

1. Policy Statement

St Nicholas is committed to providing environments that promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children through positive nutrition practices from birth. Recognising the essential role of healthy eating in children’s growth, development, and learning, each service ensures food provision supports these outcomes. St Nicholas also acknowledges the serious nature of anaphylaxis, allergies, and food-related medical conditions and is committed to minimising known risks. All services operate as allergy-aware environments where staff, families, and stakeholders remain informed, vigilant, and responsive to managing allergies and dietary requirements.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to:

- outline the practices St Nicholas services and employees will implement to promote healthy nutrition and ensure the safety of children with dietary related medical conditions.
- ensure families are informed of, and have access to, the service’s procedures relating to nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements.
- support compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, which require services to have policies and procedures in place for nutrition, food and beverages, and the management of dietary needs.

3. Procedure Direction

| Step | Detail |
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| Safe food handling practices | <p>In accordance with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, Standard 3.2.2A, services that handle unpackaged, potentially hazardous, ready to eat food must comply with the applicable food safety management requirements.</p> <p>Where the service undertakes category one food handling activities (for example, processing potentially hazardous food through activities such as chopping, cooking, heating, thawing or washing, and serving that food to children), the service must implement the following food safety management tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a food safety supervisor • Ensure team members handling food have completed food handler training • Substantiate critical food safety controls (demonstrate food is safe) <p><u>Food Safety Supervisor</u></p> <p>Each service must have at least one qualified Food Safety Supervisor (FFS) on site. St Nicholas requires the service cook and Nominated Supervisor to be qualified as an FFS.</p> |

The Food Safety Supervisor will:

- be formally trained to recognise and prevent risks associated with food handling in food businesses
- hold a current NSW Food Authority FSS certificate (no more than 5 years old) as per the NSW Food Act Section 106B(1a)
- train and supervise other people in the business about safe food handling practices, and
- has the authority and ability to manage and give direction on the safe handling of food

Our service will ensure that food and drinks provided to children are stored, prepared and served in a safe and hygienic manner in line with Australia and New Zealand Food Safety Standards to promote hygienic food practices.

Person preparing food will:

- undertake Food Handler Basics training if they do not hold a current FFS
- wear gloves or use tongs for all 'ready to eat' foods
- store and serve food at safe temperatures i.e. below 5C or above 60C
- use separate cutting boards for raw meat; utensils and hands are washed before touching other foods
- store all open food packages in sealed, labelled containers with the use-by date clearly displayed to ensure freshness and traceability.
- store food and drinks in a manner that minimises the risk of cross-contamination
- ensure fridge and freezer temperature checks are conducted regularly
- check food temperature using a probe thermometer; ensure the thermometer is calibrated/verified and cleaned between uses.

Educators will:

- undertake Food Handler Basics training
- ensure that both children and educators practice appropriate hand-washing practices before and after handling food or eating meals and snacks.
- wear gloves or use tongs for all 'ready to eat' foods
- discourage children from handling other children's food and utensils
- thoroughly wipe down tables, chairs and highchairs with soapy water or an appropriate cleaning chemical before and after meals
- ensure children do not share food or drinks and do not eat/drink from another child's plate, bowl, cup, bottle or cutlery

Management of dietary requirements

Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure parents have recorded children's dietary requirements including cultural, religious and diagnosed medical requirements in the child's enrolment form
- consult with parents/guardians and follow the information recorded in the enrolment form, medical action plans and/or other dietary requirement related information to develop a medical risk minimisation and communication plan for each child
- communicate all relevant information to the service cook and room educators
- create a dietary requirement card immediately when a dietary need is identified, using the most recent St Nicholas template. Dietary requirement cards include child's name, colour photo and dietary requirement details.
- ensure adequate supply of all colour-coded equipment is maintained

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- ensure meal check point forms are kept for two weeks. If a food-related incident occurs, retain the relevant meal checkpoint form on file as part of incident documentation.
- maintain the St Nicholas dietary quick reference (DQR) guide listing all children with diagnosed food-related medical conditions and dietary preferences.
- display the DQR guide in the kitchen and on each food service trolley
- print the guide in colour and keep it current

Staff member preparing the food will:

