

<b>Document Title</b>	NQS2.14 Nutrition and Food Safety Policy	<b>Version</b>	5
<b>Date Approved</b>	February 2024	<b>Date for Review</b>	February 2027
<b>Warning - Ensure you are using the latest version of this policy.</b>			
DCC Network/All Organisation Information/DCC Policies/Quality Area 2 – Childrens Health & Safety			

## 1. Policy Statement

River Region Early Education recognises the importance of healthy eating and safe food handling and storage for the safety, wellbeing, and development of young children. River Region Early Education has a commitment to:

- Ensuring children have access to safe drinking water at all times,
- Encouraging and supporting breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of solid foods for infants,
- Providing a positive eating environment that is relaxed and social and reflects cultural and family values,
- Promoting and communicating with families the benefits of healthy food and drinks based on the Australian Dietary Guidelines,
- Ensuring adequate health and hygiene and safe practices for handling, preparing, and storing food,
- Where food and drink is provided, ensuring it is nutritious and adequate in quantity and has regard to individual dietary requirements, each child’s growth, and development needs and any specific cultural, religious, or health requirements,
- Where food and drink is provided, ensuring a weekly menu that accurately describes the food and drink being provided is displayed on premises and accessible to parents, and
- Ensuring any requirements of law or regulation and the Food Standards Code are met.

## 2. Rationale

This policy provides guidance for employees on how food is to be handled, stored and prepared, how healthy eating is integrated into educational program and practice, and regulatory compliance related to food safety and nutrition.

Education and Care Services National Regulations require Approved Providers to ensure adequate health and hygiene and safe practices for handling, preparing, and storing food, that food provided is adequate and nutritious, meets individual needs, and is displayed in a weekly menu and that children have access to safe drinking water at all times. Regulation also requires Approved Providers to have policies and procedures in relation to health and safety matters concerned with nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements, and for these to be followed, kept available, and for families to be notified of changes.

The NSW Food Standards Code requires children’s services to demonstrate safe food practices, have a Food Safety Program in some circumstances and have employees available with suitable food-handling qualifications.

Suitability of construction and layout of food handling areas is referred to in *NQS3.20 Physical Environment Policy*.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, including students and trainees, volunteers, and Board members.

### 4. Definitions

**Chest-feeding** – A more inclusive word for breastfeeding that accommodates gender non-binary and transgender people.

**Food business** – Under the NSW Food Act 2003, a business, enterprise or activity that involves the handling of food intended for sale, or the sale of food, regardless of whether the business, enterprise or activity concerned is of a commercial, charitable or community nature or whether it involves the handling or sale of food on one occasion only.

**Potentially hazardous food** – Under the Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code, foods with certain characteristics that support the growth of bacteria, or the production of toxins, and must be kept at 5°C or colder, or 60°C or hotter, to stay safe to eat. They are foods that a person would keep in the fridge at home.

**Vulnerable person** – Under the ANZ Food Standards Code, hospital patients, aged care recipients, children in child care centres and vulnerable people receiving other services.

### 5. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board as Approved Provider to ensure that:

- Obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations and Food Act and Food Standards Code are met,
- 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,
- Children have access to safe drinking water at all times and are offered food and beverages appropriate to each child's needs on a regular basis throughout the day,
- Food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and chosen based on each child's dietary requirements (accounting for their growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements),
- Where food is provided, a weekly menu which accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by the service each day is on display and made accessible to family members,
- Child enrolment records include any special considerations for the child, such as cultural or religious dietary restrictions, as well as any health-related dietary restrictions,
- Risk minimisation plans are developed for children with medical conditions that can be impacted by food,
- Healthy eating is promoted,
- Copies of this policy and procedures are readily accessible to employees and volunteers, and are available for inspection by families,
- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that employees and volunteers understand their responsibilities and follow the requirements of the policy and procedures, and
- Families are notified at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or significantly impact

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the service's education and care of children or significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.

It is the responsibility of the General Manager to:

- Carry out or delegate the responsibilities of the Board as listed above,
- Ensure that the local council is notified that services are supplying food,
- Ensure that services that provide food as part of an agreement with families can demonstrate compliance with safe food handling, and
- Include required food handling and supervision training and qualifications in the organisational training plan.

It is the responsibility of Nominated Supervisors to:

- 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,
- Ensure adequate health and hygiene practices are followed, as well as safe practices for handling, preparing, and storing food, in line with Australian food safety standards and any jurisdictional requirements,
- Ensure children have access to safe drinking water at all times and are offered food and beverages appropriate to each child's needs on a regular basis throughout the day,
- Ensure food and beverages where provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and chosen based on each child's dietary requirements (accounting for their growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements),
- Where food is provided, ensure a weekly menu which accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided each day is displayed and made accessible to families,
- For children and workers with medical conditions that can be affected by food, work with families and the worker, where relevant, to develop risk minimisation plans and ensure educators and staff implement these plans,
- Ensure that a system for ongoing communication is developed and maintained between families, educators, and cooks, so that all are aware of children's nutrition and any special dietary requirements, and
- Develop program planning that promotes healthy eating and knowledge of nutrition by children and families and involves children in decision-making about healthy food and beverage choices.

It is the responsibility of cooks to:

- Undertake and maintain certified Food Safety Supervisor training,
- Handle, prepare and store food using safe practices, in line with Australian food safety standards and any jurisdictional requirements,
- Plan the menu to ensure food and beverages are nutritious, adequate in quantity, and based on each child's dietary requirements (accounting for their growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements),
- Display and make accessible to family members the weekly menu which accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by the service each day, and
- Maintain communication systems with management, educators, employees, and families to ensure all changes with food preparation and provision of food are actioned.

