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INDIVIDUAL PROCEDURES INCLUDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9.1 Breastfeeding and Solid Food Introduction (Early Education Only) 9.2 Infant Bottle Feeding (Early Education Only) 9.3 Promote Healthy Food 9.4 Promote Food Safety 9.5 Positive Eating Environment 9.6 Education and Communication about Nutrition 9.7 Children’s Cooking Classes
OTHER DOCUMENTS/ LEGISLATION TO BE REFERENCED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Partnerships Policy • Health and Wellbeing Policy • Food and Nutrition Policy

9.1 Breastfeeding and Solid Food Introduction (Early Education)

Purpose

At St Nicholas we will encourage and support breastfeeding and the appropriate introduction of solid foods to infants in our care.

Step by Step

- We will support mothers to continue breastfeeding until babies are at least 12 months of age while offering appropriate complementary foods (provided by St Nicholas or the family) from 6 months of age.
- We will provide a suitable place within the centre where mothers can breastfeed their babies or express breast milk.
- We will ensure the safe handling of breast milk and infant formula including storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding.
- In consultation with families, we will offer cooled pre-boiled water as an additional drink from around 6 months of age.
- In consultation with families, we will determine appropriate foods (type and texture) are introduced around 6 months of age.
- In consultation with families we will provide to babies nutritionally prepared meals or the prepared meals from home and also where necessary offer nutritional snacks according to our menu.
- At St Nicholas we closely supervise babies while drinking and eating - ensuring safe bottle feeding and eating practices at all times. Bottle-fed babies are held in a semi-upright position whilst offered a bottle.

Reference: *2018 National Quality Standards (NQS)*
Education and Care Services National Regulations (Amended 2018)

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9.2 Infant Bottle Feeding (Early Education)

Purpose

St Nicholas will promote the safe and hygienic preparation and sterilisation of all infant bottles.

Step by Step

- All bottle preparation will be done in the designated bottle and food preparation area in the nursery.
- The bottle and food preparation area will always be clean and hygienic and will only ever be used for the purpose intended.
- All food and bottles will be kept totally separate from the nappy change and toileting areas.
- Only sterilised bottles and teat assemblies are to be used for all infant feeds.
- Before preparing or handling expressed milk, formula or food, always wash hands and wear gloves.
- Families are to provide the formula in original container or in premeasured suitable storage containers.
- It is best to make up fresh formula for each feed and give it to the child as soon as it has cooled.
- If it is not possible to use the fresh formula straight away then:
 - It should be cooled immediately and stored in the back of the refrigerator (where it is coldest) for no more than 24 hours.
 - It should be labelled with the child's full name and the date and time it was prepared
 - It should be thrown away if not used within 24 hours
- If families bring in pre-made formula it should be labelled clearly with the child's name and the date and time the bottle was prepared. Any formula that was prepared more the 24hours prior must be discarded and not given to the child.
- Storing breast milk:
 - Families must provide the expressed milk in sterilised containers, bottles or bags.
 - Families will clearly label all containers with child's name and date milk expressed and date (if applicable) milk has been frozen and then thawed.
 - Milk that has not been offered can be stored safely for a maximum of 3 – 5 days (from time expressed) at 4° C or lower, If stored without refrigeration for 6-8 hours if the room temperature is less then 26° C.
 - Milk that is frozen can be thawed:
 - In refrigerator and used within 24hours
 - By standing the bottle in a container of luke warm water and used straight away
- The microwave will not be used to heat expressed breast milk, formula milk, bottled milk or any fluid.
- Bottles will be warmed using the bottle warmer.
- The temperature of the milk will always be tested before giving it to the infant by using your wrist.

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- To test if the milk is at the right temperature, let the milk drop onto the inside of your wrist to check the temperature. It should feel comfortably warm or even a little cool - do not give hot milk.
- Infant milk will only be warmed once and any unused warmed milk will be discarded within a period of 1hour after heating
- Bottle feeding such as ‘prop feeding’ or propping up the bottle for self-feeding by bottle-fed infants is not an acceptable practice. Research shows that attachment in young infants strongly reinforces the need for relationships with a consistent caregiver who provides warmth, affection and stimulation and at St Nicholas we strive to fulfil this.
- Infants should be in a semi-upright or upright position when being fed. Examples of suitable positions include:
 - On your lap facing to the side or in front
 - In a semi-reclined seat if requiring trunk and head support
 - In a stable baby chair if able to sit independently
 - In a high chair (ensure good trunk support and safety strap used through legs to avoid slipping)
- The use of feeding bottles with teats is only recommended until the age of 12 months for developmentally able children. Between the ages of 6 and 12 months, infants need to transition from liquid food to solid family foods. Daily cup drinking practice from 6 months on helps infants to give up the bottle at 12 months of age. Less reliance on bottle feeds of milk makes it easier for toddlers to become good eaters.

