



Rockingham Montessori School
Incorporated
ABN: 68 115 270 695

POLICY TITLE: Healthy Eating Policy

BOARD APPROVAL DATE: May 2021

SIGNED BY CHAIR:

BOARD REVIEW DATE: May 2024

OVERVIEW:

Healthy eating is essential for children in supporting their growth and development, and in producing long-term, sustainable eating habits which promote health and well-being into adulthood. These sustainable eating habits include choosing nutritional foods, consuming appropriate food portions, and limiting the intake of sugar, salt and fat.

In 2018, one in four Western Australian children aged 5-15 years were overweight or obese, putting them at an increased risk of obesity and chronic disease in adulthood. Childhood obesity has remained steady since 2004. (Western Australian Department of Health website 2021).

Our school encourages through its practice the consumption and awareness of healthy foods and the promotion of healthy eating habits.

OBJECTIVES:

- To educate children about healthy eating
- To implement classroom practices that support healthy eating
- To provide parents with healthy eating information

PRINCIPLES:

Our staff give a commitment to promote healthy eating through education of our children in the classroom and on all school activities including camps, excursions, incursions and Community Spirit events along with the education of parents through discussion and specific parent information.

Breakfast

Research has shown the importance of children eating a nutritious breakfast before school and we encourage all children to do so.

Packaging

All children need to bring their snacks and lunches in reusable washable containers that the child can *easily open themselves*. This promotes independence.

As an accredited Waste Wise School any packaging needs to be either recyclable or safe for disposal. This gives our children the opportunity to learn about recycling and caring for the environment.

Snack

Children's House (3-6)

We encourage all children to bring a serving of fruit or vegetables in a named paper bag for their child's snack. This will go into the basket provided by their class teacher at the beginning of class. This prevents the child from eating all of their lunch at snack time and gives everyone a chance to have snack as part of their morning work cycle.

Lower and Upper Primary (6-12)

Children in this age group are capable of limiting their snack intake and saving most of their food for lunch. We still encourage all children to bring a serving of fruit or vegetables for snack time. Classes will establish their own routines for morning snack and children will be encouraged to include their snack as part of managing the day's work cycle requirements. This promotes self-discipline and independence.

Adolescent Program (12-18)

It is recognised students of this age may have already developed healthy eating habits. Individuals are responsible for eating choices and we strongly recommend students of this age select and prepare nutritious foods low in sugar, salt and fat to support healthy growth.

Lunch

We encourage children to have a healthy nutritious lunch. Some suggestions are:

- Fruit and vegetables
- Natural foods low in sugar
- Foods high in protein content such as eggs, cheese, meats, fish, yoghurt, pulses and bread

We strongly discourage the following:

- Any food containing chocolate
- Any foods containing high concentrations of sugar, salt, and fats eg: lollies, fruit roll-ups, potato chips, biscuits, cakes etc
- Boxed or canned drinks

We also encourage all children to participate in making of their own lunches.

Children with Allergies

A number of children in our School Community have severe allergic reactions to some types of foods. Care needs to be exercised in the provision of foods for children in these classes. Our teachers will inform families should caution need to be taken in your child's class.

Research has demonstrated that some additives affect children's behaviour. Some applications and websites can keep you up to date with this information.

Water

Students within Children's House (3-6) and Lower and Upper Primary (6-12) will have fresh water provided for them throughout the day in the form of access to taps and drinking fountains.

Students in Children's House (3-6) do not need to bring water bottles. They will be provided with their own drinking glass in their classroom.

Lower and Upper Primary (6-12) children need to bring a refillable water bottle for use in the classroom and going out activities.

Adolescent Program (12-18)

Students are responsible for ensuring their individual intake of water is appropriate.

Birthday Celebrations

Families are welcome to provide a fruit platter for all birthday celebrations to be held during class.

Special Cultural and other Celebrations

During the year our classes may participate in a wide variety of celebrations from different cultures. As part of these activities children may be involved in the making and consumption of different foods. Celebrations such as Easter have a significant focus on the consumption of chocolate. Consumption of chocolate will be allowed, in moderation, at such times under the direction and supervision of the class teacher and according to individual family requests.

Inappropriate Foods

To support healthy eating, class teachers in Children's House, Lower Primary and Upper Primary have lunch with their classes. They role model good healthy eating habits and may have general discussions about food choices while everyone is eating. Your child's teacher may have a conversation with your child about their food choices and send an item of inappropriate food home with a note.

In addition our Principal may contact the family to explain the importance of compliance with our school's Healthy Eating Policy.

By following this policy, you support your child's physical development, self-discipline and independence. You also support their social development because your child may feel uncomfortable if they have inappropriate food.

Suggested references for more information:

https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_I/Food-for-kids