It is the responsibility of educators to:

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- Implement this policy and procedures and undertake training as required,
- Handle, prepare and store food using safe practices, in line with Australian food safety standards and any jurisdictional requirements,
- Ensure safeguards are in place to prevent children being provided the wrong food or expressed milk,
- Ensure children have access to safe drinking water at all times and are offered food and beverages appropriate to each child's needs on a regular basis throughout the day,
- 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 their care with specific dietary requirements, and ensure those requirements are taken into consideration, including on excursions,
- Maintain ongoing communication with families and other employees (including the Nominated Supervisor) about any changes to children's dietary requirements and ensure these changes are reflected in mealtimes, and
- Implement and reflect on program planning to:
  - Promote healthy eating and knowledge of nutrition by children, for example eating with children and conversations during mealtimes around food,
  - Promote healthy eating among families, and
  - Involve children in decision-making about healthy food and beverage choices, for example, having them assist with food preparation.

It is the responsibility of families to:

- Ensure the service is advised of their child's dietary requirements relevant to their 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 their children have a medical condition that can be affected by food, work with the service to develop risk minimisation plans,
- Where food is provided, read the service's weekly menu and provide feedback, and
- If providing food and beverages from home, ensure these are nutritious and plentiful and that they are in line with service requirements, for example restrictions on including allergens in provided food, noting that the service is not required to serve food and beverages from home to children.

## 6. Guidelines

### a) Access to safe drinking water

River Region Early Education Ensure will ensure that safe drinking water is readily available (both indoors and outdoors) for children to consume throughout the day. Water and milk are the recommended beverages for children attending services.

### b) Healthy eating

River Region Early Education follows the Australian Government's Australian Dietary Guidelines <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/guidelines>

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### **For babies and infants**

The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend exclusive breastfeeding, with positive support, for babies until around six months. Continued breastfeeding is recommended for at least 12 months and longer if the parent and baby wish to and are able.

The Australian Government's Eat for Health brochure: *NQS2.14A Giving your Baby the Best Start* provides useful information for families.

River Region Early Education services support this guideline by:

- Providing a suitable place within the service where parents, including educators, can feed their infants or express milk,
- Supporting parents to continue breastfeeding or chest-feeding until infants are at least 12 months of age, including providing flexible work arrangements and lactation breaks where possible for educators, and
- Ensuring the safe handling of expressed milk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding.

While being educated and cared for, babies and infants will be:

- Provided with expressed milk or formula,
- Provided with cooled boiled water in addition to age-appropriate milk drinks and formula where needed,
- Offered appropriate foods from around six months of age, such as iron-rich nutritious foods, with type and texture appropriate to the infant's developmental stages between 6 and 12 months, and
- Supervised closely while drinking and eating.

### **For children**

The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend that children should enjoy a wide variety of foods from these five food groups:

- Fruit,
- Vegetables, legumes, and beans,
- Grain (cereal) foods, including breads, rice, pasta and noodles, mostly wholegrain or high cereal fibre types,
- Lean meat, fish, poultry and/or alternatives, and
- Milks, yoghurts, cheeses, or alternatives — children under 2 should have full-fat milk, but older children and adolescents should choose mostly reduced-fat varieties.

The Australian Government's Eat for Health brochure: *NQS2.14B Healthy Eating for Children* provides useful information for families.

River Region Early Education services support this guideline by:

- Where food is provided, providing children with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, lean meats, and alternatives,
- Providing information for families that supports them to provide a wide variety of healthy and nutritious food for their child that accommodates individual needs,
- Ensuring meal times are positive, relaxed, and social and encouraging children to try new and different foods,

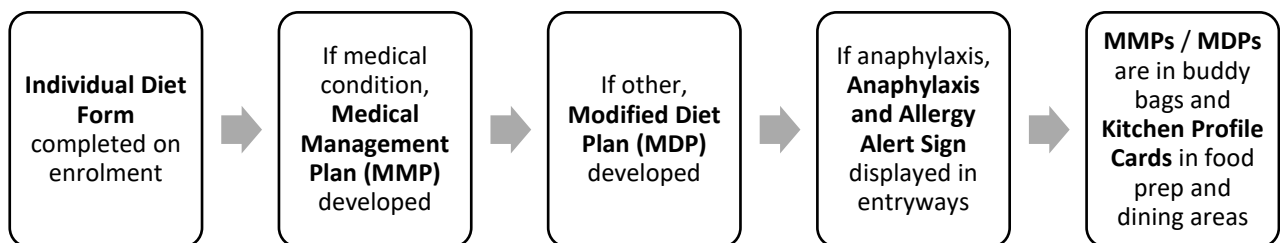
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- Encouraging children to eat by offering an appropriate amount of food at regular and predictable intervals while accommodating slow or messy eaters and allowing children to choose how much they eat,
- Educators sitting with children during meal and snack times to model healthy choices and engage children in conversations about food and drink choices,
- Encouraging older toddlers and preschool-aged children to help set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink to provide opportunities for the development of independence, confidence, and self-esteem, and
- Never using food as a reward or withholding food from children for the purpose of behaviour management.

### c) Individual dietary requirements

Information about a child's dietary requirements is collected on enrolment, during updates and communication with families using *NQS2.14G Individual Diet Form*.

River Region Early Education adopts a risk management approach with regards to food allergies and in line with evidence about the effectiveness of general food bans in early childhood services, is generally a 'nut aware' organisation where nuts are not encouraged but are allowed unless a service has a child or worker in attendance with a severe nut allergy or anaphylaxis.



River Region Early Education *NQS2.12 Medical Conditions Policy* guides practice around children with medical conditions that relate to food, including diabetes, allergies, anaphylaxis, and asthma.

