



## **Rangi Ruru Preschool**

### **Nutrition Policy**

#### **Rationale:**

Promote and support an ongoing collaborative approach to children's physical well-being and health within our centre community. An important aspect of this is creating a sustainable healthy eating environment which is safe and informative for all involved.

Developing and sustaining healthy eating behaviours in children is an integral part of the daily curriculum and experiences and education offered to children and their families should reflect this.

To adhere to the Ministry of Health document – Minimising food related choking risk in Early Learning Service settings (2020).

<https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-activity-and-sleep/healthy-eating/food-related-choking-young-children>

#### **Purpose**

1. To support and encourage parents and whānau to make healthy food choices for their children so that together we can teach children healthy eating behaviours to stay healthy and grow.
2. Food offered should provide children with important nutrients and energy to be active.
3. To promote a healthy awareness of the differences between everyday foods and treat foods, whilst acknowledging the parents right to make decisions for their child.

#### **Procedure:**

##### **Food safety**

1. Rangi Ruru has always had your child's health and well-being as our top priority. For this reason we do not prepare meals for children, rather we ask that you provide a nutritious and well balanced home packed meal, with items that your child has prior experience with and is confident eating.
2. Food allergies and intolerances will be the shared responsibility of the child's family and centre. On enrolment parents/caregivers are asked to share with us any

- information regarding children's allergies or intolerances. In individual cases it may be necessary to have a management plan in place and review of the nutrition policy
3. The names of children with food allergies are displayed in the kai area for teachers to be aware of.
  4. A fridge is available ensuring all food is stored in a safe and hygienic manner.
  5. All lunches must be brought in a clearly named lunchbox. Lunchboxes and drink bottles will be renamed by staff should it become difficult to identify the owner.
  6. All children and staff wash hands before kai time (refer: hand-washing policy).
  7. A staff member will supervise children during kai times, with particular attention to ensuring children are not moving away from the kai area with food in their mouths. We see kai time as a wonderful opportunity to promote relationships, language, independence and self-help skills.
  8. Any records of food prepared or given out by teachers are kept for inspection for at least 3 months (refer: regulation requirements) after the food is served.

### **Lunch box guidelines**

9. Parents are strongly encouraged to provide simple nutritious food such as fruit, sandwiches, yoghurt, muffins, crackers, vegetables, cheese, scones, pikelets and rice crackers, leftover meals.
10. You are welcome to bring the occasional hot meal to heat but we would highly recommend sending hot food in a thermos to allow teaching team to provide quality supervision and care of children at the kai tables.
11. In the interest of promoting healthy eating habits children are asked to keep lollies, chocolate bars, roll ups, and highly coloured chips/savoury snacks at home.
12. Health professionals state that water is the ideal drink for children. To support this children bring named water bottles. Cups are also provided for children to access a shared water supply and teachers will actively encourage children have water with every meal.
13. In the event of a child having insufficient food, the centre will supplement using additional food such as crackers, sandwiches or fruit and this will be recorded.

### **Birthday and celebration foods**

14. We encourage the celebration of your child's birthday at Rangī Ruru. If you wish to bring a cake or other healthy snack alternative to share for a birthday or special occasion, please see Linda or Keri, and we would be happy to accommodate this.
15. We discourage lollies and fizzy drinks as part of this celebration.
16. Should the centre be engaging in any activities regarding cultural celebrations and food, families will be advised in advance, and provide the opportunity to consent to their child sharing the item.

### **Food and nutrition education**

17. As a community of learners we will strive to provide ongoing opportunities to strengthen communities' engagement in food and nutrition activities/experiences. This policy along with supporting information from the Ministry of Health will be

given to children and their families on enrolment so that healthy eating guidelines are made clear from the beginning.

18. The centre will offer information around healthy eating through a variety of ways to children and their families; including healthy recipes shared through newsletters, wall displays, pamphlets published by the Ministry of Health and 'workshop' type parent education opportunities. Practical healthy recipe ideas from families will be encouraged to be shared. The parent library will contain a variety of healthy food recipes and ideas.
19. Cooking and food preparation are a regular part of the curriculum experiences children are engaged in within our programme. These provide a further opportunity to provide healthy eating practices. It is also a time to learn about and celebrate meals/food from other cultures.
20. We will endeavour to plant a variety of seasonal vegetables/fruit with the children. These will be cared for by the children and teachers. Food grown provides an ideal base to make nutritious snacks/meals with the children.
21. Curriculum experiences may, from time to time, involve items of food which are considered 'sometime' or treat foods however children will be encouraged to eat a healthy food option first or save the treat until such a time as the parent deems fit.

### **Record keeping**

22. Kai sheets will be kept for three months, which record the daily roll and when each child was supported and involved in eating some of their pre-prepared food from home.

### **Food safety for ECE services (food act requirements)**

This is the Ministry of Education advice about where we sit with the MPI registration. We are classed as an Exempt service, i.e. those that are not required to operate under a national programme for the following reasons:

- Centre-based ECE services who undertake minimal food handling only, for example provide cut fruit, crackers and spreads, and packet biscuits
- Where food preparation as part of the curriculum, i.e. baking and cooking done with children
- Where food is donated or brought by families to share
- Where children bring a lunch box

They advise the following as an exempt service:

- Make food safe. Meet food safety requirements by, for example, keeping hands and kitchen surfaces clean, keeping cooked and raw food separate, and cooking and storing food at the right temperature.
- Service does not need to register or be verified.

**Date:** January 2020

**Review Date:** January 2022

**Responsibility:** Preschool Staff

Management

Parental Feedback

**Distribute to:** Preschool staff

Policy Folder

Enrolment Packs

Service Provider

Date: 18 January 2021