- 15.20. Ensure children do not share food, plates, cups or utensils

### 16. Cooking with Children

- 16.1. Cooking experiences are a valuable experience for children developing life skills. Cooking can help children's knowledge and skills regarding healthy eating habits. Cooking is a great, fun activity and provides opportunities for children to be exposed to new foods, sharing of recipes and cooking skills.
- 16.2. Educators will look for recipes with minimal or no allergens
- 16.3. Educators will ensure the allergens and dietary requirements for the children attending that session are checked and catered for in the recipe.
- 16.4. Safety during the cooking activity is important as children learn new skills, considering their age and experience hence educators will be required read through the '*Cooking Activity*' risk assessment and plan accordingly
- 16.5. All cooking activities will be supervised and educators will be vigilant to ensure that the experience remains safe, and relevant food hygiene practices are adhered to.

### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/EVALUATION

Our *Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements and Food Safety Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

Ref. No.	Issued	Version No.	Supersedes	Approved by	Next Revision Due
P-2.3	May 2025	5	4	Management Committee	May 2027



## P-2.3 Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements & Food Safety

### SOURCES

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[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).

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[https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the\\_guidelines/n56b\\_infant\\_feeding\\_summary\\_130808.pdf](https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the_guidelines/n56b_infant_feeding_summary_130808.pdf)

National Health and Medical Research Council. Eat for health: <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/>

NSW Food Authority: <http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/>

NSW Government. Eat for Health <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating>

NSW Heart Foundation 'Eat Smart, Play Smart':  
[https://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/downloads/file/teacherschildcare/EatSmartPlaySmart\\_Manual\\_ThirdEdition-V7.pdf](https://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/downloads/file/teacherschildcare/EatSmartPlaySmart_Manual_ThirdEdition-V7.pdf)

*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

*Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011.*

Ref. No.	Issued	Version No.	Supersedes	Approved by	Next Revision Due
P-2.3	May 2025	5	4	Management Committee	May 2027



## P-2.3 Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements & Food Safety

CHANGE HISTORY	Version	Amendment Details	Date Amended
	New	Reformatted DEBASCA policies	Nov 2013
	1	Reformatted Policy number: D-3 to P-2.3	Aug 2016
	2	Updated according to latest revised Quality Standards	Apr 2018
	3	No change	Aug 2020
	4	Policy name add – Food and Beverages Minor rewording Policy Statement, added last sentence. Added Background Added Legislative Requirements section Added Regulations 91, 160, 162, 168, 170, 171, 172 Associated Documents added NQS 2.1.3, NSW Food Authority, Eat for Health website: eatforhealth.gov.au, ACECQA policy guidelines Definitions added: ACECQA, Dietary Requirements, Food Safety, Risk Minimisation Plan Added Related Policies Added Implementation Minor rewording: 8.1, 8.5, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.6, 9.9, 9.10, 9.11 Added: 9.12, 10.3, 11, 12, 13	Aug 2022
	5	Adopted NEW DEBASCA policy format Added National Quality Standard Added Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations Removed Associated Documents as it has been separated above categories Added Purpose Deleted 6 from previous policy. Added clause 7, 8, 9. Added 10.9-10.12 11.3 minor rewording Deleted 9.4, 9.5, 9.6, 9.9, 9.10 from previous version Added 13.1-13.3 Deleted 11.6 from previous version Added 14.1-14.5, 14.11, 14.12 Added 15.11-15.20 Minor re-wording: 16.1 and 16.5 Added Continuous Improvement/Evaluation Added Sources Added '...& Food Safety' to policy name	Jan 2025

Ref. No.	Issued	Version No.	Supersedes	Approved by	Next Revision Due
P-2.3	May 2025	5	4	Management Committee	May 2027