- The Individual Diet Form includes medical and cultural requirements and information gathered in this way informs the weekly menu where food is provided, and risk minimisation due to a medical condition.
- Where a child has a food-related medical condition, a Medical Management Plan that identifies conditions, triggers, medication, and risk minimisation actions is developed and displayed in areas where food is prepared and consumed.
- Where a child has a severe allergy or anaphylaxis, an Anaphylaxis and Allergy Alert Sign is displayed in the entryway to services to inform families of any allergens affecting children in attendance on each day and directions for risk minimisation, for example alerting educators if their child has a listed allergen in their lunchbox.
- Where a child has a dietary restriction or intolerance that is not a medical condition, a Modified Diet Plan is developed using *NQS2.14H Modified Diet Plan*
- To ensure educators are aware of individual dietary requirements, a *Kitchen Profile Card* is created for display in food preparation and dining areas.
- Completed forms and plans are recorded in the child's enrolment record.

River Region Early Education services ensure children are safe and feel included while eating by:

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- Ensuring Medical Management Plans and Modified Diet Plans are up-to-date and accessible, Kitchen Profile Cards are displayed, and that educators and cooks are aware of requirements,
- Displaying the allergens of children in attendance with anaphylaxis or severe allergies in entryways to services so families are aware, can alert educators if an allergen is included in their child's food, and can modify any shared food,
- Ensuring all educators have current first aid training that includes anaphylaxis and asthma management,
- Always supervising children while they are eating and encouraging them to remain seated,
- Discouraging children from sharing food and ensuring children with food-related allergies and anaphylaxis are closely supervised to ensure this does not happen,
- Ensuring babies and infants do not have access to foods that may cause choking, and
- While encouraging families to share their culture or traditions by bringing in food to share, such as birthday cakes, requiring ingredients to be listed and known allergens for children in attendance to be excluded.

### **d) Adequate hygiene**

*NQS2.10 Hygiene and Infection Control Policy* provides guidance on requirements for adequate hygiene that includes food preparation and handling.

#### **Handwashing**

All individuals must wash their hands before and after handling food. It is recommended that hands are thoroughly washed with soap and water for at least 15 seconds, rinsed under running water and dried with a paper towel.

#### **Cleaning of food preparation and storage areas**

Where the service has a kitchen for the daily provision of food and beverages for children, the *NQS2.14F RREE Food Safety Program* provides details about the cleaning and sanitation of food preparation and dining areas.

The overall principles of maintaining the safety and hygiene of equipment, furniture, and environment where food is stored, prepared, handled, or served are:

- Hair is tied back, and hands are washed before handling food,
- Bench tops, surfaces, equipment, and spills are cleaned immediately and between tasks,
- Sponges and cleaning cloths used in kitchens and eating areas are colour-coded green to minimise cross-contamination, and are sanitised daily,
- All food scraps are removed and placed into bins,
- Equipment and utensils are washed with hot water and detergent until clean, rinsed with clean water to remove any residue, and left to air dry or dried by hand,
- Dishwashers are used on the hottest cycle with an appropriate detergent, and cleaned regularly,
- Floors are swept and mopped clean with a detergent solution and allowed to air dry, and
- Bins are cleaned and stored properly so they do not attract pests or cause odours.

### **e) Food Standards Code and safe food handling**

The Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code under the NSW Food Act 2003 has requirements for children's services that supply food as part of its business, which means food



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provided for a fee other than as part of an educational program or for charitable fundraising. At River Region Early Education, this applies to Deniliquin Childcare as it is the only education and care service that prepares and serves food on a daily basis.

The Food Standards Code has some additional requirements for children's services that serve or reheat unpackaged, potentially hazardous food, such as cut fruits and vegetables, sandwiches containing meat, fish, egg, and dairy products, sprouted seeds, or cooked rice or pasta, even when those foods are supplied by parents. For more information on potentially hazardous foods, see NSW Food Authority Potentially Hazardous Foods <https://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/media/2671>

For more information on how these requirements apply, see NSW Food Authority Food Safety Guidelines for Children's Services <https://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/media/8826>

The following applies to all River Region Early Education services:

- All children's services that supply food must notify their business details to their local council.
- All premises that supply or serve potentially hazardous food must appoint a certified Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) to oversee day-to-day food handling, ensure food safety risks are managed, share skills and knowledge, and promote positive food safety practices.
- A copy of the FSS certificate must remain on the premises.
- All person handling potentially hazardous food must be adequately trained in safe food handling, food contamination, cleaning and sanitising, and personal hygiene. Training can be through NSW Food Authority free online Food Handler Basics training course or through internal training.
- *NQS4.34 Staff Training and Development Policy* includes details of requirements around food safety training and record-keeping.

The following applies only to Deniliquin Childcare and any River Region Early Education service that supplies food for a fee that is not a part of an educational program or charitable fundraising:

- Businesses must be able to show they are monitoring and managing the safe receipt, storage, transport, cooking, cooling, and reheating of food and cleaning and sanitising.
- Evidence can be through demonstration or record-keeping.
- *NQS2.14F RREE Food Safety Program* provides the standard operating procedures and guidance on monitoring and record-keeping to meet this requirement.

Procedures from *NQS2.14F RREE Food Safety Program* have been extracted, attached to this policy, and included in the Educator Handbook to provide guidance for all services.

- Safe food handling procedures,
- Safe bottle-feeding procedure.