Sterilising of Bottles and Teats

- To minimise risk of infection or incident, families are to provide St Nicholas with sterilised bottles and teats for the day.
- If St Nicholas needs to sterilise either bottles or teats, all bottles and teats are to be washed; first in warm soapy water then rinsed with clean water.
- Steamers for microwaves - They take around five to eight minutes to work, plus cooling time. Be careful when removing the lid of steam sterilisers, as the inside can become very hot.
- Microwavable bottles - it takes 90 seconds to sterilise a single bottle. Bottles must not be sealed during microwaving. Pressure could build up inside them during the heating process.
- Educators will wash their hands before removing the sterilised items.
- Avoid leaving sterilised empty bottles out on work surfaces for long, as they will quickly lose their sterility. Ideally, sterilisers have built-in storage facilities and bottles can be removed when required.
- If using a microwave for sterilising, ensure that it is in a purpose designed container and follow the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Regular inspections of all sterilising equipment will be carried out to ensure a safe and hygienic environment.

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Reference: 2018 National Quality Standards (NQS)
Education and Care Services National Regulations (Amended 2018)
Staying Healthy in Child Care, 5th Edition, 2013
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/breastfeeding-bottle-feeding-solids/bottle-feeding/formula-making-storing-transporting>
www.breastfeeding.asn.au

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9.3 Promote Healthy Food

Purpose

St Nicholas will promote healthy food and drinks based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Dietary Guidelines for children and adolescents.

Step by Step

For Centres where children provide their own midday meal (Early Education and Vacation Care)

- At St Nicholas we will plan healthy morning and afternoon tea snacks for children, ensuring they are substantial enough to meet the energy and nutrient needs required.
- We will provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and suitable for children's lunchboxes.
- We will 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.
- We will discourage the provision of highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt and sugar and low in essential nutrients in children's lunchboxes. Examples of these foods include lollies, chocolates, sweet biscuits, muesli bars, breakfast bars, fruit filled bars, chips, oven-baked crackers and corn chips.

For Centres where all food is provided

- St Nicholas will ensure that, if a child attends service for 8 hours or more, the child is provided with at least 50% of recommended daily intakes (RDI) of nutrients.
- Food and drink provided to children at the premises is to be consistent with the dietary guide.
- The FeedAustralia for Child care services App will be used to help monitor, assess and improve the delivery of food and drinks to the children at St Nicholas, in alignment with Australian Dietary Guidelines.
- Drinking water is provided and available to children at all times.
- Each child at the centre is provided with food and drinks that are nutritious, adequate in quantity, varied, offered at frequent intervals and appropriate to the developmental needs of the child.
- Information is readily accessible to parents of children enrolled, outlining the approach taken to meet the needs of children including each child's special dietary needs, culture and religion
- The menu that outlines the food to be provided each day is prominently displayed in a place visible to parents and is on display at least one week in advance for parents.
- The written menu must be in line with regulations and must address:
 - A variety of foods that satisfy current nutritional standards and satisfy children's appetites and interests.
 - Quantities of food provided should meet NSW regulations.
 - The quality of food – limit amounts of sugar and saturated fats.
 - Meals that are appropriate for children's age, cultural and religious background.

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- Meals that are appropriate for children with food allergies or medical conditions or disabilities related to eating and nutrition.
- Principles of safe food handling to be practiced at all times (see Food Handling Policy).
- Quantities of food need to be sufficient to allow for second helpings and access to healthy snacks.
- Provisions will be made for those children who do not eat what has been offered, for example sandwiches, fruit or yogurt. All children will be encouraged to try the meal first.
- Milk to be provided at breakfast, morning or afternoon tea. Full cream milk is recommended for children under 2 and reduced fat milk is encouraged for children over 2.
- Strategies are to be implemented to reduce risks of food allergies and anaphylaxis (see Medical Conditions Policy).
- Children's Birthdays are a special time for children and St Nicholas enjoys sharing the occasion. Parents are welcome to send along a store bought cake to share if they wish, however are asked to send plain cakes only. Cakes must be sealed and have an ingredients list on them due to allergies.

Reference: *2018 National Quality Standards (NQS)*
Education and Care Services National Regulations (Amended 2018)
Staying Healthy in Child Care 5th edition, 2013.
Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia Incorporating the Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers, NHMRC (2003)
Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 (Cwlth)
<https://www.feedaustralia.org.au/>

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9.4 Promote Food Safety

Purpose

St Nicholas will ensure the required safety pertaining to food and drinks consumed at our centre.