- follow the information recorded on individual children's medical risk minimisation plan, medical action plan and/or other dietary requirement related information when preparing children's food
- use separate clean utensils for preparing meals for children with dietary requirements; if shared utensils are used, wash in soapy water or dishwasher between uses to remove traces of potential allergens.
- prepare meals for children with individual dietary requirements first to help prevent cross-contamination.
- for meals/drinks prepared for children with dietary requirements: cover with cling wrap or suitable alternative, attach the child's dietary requirement card, then add a second layer of cling wrap or suitable clear alternative to keep the card secure and clearly visible.
- Use colour coded plateware at all times to help prevent cross-contamination and reduce the risk of incorrect meals/drinks being served:
 - RED** – medically diagnosed food-related conditions (including anaphylaxis, allergies, coeliac disease, FPIES, EoE, medically diagnosed intolerances).
 - ORANGE** – dietary preferences (including cultural and religious preferences).
 - WHITE** – all other children
- complete the St Nicholas meal checkpoint form to confirm the right child receives the right food and drinks.

Educators will:

- follow the information recorded on individual children's medical risk minimisation plan, medical action plan and/or other dietary requirement related information when serving children's food including when on excursions.
- include children with dietary requirements within the group and ensure they are not isolated from peers
- complete the St Nicholas meal checkpoint form to confirm the right child receives the right food and drinks. Educators sign when receiving the food, serving the food and checking the correct child has received the food.
- meal check point form must be completed every time a child with a dietary requirement is served any food or drinks other than water.
- serve children, or allow children with dietary requirements to serve their food and drinks before other children
- clean up food and drink spills immediately.
- clean up posit/vomit quickly and thoroughly as it can contain food allergens.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use disposable paper towels where possible. If cloths are used, machine wash before using again • baby wipes may be used to remove allergens from hands and faces if soap and water are not available • Student Based Trainees are not to serve children their food <p>Foods with precautionary allergen labelling statements such as “may contain traces of ...” must not be provided to children allergic to specific foods unless written consent is provided by the parent/guardian.</p> |
| Menus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our service will promote healthy foods and drinks based on the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating • For children attending 8 hours or more we will provide at least 50% of their recommended daily intake (RDI) of essential nutrients through food and beverages provided. • Menus will be planned to ensure food and beverages are nutritious, adequate in quantity, and based on each child’s dietary requirements. They will account for their growth and developmental needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements. • Food and beverages provided will accommodate children with allergies, medical conditions, or disabilities related to eating and nutrition. • Weekly menus accurately describing the food and beverages provided to children will be available to parents and guardians with advice provided in the event of changes being made to the menu and will be reviewed regularly to ensure they meet the nutritional needs of children. • Safe drinking water will be readily available (both indoors and outdoors) for children to consume throughout the day • Sufficient quantities of food and beverages will be provided to children at regular intervals throughout the day. • If a child does not eat the main meal offered, an alternative nutritious option (e.g., sandwich, fruit, yoghurt) will be offered after encouraging the child to try the main meal first. • Children under the age of 2 will not be served food items that might pose a choking risk including but not limited to whole round foods such as grapes or cherry tomatoes, hard food such as crackers and corn chips, hot dogs, sausages (unless cut into very small pieces) and raw carrots |
| Eating environments | <p>Our service will provide positive eating environments that are relaxed, social and reflect cultural and family values.</p> <p><u>Educators will:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • closely supervise children while eating and drinking • monitor children’s food and beverage intake to ensure it is adequate and appropriate to each child’s needs |

- be familiar with the individual needs and action plans for the children in your care with specific dietary requirements, and ensure those requirements are taken into consideration, including on excursions
- sit with the children at meal and snack times to role model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in positive conversations about the food and nutrition
- recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds through strong partnerships with families and community
- conduct mealtimes in a calm and relaxed atmosphere allowing sufficient time to eat and engage socially.
- encourage children to participate in mealtime routines (setting/clearing tables and serving themselves where possible) to build independence and confidence
- respect children’s appetites; do not insist children eat if they are not hungry or indicate they are full; show patience toward slow eaters or children developing skills.
- encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat
- never use food as a reward or withhold food from children for behaviour guidance purposes
- ensure children do not have access to educational play resources while they are eating.

Breast feeding
 Bottle feeding
 Introduction of solids

Breast Feeding

- St Nicholas supports breastfeeding until at least 12 months, consistent with NHMRC recommendations.
- From around 6 months, complementary foods are introduced in consultation with families, while continuing breastfeeding.
- A private, comfortable, hygienic space is available for mothers to breastfeed or express milk during the day.
- Breast milk and formula are handled safely, including correct storage, preparation, and feeding practices.
- In consultation with families, cooled, boiled water may be offered from around 6 months as infants transition to solids.