The key principles for maintaining food safety during storage and serving of food are:

- Food provided by families is refrigerated until it will be served so that potentially hazardous food is stored below 5°C or above 60°C,
- The 2-hour/4-hour rule is applied to potentially hazardous ready-to-eat food that has been kept between 5°C and 60°C for a cumulative period of time:
  - Up to 2 hours, it can be refrigerated below 5°C or kept hot above 60°C or used immediately,
  - Between 2 and 4 hours, it must be used immediately, or



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- Up to a total of 4 hours or more, it must be thrown out.
- If food is to be heated, it is heated so a temperature probe check shows it is at 75°C or 70°C for 2 minutes,
- Children and educators handling food wash their hands before and after eating and tongs and gloves are used by educators when serving unpackaged food,
- Medical Management Plans and Modified Diet Plans are checked before children are provided with food,
- Children only eat their own food, using their own containers and utensils, and are supervised while eating, particularly where a child is in attendance with anaphylaxis or a severe food allergy,
- Food handled by another child or dropped on the floor is discarded, and
- Where children do not have a container or utensil that has been provided for their sole use, they will be provided with disposable ones that will be discarded after use or reusable ones that will be cleaned and sanitised before reuse.

### **f) Provision of food in Deniliquin Childcare**

River Region Early Education provides a daily meal service at Deniliquin Childcare. Education and Care Services National Regulations 79 and 80 apply to the provision of food and beverages as part of a weekly menu.

The safe receipt, storage, handling and preparation of food and beverages for this service is guided by *NQS2.14F RREE Food Safety Program*.

#### **Nutritious and adequate food and drink**

The service provides children with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, lean meats and alternatives.

- The service will provide for the nutritional needs of all children at the service.
- Daily menus are planned as per the Australian Dietary Guidelines, if a child is in care for:
  - Up to eight hours or more, they should receive at least one main meal and two midmeals that should provide at least 50% of the recommended dietary intakes (RDI) for all nutrients, or
  - More than eight hours, extra meals and/or midmeals (i.e. breakfast or late afternoon tea) should be provided.
- Infants are offered appropriate foods from around six months of age, including iron-rich nutritious foods, with type and texture appropriate to the infant's developmental stages between 6 and 12 months,
- Healthy snacks will be included on the menu to complement what is served at mealtimes and snacks will be substantial enough to meet the energy and nutrient needs of children,
- Meals and snacks on the menu will be varied to keep children interested and to introduce children to a range of healthy food options.
- One main lunch option per day will be planned, taking into consideration dietary needs of all children, and other than this, no alternatives will be provided.
- Drinking water will always be available.
- Meal times will be progressive to allow flexibility for children's appetites and engagement in play and children will be supported to self-serve and to decide how much food they will consume.

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### **Individual needs**

The individual dietary requirement for each child is managed as detailed in section c) *Individual dietary requirements*.

### **Weekly menu**

The weekly menu will be displayed in the entryway of the service so that it is readily accessible to families.

### **g) Providing food from home**

*This section is replicated in NQS2.14J Providing Food from Home Guide to make it easier to share information with families.*

Where the River Region Early Education service does not provide food, families are required to provide, for each day that their child is at the service:

- A suitable drink bottle containing water that is labelled with their child's name and/or infant milk or formula as required,
- Sufficient food for their child's needs for the day, including morning tea and lunch, and afternoon tea if required, packed into one or more containers labeled with their child's name and with any necessary utensils, and
- Food that is healthy, meets the Australian Dietary Guidelines, and is suitable for the age, ability, and stage of development of their child.

The following Australian Government attachments provide guidance for families so they can provide food and drink that meets guidelines and provides the best health outcomes for their child:

- Eat for Health - *NQS2.14B Healthy Eating for Children Brochure*
- Caring for Children – *NQS2.14C Lunchbox Checklist 2-5 Years*
- Caring for Children – *NQS2.14D Lunchbox Checklist Preschool*
- Caring for Children – *NQS2.14E Drinks – Water and Milk*

Educators will make sure:

- Meal times are a positive experience with opportunities for children to practice independence and discuss healthy eating,
- Children are encouraged to eat more nutritious foods first, such as sandwiches, vegetables, fruit, cheese, and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious food that has been provided, and
- Families are contacted to provide additional food if a child has insufficient food for the day.

Families are discouraged from providing food that is not recommended, including foods that are highly processed, low in nutrients, and high in sugar, salt, and fat, such as:

- Chips and high-fat savoury crackers,
- Sweets, lollies, and chocolate, and
- Sweet biscuits, muesli bars, fruit-filled bars, and high sugar snack bars (such as LCMs).

### **Milk and formula**

Milk or formula should be:

- Cooled in the refrigerator before transporting,
- Transported in an insulated container with ice packs, and

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- Placed in the refrigerator or freezer (if frozen) immediately on arrival.

Please provide expressed milk in a container labelled with the child's full name, contents (expressed milk), date that it was expressed and the date to be used. If frozen, families will need to bring a clean bottle labelled with the child's full name.

Please provide formula in one of the following two ways:

- Formula in a tin or pre-measured in a container and boiled water in a clean bottle. The containers need to be labelled with the child's full name, the contents (boiled water or name of formula), the date the tin was opened, and the date you boiled the water, OR
- Prepared formula in a clean bottle labelled with the child's full name, the contents (boiled water and name of formula) and the date you prepared it (must be within 24 hours of attendance).

If providing cow's milk or a milk alternative, please provide in a clean bottle labelled with the child's full name, what it contains and the date it was prepared.

Please note bottles are only rinsed after used and are not washed or sterilised.

### Shared food

Families are encouraged to provide food for children in the service to share, such as for a birthday or other celebration. River Region Early Education has a duty of care to all children to make sure that those with allergies and specific dietary requirements are not put at risk and so families are requested to:

- Consult the Anaphylaxis and Allergy Alert Sign in the entryway of the service their child attends to check any allergens that other children attending service on the same day may have,
- Only bring in food that does not contain nor has come into contact with any identified allergen for that day, and
- Provide a list of ingredients in the food, being sure to identify any allergens, as identified under the Food Standards Code and listed in the table below.

