



Food and Nutrition Policy

Aim:

At Akoranga Preschool we aim to provide a safe, healthy and positive approach to food and nutrition, in the knowledge that these interactions can enhance educational outcomes for the tamariki in our care, support age appropriate development and independence, and impact on life long relationships with food.

Te Whāriki

Wellbeing – Mana atua

Children experience an environment where their health is promoted.

Procedures:

Food Provision and Preparation

- All meals are provided by whānau/caregivers in sealed and clearly named containers. Akoranga Preschool encourages the use of reusable containers.
- Akoranga Preschool fully supports breast feeding – please notify of us of your needs so that we can accommodate these.
- Infant formulas are provided by whānau in clearly named containers. Already made up formula will be stored in the fridge until required and heated as per instruction from whānau. If unmade formula is provided it will be stored and made up following the manufacturers instructions. Formula tins will be dated when opened, and returned to whānau one month from opening.
- Akoranga Preschool provides all families with a copy of the *“Ministry of Health: Reducing food related choking for babies and young children at early learning services”* guidelines at the time of enrolment.
- Akoranga Preschool employs a Housekeeper who assists in the preparation of food for the tamariki, including the warming of food for hot kai options.
- When our staff are involved in preparing food for the tamariki, this food will be prepared in accordance with the *“Ministry of Health: Reducing food related choking for babies and young children at early learning services”* guidelines.
- Where a child selects food directly from their lunch box, teachers will use their discretion and knowledge of the child (not relying on age alone as the indicator) to decide if it is developmentally appropriate or if they need to intervene and prepare as per the *“Ministry of Health: Reducing food related choking for babies and young children at early learning services”* guidelines.
- Any concerns around the food provided will be referred to the child’s key teacher/Team Leader for discussion with whānau.



Health and Safety

- Kitchen and cooking facilities are designed to prevent unsupervised access by children.
- Housekeeper, Kaiako and tamariki will not be involved in food preparation if they are unwell.
- Handwashing and general hygiene routines will be followed by adults and children involved in preparing food. Cuts/sores on hands will be covered by blue plasters. Adults will wear gloves when handling food.
- Whānau are responsible for notifying Akoranga Preschool of any food allergies, intolerances, and special dietary requirements for their child.
- Food allergies, intolerances, and special dietary requirements will be recorded on the “Allergy List”. This list will be updated monthly, and a copy of this list will be kept near the first aid kits for staff to reference as required.
- Food provided by whānau or Akoranga Preschool to be shared for celebrations or gardening/cooking/baking experiences will be recorded in the “Shared Kai” notebook kept with a copy of the “Allergy List” for easy cross reference.
- Food is stored in separate, named, and covered containers at all times – either on designated kai room shelves, or in the fridge if required to be chilled.
- Hot kai options are cooked or reheated until steaming hot throughout, then left to cool to an appropriate temperature before serving. Leftovers are reheated only once.
- Any uneaten food will be sent home, unless the child does not have an appropriate sealable container for the food, in which case it will be discarded.
- Rubbish bins are provided, and rubbish is cleared and disposed of regularly.
- Sterile dishwashing facilities are provided, and all kitchenware and bottle-feeding equipment is rinsed and thoroughly cleaned after use.
- Cloths of different colours are used for different cleaning tasks – refer to Bicultural policy.
- Disinfectant for kitchen and dining surfaces is made up as per the manufacturer’s instructions, and surfaces are cleaned after use.
- Dining room floors are swept after each mealtime and mopped daily.
- Other kitchen appliances and furniture are cleaned regularly: Ovens – after each use; Dishwashers – monthly; Fridges – weekly; Chairs – weekly, Microwaves – daily.
- Food Restriction and Modification Guide for Staff on kai room walls will be reviewed at same time as Food and Nutrition policy every 2 years.

Routines and Supervision

- Supervising staff will endeavour to make mealtimes as positive and enjoyable as possible.
- The Akoranga Preschool karakia kai will be said at least once a day with children to express gratitude for food and friendship.



- A safe and hygienic dining space is provided for children to sit while eating (e.g. indoor dining room or outdoors on picnic table, blanket, tarpaulin).
- Main meals will usually be eaten together at set times, with flexibility for individual children's needs when practicable.
- While eating, infants will sit on a teacher's lap and children will be seated and closely supervised by staff.
- Distractions will be minimised, and children reminded not to talk with food in their mouths.
- Children will be reminded to sit up straight while eating and food will be placed directly in front of the child.
- Babies/infants or children with special needs drinking from a bottle will be supervised one-on-one and supported in a semi-upright position.

Food Restrictions

- Whole foods, variety and moderation are encouraged.
- Ensuring that children are fed is our priority – no child will be left hungry due to any preferred food restrictions.
- Due to the severity of nut allergies, Akoranga Preschool is a NUT FREE ZONE. This means we do not allow any nuts or any food containing nuts including peanut butter and chocolate nut spread (e.g. Nutella). Food labelled as "May contain traces of nuts" is allowed.
- Due to the high sugar content and risk to oral health, Akoranga Preschool does not allow:
 - Confectionary/lollies or foods containing lollies
 - Chocolates or chocolate coated foods (chocolate chips in baking is allowed)
 - Fruit juice or flavoured milk
- Due to high fat and salt content Akoranga Preschool does not allow:
 - Chips/Crisps or related products
- If food is provided that is inappropriate for the age and ability of the child, staff may keep this aside until the child's key teacher can discuss with them and offer advice on suitable alternatives.
- Any concerns around the types of food provided will be referred to the child's key teacher/Team Leader for discussion with whānau.
- Exceptions may be made for specific foods for specific children on the advice of a health professional.

Supporting Healthy Choices

- Water will be made available to children at all meals, and as often as needed between meals, and children will be encouraged to drink regularly.



- At each meal staff will encourage children to first eat foods that provide nutrition and long-lasting energy to sustain them through their day – this includes (but is not limited to) fruit, vegetables, cheese, eggs, sandwiches/breads, hot meals, cold meats and salads.
- If food is refused, encouragement is offered. If food continues to be refused, it may be offered later when the child is hungrier, or a suitable alternative from their lunch box may be offered.
- Repeated/continual refusal of a certain type of food will be reported to the child’s key teacher/Team Leader for discussion with whānau.
- If it is thought that the food options provided by whānau are impacting on a child’s wellbeing, the child’s key teacher/Team Leader will discuss with whānau and offer advice on suitable alternatives.
- Children will be encouraged to try a variety of foods during gardening/cooking/baking experiences and food celebrations and this approach will be role modelled by staff when appropriate. “Allergy list” will be checked before foods are offered.
- Staff will attend appropriate professional development to support healthy eating education.
- Funds are made available for resources that support nutrition education for tamariki.
- Educational and inspirational resources around healthy eating will be made available for whānau.

Celebration Food

- To honour our 5 year olds as they transition to school, Akoranga Preschool will provide a variety of colourful seasonal fruit on a special celebration silver platter.
- There is no obligation for whānau to provide shared kai on their child’s birthday or other occasions for celebration, but if they wish to do so, we encourage a conversation with staff about appropriate options.
- On other occasions of celebration Akoranga Preschool may invite families to contribute to shared kai, and guidelines will be included in the invitation.

CONSULTATION:

- Who? Families/whanau
- How? Written and discussion
- When?

Date: May 2024

Review: May 2026