Preparation & Hygiene

- Bottles and formula are prepared only in the designated hygiene-maintained bottle/food prep area, never near nappy change or toileting areas.
- Only sterilised bottles/teats are used for children under 12 months.
- Families must provide formula in original or clearly labelled containers with the child’s full name.
- Microwaves must not be used to heat breast milk or formula. Bottles are warmed in a bottle warmer and tested on the wrist to ensure they are warm or slightly cool, never hot.

Formula Preparation & Storage

- Fresh formula should be prepared for each feed and offered once cooled.
- If not used immediately, formula must be rapidly cooled, stored at the back of the fridge, and labelled with the child’s name, date, and time. Discard after 24 hours.

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- Pre-made formula from families must follow the same labelling rules.
- Formula older than 24 hours is discarded.

Breast Milk Handling

- Breast milk must arrive in sterilised, clearly labelled containers including name, expression date, and thaw date if applicable.
- Storage:
 - Fresh milk: 3–5 days at $\leq 4^{\circ}\text{C}$
 - Room temp ($< 26^{\circ}\text{C}$): up to 4 hours
 - Frozen: thaw in fridge and use within 24 hours, or in lukewarm water and use immediately
- Warmed milk must be used within 1 hour; leftovers are discarded

Feeding Practices

- Bottle feeding must only be conducted by a St Nicholas staff member.
- Prop feeding or self-feeding is prohibited to support responsive feeding and healthy attachment.
- Infants are fed upright or semi-upright—on an educator’s lap, in a semi-reclined seat, or in a secure chair/highchair if sitting independently.

Transition from Bottle to Cup

- Bottles with teats are generally recommended only until around 12 months.
- Cup drinking is introduced from about 6 months to support oral motor development and gradual weaning. Educators work with families to support individual readiness.

Sterilising Bottles & Teats

- Families are encouraged to supply sterilised items daily. If sterilised onsite, bottles/teats are washed in warm soapy water, rinsed, then sterilised using microwave steamers or approved containers.
- Bottles must remain unsealed during microwave sterilisation; educators must wash hands before handling.
- Sterilised items should be stored in sealed containers and not left exposed. Equipment is checked regularly to maintain safety standards.

Introduction of solid foods

- Communicate with families regularly to ensure children's changing feeding needs are incorporated into their care routines. The service will endeavour to provide foods which have been previously introduced by the family
- Abide by the current Australian Government Infant Feeding Guidelines
- Offer a variety of nutritious foods to infants from all food groups in line with the Australian Dietary Guidelines.
- Support families where needed to ensure appropriate foods (type and texture) are introduced around six months of age including iron rich nutritious foods.
- Adjust the texture of foods offered between six and 12 months of age to match the infant’s developmental stage.

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| Educational Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children and team members must wash and dry hands before and after cooking. • stay alert to risks from heat sources such as stovetops, ovens, and hot appliances. • long hair must be tied back for safety and hygiene. • children may only prepare uncooked food for themselves; shared food must be cooked thoroughly. • cooking experiences are not permitted during or shortly after a gastroenteritis outbreak. • a full risk assessment must be completed for all cooking activities, including appliance use, knives, hygiene, non-cooked food preparation, and kitchen access. • cooking activities must be directly supervised at all times. • promote healthy eating and knowledge of nutrition by children, e.g., eating with the children, conversations during mealtimes around food • promote healthy eating among families • involve children in decision-making about healthy food and beverage choices, e.g., having them assist with food preparation • healthy eating concepts should be embedded in learning experiences along with knowledge of nutrition. • provide hands on food preparation opportunities to build skills and positive relationships with healthy foods.-on food preparation opportunities to build skills and positive relationships with healthy foods. |
| Birthday Celebrations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • birthday cakes and food-based treats from home are not permitted due to allergy risks, for safety requirements, equity and inclusion considerations, cultural/dietary needs, hygiene, and healthy eating guidelines. • nonfood celebration options are encouraged, such as a birthday badge, group song and dance, special story time chosen by the child, or a birthday chair/cushion. |