Nuts	Grain and seeds	Seafood	Dairy and egg	Other
Peanut	Wheat	Fish	Egg	Sulphites
Almond	Gluten	Crustacean	Milk	
Brazil nut	Sesame	(prawn, lobster, crab, yabby, crayfish)		
Cashew	Soy	Mollusc (octopus, squid, oyster, scallop, clam, snail)		
Hazelnut	Lupin			
Pistachio				
Pine nut				
Walnut				
Macadamia				
Pecan				

### h) Communication with families

River Region Early Education recognises that the health, well-being, and safety of children is best maintained when services and families work in collaboration. We support families to understand and ensure nutrition and food safety for children by:

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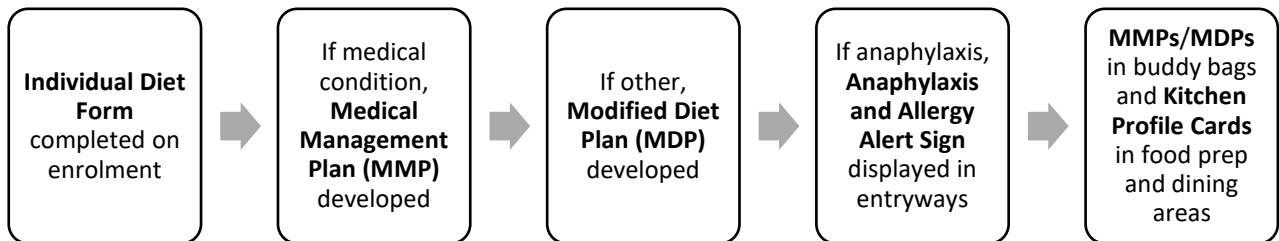
- Including information about nutrition, including reference to this policy and brochures and guides, in orientation of children to the service,
- Including information about nutrition and safe and health eating in newsletters, displays in services, discussion forms and during conversations while families are on site,
- Communicating periodically to provide information and advice on appropriate food and drinks to be included in children's lunchboxes,
- Encouraging families to share recipes and information about their food culture and traditions, including bringing food in to share, and
- Encouraging and providing suitable space for parents to visit the service to breast/chest-feed their infant.

## 7. Procedures

### a) Food-related medical conditions procedures

River Region Early Education *NQS2.12 Medical Conditions Policy* guides practice around children and workers with medical conditions that relate to food, including diabetes, allergies, anaphylaxis, and asthma.

Information about a child's dietary requirements is collected on enrolment, during updates and communication with families using *NQS2.14G Individual Diet Form*.



When a child is enrolling in a service or is updating their enrolment, Administration:

- Provides the family with an enrolment pack that includes *NQS2.14G Individual Diet Form*,
- When the Individual Diet Form is returned, if it indicates an allergy, sends the family *NQS2.12 A8 Management of a Medical Condition Form*,
- Sends the completed forms to the Nominated Supervisor, and
- Saves the forms in the child's enrolment record.

The Nominated Supervisor:

- If the child has an allergy, uses the information in the Management of a Medical Condition Form to develop a Medical Management Plan using *NQS2.12 A7 Medical Management Plan Template* in consultation with the child's doctor and the family and a Kitchen Profile Card using *NQS2.14L Kitchen Profile Card* if the allergy is food-related,
- If the child has a dietary restriction that is not a medical condition, such as an intolerance, develops a Modified Diet Plan using *NQS2.14H Modified Diet Plan* in consultation with the family and a Kitchen Profile Card using *NQS2.14L Kitchen Profile Card*,
- Ensures that educators handling food and kitchen staff, including cooks, are made aware of Medical Management Plans and Modified Diet Plans and their responsibilities in safe food handling, that they are accessible to educators in Buddy Bags, and Kitchen Profile Cards are displayed where food is prepared or served and accompany food where required, and
- Where a child has anaphylaxis or a severe allergy, their allergen is included on *NQS2.12 A1 Anaphylaxis and Allergy Alert Sign* for the days they are in attendance and this sign is displayed in entryways to the service,

### b) Safe food handling procedures

#### Food storage

Food received into River Region Early Education premises is required to be stored safely.

Dry storage (pantry):

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- Store all food off the floor in a clean and tidy area. This will discourage pests and insects from breeding and spreading harmful bacteria to your food. If storage areas are dirty, do an extra clean. If pest activity is sighted, advise the General Manager and contact the pest controller.
- Keep foods covered or sealed in clean containers to prevent foreign objects, pests and harmful bacteria entering the food.
- Food must be stored separately from chemicals (eg cleaning and pest control) to prevent them from contaminating food. Throw away any food exposed to chemicals.
- Rotate food stocks (First In First Out) so you are not left with old stock. Foods with 'use-by' dates have a limited shelf life. Throw away any old, damaged or unlabelled stock, and food past its 'use-by' date.

### Cold storage

- Certain foods need to be kept chilled to keep them safe. If fridge or freezer are not kept cold enough, harmful bacteria could grow in these foods.
- Store raw foods (eg meat) below cooked and ready-to-eat foods, on the bottom shelf of the fridge. This prevents harmful bacteria in juices from raw food from dripping onto other cooked or ready-to-eat food and contaminating it.

Food safety point	Checks and records
<p><b>Cold storage (fridge):</b> Chilled food must be stored at 5°C or below (eg milk and cream; most foods with a 'use-by' date; food with 'keep refrigerated' on the label; cooked food to be served the next day; ready-to-eat food such as salads and desserts) (Std 3.2.2 cl 6).</p>	<p><b>Check:</b> Place a thermometer or temperature gauge inside each fridge. At the start of each day, check and record the temperature. Check food in each freezer is hard frozen.</p> <p><b>Record:</b> Fridge and freezer temperatures log If chilled food is between 5°C and 10°C, refrigerate and use within 12 hours. Throw away any chilled food over 10°C. Contact fridge service technician.</p>
<p><b>Frozen storage (freezer):</b> Frozen food must be stored so they stay hard frozen (eg minus 10°C or below) (Std 3.2.2 cl 6).</p>	

### Safe food thawing

Frozen food should be thoroughly thawed before cooking or consumption. If food is still partially frozen, it will take longer to cook and may not cook properly. The outside of the food may look cooked but the centre may not be, allowing harmful bacteria to survive.

