

	Policy Category: HEALTH AND SAFETY
	Policy Name: Food Safety Policy

Purpose

All early childhood services need to make sure the food they serve is safe. ECE services that cook meals or prepare food such as sandwiches also need to be registered under national programme 2.

Preparing food as part of the curriculum or providing snacks does not require registration. However, all food must be safe and suitable for consumption. The purpose of this operational policy is to keep children and adults safe by meeting Licensing Criteria **HS19**, **HS20**, **HS21**, **HS22**, **HS23**, **PF15** and requirements under the Food Act 2014.

Food that is provided by parents, e.g. through lunchboxes, is the responsibility of the parents. However, parents will be provided with information about healthy eating at the time of enrolment (**HS22**).

Position Statement

At this centre we ensure that children receive nutritional food at an appropriate time to meet their health needs and in a safe manner. We are also committed to ensuring a high level of hygiene is maintained while preparing, serving and storing food. We keep records of the food served. Where food is provided by parents, the service encourages and promotes healthy eating guidelines.

Issue Outline

ECE centres have an obligation to uphold the health, safety and wellbeing of children by ensuring the service meets their nutritional needs of children in their care or alternatively encourage parents to do so. ECE centres also have an obligation to ensure that their practices align with the Food Act 2014 regulations.

Detail

Our centre takes into account the full nutritional needs of children and tailors this for children under the age of two years. We also ask parents to declare any known allergies on their enrolment form. We adhere to the following licensing criteria requirements:

- **HS19:** Food is served at appropriate times to meet the nutritional needs of each child while they are attending. The food provided by this service is of sufficient variety, quantity, and quality to meet these needs.

- **HS20:** Food is prepared, served and stored hygienically
- **HS21:** An ample supply of water that is fit to drink is available to children at all times, and older children are able to access this water independently
- **HS22:** Children are supervised while eating. Supervised means an adult is assigned to oversee children while they are eating, not undertaking other tasks. The adult assigned will be in close proximity to the children who are eating and know how to respond if a child is choking or has an adverse reaction.

Where food is provided by parents, e.g. in children's lunchboxes, the service encourages and promotes healthy eating guidelines. At the time of enrolment, parents are provided with the Ministry of Health Guidance

(<https://assets.education.govt.nz/public/Documents/Early-Childhood/Reducing-food-related-choking-pamphlet-print.pdf>). There are records that this guidance has been provided and understood by parents.

- **HS25:** There is an adult present at all times for every 25 children attending (or part thereof) that holds a current First Aid qualification gained from a NZQA accredited first aid provider.
- **HS22:** Children with additional needs who may not be able to eat or drink independently will be given one-on-one supervision.
- **HS22:** Children are seated while eating.
- Where we provide food, foods that pose a high choking risk will not be served unless prepared in accordance with best practice as set out in Ministry of Health: Reducing food-related choking for babies and young children at early learning services.
<https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/reducing-food-related-choking-babies-young-children-early-learning-services-apr21.pdf>
- **HS23:** Under-two-year-olds and Infants under the age of six months and other children unable to drink independently will NOT be propped up. Children are held semi-upright when being fed. Any infant milk food given to a child under the age of 12 months is of a type approved by the child's parent
- **HS23:** The centre has a procedure for the hygienic preparation of bottle feeding, including sterilisation of bottles, following instructions for mixing formula, timing of preparation and storage of formula.
- **PF15:** Children have a designated place set aside to sit and eat.

Special events such as birthday celebrations are a time when food is provided to share. Children with known allergies are supervised when selecting from any shared food.

We have set mealtimes but make allowances for children who are demonstrably hungry or for medical/personal reasons, require a specialised diet and eating time.

Our centre is guided by a range of resources available to help ECE services make healthy and informed choices about food provided to children, and to encourage parents to do the same.

We provide a full meal service prepared by designated kitchen staff.

Where parents provide lunch for their child, we ensure their lunch box is clearly labelled.

- **HS25** Our centre provides water as primary source of hydration. An ample supply of water that is fit to drink is available to children at all times, and older children are able to access this water independently (**HS21**).

There will be times that children will be included in the preparation of food as a curriculum related activity. Where this occurs, all the above precautions will be taken.

Food Act 2014

We provide a full meal service that includes readily perishable food and is prepared by designated kitchen staff. We therefore are subject to a National Programme 2 under the Food Act 2014. The requirements under a National Programme 2 (receiving, storing, cooking, cooling and reheating perishable food) are outlined in the Food Act 2014 Check List and Record Sheet.

Alignment with Other Policies

This policy aligns with the Food Act 2014 check list and record sheet.

Relevant Background (including legislation/regulation references)

Licensing Criteria 2008, Health and Safety Regulations and associated criteria.

- **HS19**: a record of all food served during the service's hours of operation (other than that provided by parents for their own children). Records show the type of food provided, and are available for inspection for three months after the food is served.

- **HS20, HS21, HS22, HS23, PF15** and requirements under the Food Act 2014. For further information:

<https://www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/licensing-and-regulations/food-safety-for-services-food-act-requirements/>

- Ministry of Primary Industries – running a food business:

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/running-a-food-business/national-programmes-steps/early-childhood-educators-and-kohanga-reo/>

NZ Heart Foundation – loading up the lunchbox [PDF; 622kb]

- The Ministry of Health has produced a publication on healthy nutrition for babies and toddlers and Nutritional Guidelines for healthy children. There is a list of resources on Food and Nutrition including information on allergies <http://www.health.govt.nz/resources>

Food Act 2014 <http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz/policy-law/food-act-2014/overview.htm>

http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0032/latest/DLM2995811.html?search=ta_act_F_ac%40ainf%40anif_an%40bn%40rn_25_a

Ministry of Health

<https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/reducing-food-related-choking-babies-and-young-children-early-learning-services>

Impacts of Policy on Staff, Parents, Children

Consequences policy will help to avoid the inability of parents, management or officials to obtain accurate information on the type of food provided at the centre in the recent past. It also will uphold the health and safety of children in our centre. It will avoid penalties under the Food Act 2014 regulations.

Alignment with the Centre Philosophy

This policy ensures a healthy and safe environment, a crucial part of creating and maintaining the well-being of children in our care.

Implications and/or Risks

Failure to implement this policy correctly could cause our centre to be fined under the Food Act 2014 regulations; such a failure could also impact on our Ministry of Education License to operate. It could also cause a child in our centre to become seriously ill and damage the reputation of our centre to provide a safe place for children

Implementation

Staff are aware of this policy and are trained accordingly. We will consult with parents to decide on how the Food Act 2014 will affect our centre and the options available to parents to ensure that at this centre we can guarantee that children receive nutritional food to meet their health needs and in a safe manner.

Record Keeping

Our centre keeps a record of all food served during the service's hours of operation (other than that provided by parents for their own children). Our records show the type of food provided and are available for inspection for three months after the food is served. We do this by keeping a record of the daily menu and where food is provided by parents to be shared, a list of all of the food provided for children is kept

Review

Review annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the policy topic.

Authorised by licensed service:	Greendale Kids Preschool Greendale Kids Nursery
Date:	22 April 2025
Review Date:	April 2027
Parents informed:	April 2025