4. Roles and Responsibilities

| Role | Responsibility |
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| Approved Provider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure obligations under National Law/National Regulations and relevant NSW legislation are met. • ensure adequate health and hygiene practices are followed, as well as safe premises, equipment and practices for handling, preparing and storing food, in line with Australian food safety standards and any jurisdictional requirements • take reasonable steps to ensure that St Nicholas staff members, educators and visitors follow the policy and procedures |
| Nominated Supervisor Responsible Person | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that regulatory obligations are met in relation to nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements • implement procedures for nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements • Request families inform St Nicholas of allergies, intolerances or dietary requirements so the service can work collaboratively to meet individual needs. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide communication with families about food and nutrition-related experiences and share current information to support healthy choices at home. • take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders • take reasonable steps to inform and support educators and staff of their responsibilities in implementing the policy and procedures at all times • guide and mentor educators and staff to be able to follow the policy and procedures |
| Educators / staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adhere to St Nicholas policies and procedures |
| Parent/Guardian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the service is advised of your child's dietary requirements relating to your child's growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements, at the time of enrolment, and that this information is kept up-to-date • should your child have a medical condition that can be impacted by food, work with the service to develop risk minimisation plans • read the service's weekly menu and provide any feedback • if providing food and beverages from home, ensure these are nutritious and plentiful and that they are in line with service requirements (e.g., that they do not contain allergens that could harm other children at the service), noting that the service is not required to serve food and beverages from home to children. • be aware of, support and follow the service's policies and procedures |

5. Related Documents

Policies and Procedures

- St Nicholas Administration of First Aid Policy and Procedure
- St Nicholas Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- St Nicholas Dealing Medical Conditions in Children Policy and Procedure
- St Nicholas Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy and Procedure
- St Nicholas Dealing with infectious diseases Policy and Procedure
- St Nicholas Child Safe Environment Policy and Procedure
- St Nicholas Excursions Policy and Procedure
- St Nicholas Governance and Management Policy and Procedure

Legislation

- [Children \(Education and Care Services\) National Law \(NSW\) No 104a of 2010 - NSW Legislation](#)
Section: 167, 165
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations \(2011 SI 653\) - NSW Legislation](#)
Regulation: 77, 78, 79, 80, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 160, 162, 176
- [Standard 3.2.2A Food Safety Management Tools | NSW Food Authority](#)

Other References

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- [australian-dietary-guidelines.pdf](#)
- [Infant Feeding Guidelines | NHMRC](#)
- [Policy and procedure guideline - Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements](#)
- [National Quality Standard | ACECQA](#)
- [Using expressed breastmilk in early childhood education and care settings | Australian Breastfeeding Association](#)
- [Baby formula: how to make and store it | Raising Children Network](#)
- [Children’s services | NSW Food Authority](#)
- [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code – Standard 3.2.2A – Food Safety Management Tools - Federal Register of Legislation](#)
- [Children's education and care - Allergy Aware](#)
- [Best practice guidelines for anaphylaxis prevention and management in Children's Education and Care - Allergy Aware](#)
- [Welcome to Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia](#)
- [Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services - 6th Edition](#)

Other Related St Nicholas Documents

- St Nicholas Medical Risk Minimisation and Communication Form
- St Nicholas EE Kitchen Hygiene and Cleaning Checklist
- St Nicholas Allergen Cards
- St Nicholas Dietary Quick Reference Guide
- St Nicholas Dietary Preference Form
- St Nicholas Meal Check Point Form

National Quality Standard

Quality Area 2.1 Health

Quality Area 3.1 Design

Quality Area 5 Relationships with children

Quality Area 6 Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

6. Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|------------------------|--|
| Food Safety Supervisor | A Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) oversees day to day food handling operations, helps all food handlers to handle food safely and ensures food safety risks are managed. They must be certified within the past 5 years and have skills and knowledge in food safety, especially around high-risk foods. |
| Serious Incident | As per Regulation 12 in the National Regulations |
| ACECQA | Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority) is the independent national authority guiding the implementation of the National Quality |

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| | Framework (NQF) for early childhood education and care across Australia. It works with state governments to ensure national consistency in quality standards, compliance, and qualification assessments |
| Approved Provider | The legal entity with ultimate responsibility for the service under the National Law |
| Nominated Supervisor | A person with management or control of an education and care service, responsible for its day-to-day management. |
| Responsible Person | A Responsible Person is present at an education and care service to ensure compliance, safety, and wellbeing when the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor is not. |
| Service | Education and care service providing, or intended to provide, education and care on a regular basis to children under 13 years of age |

7. Document Review

- 7.1. This Policy will be reviewed when there is a legislative change, organisational change, delegations change, technology change or at least every 1 - 2 years to ensure it continues to be current and effective.

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