- Thawed food is to be used immediately or stored in a fridge or cool room (for potentially hazardous foods) for no longer than 48 hours.
- Ensure that food products are entirely thawed before they are cooked (unless they can be cooked without thawing according to manufacturer's instructions).
- Do not re-freeze thawed food unless it is safe to do so (thawed food has a limited shelf life because of excessive moisture on the surface will allow more rapid microbial growth).

Food should not be thawed at room temperature for longer than is necessary. Wherever practical, food is thawed in a refrigerator (maintained at a maximum of 5°C):

- Plan ahead to allow enough time to thaw food in the fridge at a safe temperature.

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- Thaw food on a tray or in a covered container on the bottom shelf of the fridge.
- Ensure thawing food does not contaminate ready-to-eat foods (eg thaw food in a dedicated refrigerator or on a bottom shelf of the refrigerator or cool room to make sure that it does not contaminate ready-to-eat food).

Food can also be thawed in the microwave:

- Put food on a plate/bowl and use the 'defrost' setting or a 'low' setting.
- Turn food occasionally to help it thaw evenly.
- Thawing in a microwave is a faster method but can create hot spots and sometimes partially cook the food. This warm environment is ideal for bacteria to grow in.
- If microwave thawed product is not used after 2 hours, throw it away.

Thawing frozen breastmilk

- Thaw frozen breastmilk in the refrigerator or, if necessary, by placing the bottle in warm water (shake gently if the breastmilk has separated).
- All frozen breastmilk thawed in warm water should be used immediately. Discard any left-overs as soon as the feed has finished.
- Frozen breastmilk left to thaw in the refrigerator can be kept in the fridge for that day. Once it has been taken out of the fridge for a feed, it should be warmed and used immediately.

### **Safe food preparation**

The preparation of food in a safe manner is of vital importance to the health and safety of children. This includes ensuring raw and cooked foods have separate preparation areas and all employees involved with the food preparation maintain the highest standards of hygiene.

- Separate preparation areas are to be created for raw foods (eg raw meat, chicken, fish and eggs) and cooked (eg quiches, pie, lasagne, pizza) or ready-to-eat foods (eg sandwiches, salads, fruit platters). This helps prevent the spread of harmful bacteria. If raw food comes into contact with cooked or ready-to-eat food, throw the cooked or ready-to-eat food away.
- Thoroughly wash hands with warm running water and soap prior to food preparation and when hands become contaminated. Dry hands well with paper towel and where possible minimise hand contact with ready-to-eat foods using disposable gloves or utensils such as tongs, serving spoons and egg lifters. Ready-to-eat foods are foods that are minimally processed and eaten without further cooking, such as chopped fruit, salads, sandwiches and cakes.
- Where possible, separate utensils such as knives, chopping boards or other equipment should be used for raw and ready-to-eat products. Otherwise, all equipment and utensils used for raw foods should be thoroughly washed and sanitised before they are used for cooked and pre-cooked prepared foods. If any food becomes contaminated from dirty surfaces, equipment, utensils or unwashed hands, throw it away.
- Inspect all fresh produce (fruits, vegetables and salads) prior to use and remove dirty, cut, mouldy and bruised stock.
- Wash all fruit and vegetables under running potable water. Wash and sanitise melons (eg rockmelons/cantaloupe, honeydew) in sanitisers appropriate for fresh produce. Packaged pre-cut vegetables, fruit and salads with a shelf life limited to no more than 7 days from date of packaging may be served.



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If refrigerated ingredients are left out of the fridge for too long, their temperature is no longer controlled as they are in the temperature danger zone (5°C to 60°C) where harmful bacteria grow quickly.

Food safety point	Checks
Only use refrigerated ingredients (eg chicken, milk, cheese, sandwich meats) as you need them, so you can minimise the time they are out of the fridge (4 hours in total) (Std 3.2.2 cl 7).	Note the total time that ingredients are out of the fridge during preparation. If refrigerated ingredients are out of the fridge for more than 4 hours during preparation, use immediately or throw away.

### Safe food reheating

Food must be reheated hot enough (recooked) to destroy any harmful bacteria. Simply warming food will not do this.

- Preheat equipment such as ovens and grills before reheating. Food may not be heated through to the centre if you use equipment before it is preheated.
- Stir or turn food during reheating to make sure it heats evenly.
- Microwave reheating:
  - Food purchased from a supplier – follow their reheating instructions.
  - Food cooked by the service – stir every 2-3 minutes while reheating until steaming hot in the centre and let stand before serving. Frozen products should preferably be thawed prior to reheating to assist uniform heating.
  - Toasted sandwiches – wrap in baking paper and heat in microwave for 30 seconds before toasting in sandwich press to ensure filling reaches a safe temperature.
- Do not add raw food, or mix in new batches of food, into already reheated food as this can spread harmful bacteria through the reheated food.
- Always use clean equipment and utensils to handle reheated food.
- Reheat once only. Do not return reheated food to the fridge or freezer. Throw away any leftover reheated food that has not been eaten or served. Reheating and cooling food more than once will increase the risk of bacteria growing as food spends a longer time in the temperature danger zone.

### Warming infant milk and formula

Feeding an infant cold breastmilk or infant formula is not harmful, but drinks warmed to room temperature flow better from the bottle, and infants seem to prefer them.