In relation to the program we will:

- Ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day.
- Be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances and special diets and consult with families to develop individual management plans.
- Ensure young children do not have access to foods that may cause choking.
- Ensure all children remain seated while eating and drinking.
- Always supervise children while eating and drinking.

Step by Step

In relation to food handling we will:

- Encourage and provide opportunities for our cook, food assistant and our educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge of early childhood nutrition.
- Provide food to children that has been stored, prepared and served in a safe and hygienic manner and promote hygienic food practices.
- Ensure gloves are worn or food tongs are used by all educators handling 'ready to eat' foods.
- Ensure children and educators wash and dry their hands (using soap, warm running water and single use or disposable towels) before handling food or eating meals and snacks.
- Ensure that food is stored and served at safe temperatures i.e. below 5 degrees Celsius or above 60 degrees Celsius, and keep records of temperature checks of all fridges and freezers at the centre. Where puréed foods are brought from home for babies they will be heated and temperature checked before being served to infants.
- When checking to see if food has cooled, remove a small piece of food with a spoon to another plate and test the temperature of the food with your hand. Throw this food away and wash the spoon.
- Separate cutting boards are used for fruit, dairy and meat products and utensils and hands are washed before touching other foods.
- Ensure all open packages are stored in sealed containers with the use by date clearly displayed.
- Children will be discouraged from handling other children's food and utensils.
- Any educators handling food will attend relevant training courses and pass relevant information on to the rest of the staff.
- If children are sharing food from a common bowl or plate, make sure they understand that they need to use tongs, spoons or other appropriate utensils to take the food they want to eat. Remind them that cannot touch food that is being shared because this can spread germs that might make them or other children ill.

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- If you are interrupted to care for another child while preparing food or spoon-feeding an infant, be sure to wash your hands again and change your gloves before you continue

Reference: *2018 National Quality Standards (NQS)*
Education and Care Services National Regulations (Amended 2018)

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9.5 Positive Eating Environment

Purpose

At St Nicholas we will provide a positive eating environment which reflects cultural and family values.

Step by Step

- Ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided.
- Endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with educators and other children.
- Encourage older toddlers and pre-schoolers to assist to set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink, providing opportunities for them to develop independence and self-esteem.
- Respect each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats.
- Be patient with messy or slow eaters.
- Encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat.
- Do not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes.

Reference: *2018 National Quality Standards (NQS)*
Education and Care Services National Regulations (Amended 2018)

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9.6 Education and Communication about Nutrition

Purpose

St Nicholas will promote lifelong learning for children, educators and families about healthy food and drink choices. We will communicate with families about appropriate healthy food and drinks for children that they provide at our centre and also what St Nicholas is providing to complement that meal.

Step by Step

- Include in the children's program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating. Through this we foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices.
- Encourage children to participate in a variety of 'hands-on' food preparation experiences.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices.
- Provide a copy of the Food and Nutrition Policy to all families upon orientation at St Nicholas. Families will be provided with opportunities to contribute to the review and development of the policy.
- Request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to St Nicholas and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children's individual dietary needs are met.
- Communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within St Nicholas and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home.
- For Centres where children provide their own midday meal, communicate regularly with families and provide information and advice on appropriate food and drink to be included in children's lunchboxes. This information will be provided to families by way of newsletters, during orientation, information sessions and informal discussion.

Reference: *2018 National Quality Standards (NQS)*
Education and Care Services National Regulations (Amended 2018)

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9.7 Children's Cooking Classes

Purpose

Children love to cook. Cooking is a safe and enjoyable activity for children in education and care services, provided that you take a few simple precautions.

Step by Step

- Make sure educators and children wash and dry their hands before and after the cooking class.
- Always be aware of the dangers of heat.
- Tie up any long hair.
- To reduce the chances of germs being spread through food, it is recommended that children only
- Prepare food that will be cooked afterwards—any germs in the food will be destroyed when the food is cooked. However, if the food will not be cooked, this risk can be lowered if children only prepare food to eat themselves.
- If the education and care service has recently had, or is currently experiencing, an outbreak of gastrointestinal disease, do not hold children's cooking activities, and check with your local public health unit before resuming cooking activities.
- Activity risk assessments will be completed for all cooking activities and should include safety measures for the following risks and hazards:
 - The use of electrical appliances (oven, kettle, toaster, frypan)
 - Safe use of knives and other sharp or dangerous implements
 - Safe preparation of non-cooked food eg. fruit skewers, sandwiches etc
 - Children accessing the centre kitchen
 - Hygiene precautions
- All risk assessments should be approved by the Director/Nominated Supervisor and signed by all staff in the room. They should also be reviewed every 3 months.
- All cooking activities should only be conducted under the direct supervision of educators.

Reference: *Staying Healthy in Child Care 5th edition, 2013.*

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