- Warm breastmilk/infant formula bottles by standing the bottle upright in warm tap water for no more than 15 minutes just before use.
- Bottle warmers can be used, but they must have a thermostat control. Bottles should only be warmed using this equipment for less than 10 minutes. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Never microwave breastmilk/infant formula.
- Before feeding the infant, shake the bottle and test some of the breastmilk/infant formula on the inside of your wrist to make sure it is not too hot. Only warm the milk once and discard any warmed milk that has not been used.
- Never refreeze thawed breastmilk.

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- Unheated unused milk will be returned to families at the end of the day when they come to collect their child.

Food safety point	Checks
<p>Reheat food until it is hot all the way through.</p> <p>Food to be held hot must be rapidly reheated to a minimum of 60°C at the centre (Std 3.2.2 cl 7). For added safety, foods should be reheated to 75°C (or 70°C for 2 minutes).</p>	<p>Daily: Visually check at least one reheated meat, chicken, fish or egg dish is hot enough (eg food is steaming, bubbling rapidly, or not pink in the centre).</p> <p>If food is not hot enough reheat it for longer, increase the heat, use different equipment or divide food into smaller portions.</p> <p>Use a clean thermometer to measure the core temperature of reheated food.</p>

### Safe food serving

To maintain food safety during serving, it is important that the temperature of foods is checked and maintained. Keeping hot foods above 60°C minimises the risk of bacteria growing. The longer a cold dish stays in the temperature danger zone, the easier it is for bacteria to grow in food. If a hot dish is below 60°C or a cold dish is above 5°C (in the temperature danger zone) for too long it may become unsafe to eat.

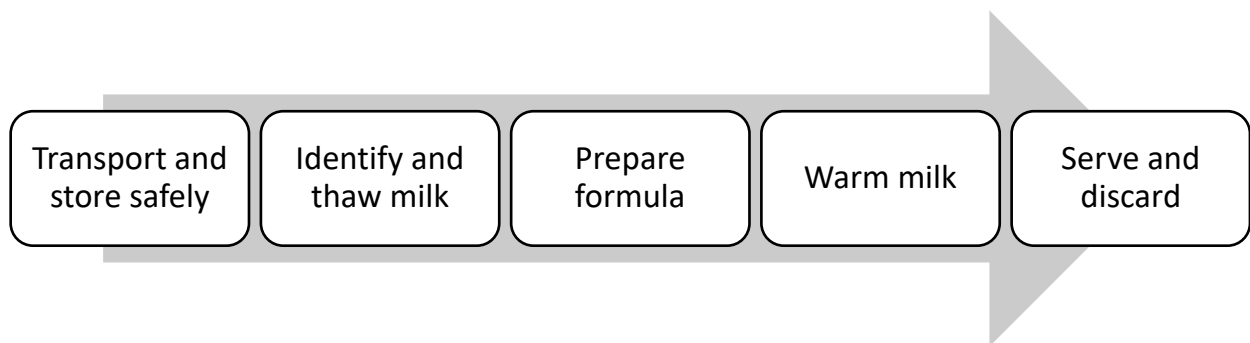
- Serve hot food, reheated food and cold food dishes as quickly as possible to minimise time in the temperature danger zone. Don't leave them at room temperature for long periods.
- Store cold dishes in the fridge or freezer until serving time, to keep them at the correct temperature.
- Serving utensils and equipment (including gloves, if used) should be clean so they do not spread bacteria to food. If food becomes contaminated from dirty utensils or poor food handling practices, throw it away.
- Leftover food should be thrown away.
- If food has been precooked and chilled, and then served cold (for example quiche, meat for sandwiches), it should not be stored for more than 48 hours.

Food safety point	Checks
Serve hot food dishes at 60°C or above.	Daily: Visually check that hot food is still steaming or use a probe thermometer to check the core temperature during service.
Serve cold dishes at 5°C or below.	Daily: Check that chilled food still feels cold or use a probe thermometer to check the core temperature during service.

Food safety point	Checks
If these temperatures can not be maintained, then the hot dish should only stay below 60°C, or the cold dish above 5°C, for a limited time.	<p>Observe the time that hot dishes are below 60°C or cold dishes are above 5°C during service and apply the 4-hour/2-hour storage rule. If a hot or cold dish is out of temperature control for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less than 2 hours, use it immediately or return it to the fridge,</li> <li>• Between 2 and 4 hours, use it immediately, or</li> <li>• Longer than 4 hours, throw it away.</li> </ul>

### c) Safe bottle-feeding procedure

Guidelines for the safe feeding of expressed milk or infant formula in early childhood education and care services include transportation,



#### Transport and store safely

For babies and infants who are milk or formula-fed, families are asked to provide:

- Formula in a tin or pre-measured, clearly labelled with their child’s name and the date the tin was opened (if applicable), and
- Sterilised bottles (ideally 120ml to limit wastage) labelled with their child’s name and if breast/chest milk, the date it was expressed.

Milk or formula should be:

- Cooled in the refrigerator before transporting,
- Transported in an insulated container with ice packs, and
- Placed in the refrigerator or freezer (if frozen) immediately on arrival.
- Stored in the back of the refrigerator where it is coldest and not inside the door.

#### Identify and thaw milk

It is very important that the right breastmilk be given to the infant. The person preparing to feed the infant should:

- Check that the name on the bottle is the same as the name of the child,
- Ask another educator to check that the name is correct,
- Note that these checks have been completed on the infant’s feeding record, and
- If an infant is given the wrong breastmilk, complete an incident report using *NQS2.11 Incident Injury Illness and Trauma Record* and inform the child’s parent.

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Frozen breastmilk should be thawed in the refrigerator or, if necessary, by placing the bottle in warm water (shake gently if the breastmilk has separated).

- Frozen breastmilk left to thaw in the refrigerator can be kept in the fridge for that day.
- Once thawed milk is removed from the refrigerator, it should be warmed and used immediately.
- All frozen breastmilk thawed in warm water should be used immediately.
- Discard any leftovers as soon as the feed has finished.

### **Prepare formula**

Educators will prepare the child's infant formula following the instructions on the label, and guidance from the caregiver. It is important to:

- Make up only one bottle at a time as germs can easily grow in prepared formula and can make a baby ill,
- Read the instructions carefully if there is a change a formula brands to ensure the correct amount of water and powder is used.
- Use the right scoop to measure as a scoop from another brand of powder might be larger or smaller.

The person preparing the formula will:

- Wash their hands thoroughly and make sure the preparation area is clean,
- Check the date on the bottom of the tin or on the sachet to ensure the formula has not passed its expiry (use-by) date,
- Use the powder within one month of opening the tin (in accordance with RREE label),
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions strictly - accuracy is important to make sure the baby receives the right nutrition,
- Boil fresh, clean water in a kettle - do not let the water cool for longer than 30 minutes before making up infant formula as hot water helps kill any bacteria (germs) in the powder,
- Pour the recommended amount of boiled water into the bottle,
- Use the scoop that came with the formula to measure the exact amount of powder,
- Level the powder with a sterilised knife or spatula (do not pack it down) and add this powder to the bottle of boiled water,
- Place the disc and cap on the bottle and shake until thoroughly mixed,
- Test the temperature by dripping some milk onto the inside of the wrist.
  - It should feel the same temperature as skin.
  - If it is too warm, then cool the bottle under running water or in a container of cool water.
  - Re-test on the wrist before giving to the infant.

### **Warm milk**

Feeding an infant cold breastmilk or infant formula is not harmful, but drinks warmed to room temperature flow better from the bottle, and infants seem to prefer them.

- Bottle warmers can be used, but they must have a thermostat control.
- Never use a microwave to warm milk or formula

The educator warming the milk:

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- Stands the bottle upright in warm tap water for no more than 15 minutes just before use or uses a bottle warmer as per the manufacturer's instructions for no more than 10 minutes,
- Tests the temperature by dripping some milk onto the inside of the wrist.
  - It should feel the same temperature as skin.
  - If it is too warm, then cool the bottle under running water or in a container of cool water.
  - Re-test on the wrist before giving to the infant.
- Discards any warmed milk that has not been used and never refreezes thawed milk,
- Returns unheated and unused milk to families at the end of the day when they come to collect their child, and
- If the service does not have enough milk from the family to meet the child's needs that day, contacts the parent.

### Serve and discard

- Prepared breastmilk must be stored in the refrigerator, immediately on arrival and used within 24 hours. Do not re-freeze it.
- Throw out all leftovers at the end of the day.
- Once a bottle has been given to an infant, throw out any leftover milk or formula after each feed. Do not put back in the refrigerator, and do not leave out at room temperature for later use.
- For children older than 12 months, cow's milk can be provided by the kitchen. Families must provide the bottle, labelled with the child's name.
- To meet children needs, educators may be required to sterilise children bottles between use using the service sterilizer and following instructions for use.

## 8. Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Standards

<b>NSW Food Act 2003</b>	
6	Meaning of 'food business'
100	Notification of conduct of food businesses
106	Food safety supervisors
<b>Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code</b>	
3.2.1	Food safety programs
3.2.2	Food safety practices and general requirements
3.2.2A	Food safety management tools
3.2.3	Food premises and equipment
3.3.1	Food safety programs for food service to vulnerable persons
<b>Education and Care Services National Law</b>	
167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazard
<b>Education and Care Services National Regulation</b>	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices

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78	Food and beverages
79	Service providing food and beverages
80	Weekly menu
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of changes to policies and procedures
173 2) f)	Prescribed information to be displayed (anaphylaxis)
<b>National Quality Standards</b>	
2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
5.1.1	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
<b>Child Safe Standards</b>	
3	Families and communities are informed and involved
<b>Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcomes</b>	
3	Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4	Children are confident and involved learners
<b>Early Years Learning Framework Principles</b>	
	Secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships
	Partnerships
	Respect for diversity
<b>Early Years Learning Framework Practices</b>	
	Holistic, integrated, and interconnected approaches
	Responsiveness to children
	Play-based learning and intentionality

	Learning environments
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## 9. Related Documents

Doc #	Attachments
NQS2.14A	Giving your Baby the Best Start Brochure
NQS2.14B	Healthy Eating for Children Brochure
NQS2.14C	Lunchbox Checklist 2-5 Years
NQS2.14D	Lunchbox Checklist Preschool
NQS2.14E	Drinks – Water and Milk
NQS2.15EH	Nutrition and Food Safety Procedures
NQS2.14F	RREE Food Safety Program
NQS2.14G	Individual Diet Form
NQS2.14H	Modified Diet Plan
NQS2.14J	Providing Food From Home Guide
NQS2.14K	Milk and Formula Bottle Labels
NQs2.14L	Kitchen Profile Card

Doc #	Intersections with other key documents
NQS2.12	Medical Conditions Policy
NQS2.12 A1	Anaphylaxis and Allergy Alert Sign
NQS2.12 A7	Medical Management Plan
NQS2.12 A8	Management of a Medical Condition Form
NQS2.10	Hygiene and Infection Control Policy
NQS4.34	Staff Training and Development Policy

## 10. Document Control

Doc #	Doc Title	Version	Approved	Next Review
	Nutrition Food Beverages and Dietary Requirements Policy	1	April 2012	April 2015
NQS2.14	Nutrition Policy	2	June 2020	June 2022
NQS2.14	Nutrition Policy	4	December 2022	December 2025
NQS2.14	Nutrition Policy (minor changes due to name change and new policy document format)	4a	January 2024	December 2025
NQS2.14	Nutrition and Food Safety Policy	5	February 2024	February 2027