



# Kaitiaki Kindergartens

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## Operational Policies

### 7.19 Food and Drink Policy

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**Classification:** Health and Safety

**Applies to:** All Staff

**Approved by:** General Manager

**Date:** February 2022

**Review Date:** February 2024

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#### **Purpose:**

- That the nutritional needs of all children attending Kaitiaki Kindergarten's services shall be appropriately met and provided for.

#### **References:**

- Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008.
- Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008 HS22 (see Appendix)
- Food Act 2014 <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-safety/food-act-2014/national-programmes/early-childhood-educators-and-kohanga-reo/>
- Ministry of Health's Reducing food-related choking for babies and young children at early learning services
- Plunket "Baby's First Foods" (<https://www.plunket.org.nz/your-child/6-months-to-1-year/food-and-nutrition/babys-first-foods/>)
- Health Ed "Eating for Healthy Babies and Toddlers/Ngā kai tōtika mō te hunga kōhungahunga" <https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/eating-healthy-babies-and-toddlersng%C4%81-kai-t%C5%8Dtika-m%C5%8D-te-hunga-k%C5%8Dhungahunga>

#### **Definition:**

- Kaitiaki Kindergartens – is referred to as 'The Association'
  - Head Teachers and Centre Managers – are referred to as Service Leaders
  - Kindergartens and Early Learning Centres – are referred to as services
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## **Policy**

1. To ensure that food and water is provided to every child that is attending one of The Association's services.
  2. To ensure that all services meet the requirements set out in The Food Act 2014.
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3. To ensure that the food provided to children is of a high standard and meets their nutritional needs.
4. To ensure that a culture of healthy eating is promoted throughout The Association.

## Procedures

1. The Association's Early Learning Centre services provide the necessary meals for the time the children are attending including morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and a late snack. This food must meet the nutritional needs of the children while they are attending and promote a culture of healthy eating.
2. Kindergartens require parents/caregivers to provide enough packed food to sustain the child for the duration of their attendance.
3. At all services, teachers must ensure that food is served or available at appropriate times whilst children are in attendance.
4. Children and babies must be supervised when eating, with ratios of adults to children as per MoE guidelines.
5. Services will ensure that children eat at an appropriate time, rather than promote continuous grazing.
6. All children must be seated and upright while they are eating.
7. Fresh water will be available to children at all times and where possible, children will be encouraged to access this water independently.
8. All food will be prepared, served and stored hygienically and teachers will ensure the health and safety of the children by promoting good hygiene practices with regards to food.
9. All food provided to the children (other than that which has been provided by parents) will be recorded in accordance with the Food Act 2014. This includes baking and any other food available to the children during their time at the service. These records will be available to parents and kept for a period of 3 months.
10. Teachers will promote the children's health and well-being through ensuring that any food used in the programme is healthy and the use of foods containing high levels of sugar, colourings and flavourings is minimised.
11. Teachers will seek information regarding a child's known or probable allergy from parents/whanau/caregiver prior to admission and this will be recorded on the services list of children with allergies.



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12. Where a child has a severe medical condition, that upon contact or inhalation of certain food groups (e.g. peanuts) may result in a severe reaction, staff may request the exclusion of this food group during the time the child attends kindergarten.
13. Baking and cooking are acceptable as part of the programme. Where possible, alternative ingredients should be used for children with identified reactions or allergies, to allow them to participate in the activity.
14. Where a parent indicates they have a preference for their child not eating a particular food, teachers will take every practicable precaution to ensure this wish is respected. This may have a health, religious or cultural basis.
15. Infants under 6 months and other children unable to drink independently will be held semi-upright when being fed a bottle.
16. Children able to drink independently from a bottle or sippy cup will be supervised while consuming their drink. Under no circumstances will a child be given a bottle or sippy cup when lying down.
17. Any infant milk food given to a child under the age of 12 months must be provided by the child's parent/caregiver.
18. A suitable area in the service will be available to support mothers breastfeeding. Fridge space will be available for the storage of breastmilk for the infant.
19. When food is provided by the service, infants will be provided with suitable foods when weaning. The foods recommended by Plunket "Baby's First Foods" will be used as a guide for suitable options. <https://www.plunket.org.nz/your-child/6-months-to-1-year/food-and-nutrition/babys-first-foods/>
20. Choking represents a significant hazard for children when eating, particularly to children under 2 years of age. Effective supervision of children when eating is essential. This is covered in the licensing criteria "HS22 Supervision while eating", updated in January 2021.
21. Any food served to children under 2 will meet the recommendations laid out in <https://www.health.govt.nz/resource/eating-healthy-babies-and-toddlersng%C4%81-kait%C5%8Dtika-m%C5%8D-te-hunga-k%C5%8Dhungahunga>
22. All foods provided by parents/caregivers for their infants, will be served in accordance with manufacturers recommendations. If the food is not commercially produced, the food will be served in accordance with the parents'/caregivers' instructions.
23. Parents will be informed of this policy prior to their child's admission and will be reminded through notices and newsletters.
24. All parents will be given a copy of the Ministry of Health's guidelines 'Reducing food-related choking for babies and young children at early learning services' during the enrolment process and



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will be asked to encourage the parents to supply food for their children that meets these guidelines.

Signed: *Braam Kukulea*

Date: *17/8/22*

General Manager

Endorsed by

Signed:

President of the Board

*Paul Gordon*

Date:

*17/8/22*



## Appendix 1

Below is information taken directly from the Ministry of Education website <https://www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/licensing-and-regulations/the-regulatory-framework-for-ece/licensing-criteria/centre-based-ece-services/health-and-safety/food-and-drink/hs22-supervision-while-eating/>

## HS22 Supervision while eating

### Criteria

**Children are supervised and seated while eating.**

Where food is provided by the service, foods that pose a high choking risk are not to 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](#).

Where food is provided by parents, the service promotes best practices as set out in [Ministry of Health: Reducing food-related choking for babies and young children at early learning services](#) and must provide to all parents at the time of enrolment a copy of [Ministry of Health: Reducing food-related choking for babies and young children at early learning services](#) [PDF, 84 KB].

### Rationale/Intent:

The criterion aims to minimise the risk of choking on food and to ensure in an event of an adverse reaction appropriate action is taken.

### Guidance

*Any examples in the guidance are provided as a starting point to show how services can meet the requirement. Services may choose to use other approaches better suited to their needs as long as they comply with the criteria.*

### Children are supervised while eating

In this criterion, supervised means an adult is assigned to oversee children while they are eating to ensure attention is on the children and not on completing other tasks. The adult assigned must 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.

The [Response - if a child is choking](#) outlines the appropriate response if a child is choking.

### Children are seated while eating

Seated means that children's weight is supported by their buttocks rather than their feet and their back is upright.

Where practical it is preferable that children are seated in a chair with their food directly in front of them to prevent the child needing to twist to the left or right, which can cause them to lose control of the food in their mouth.



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## Where food is provided by the service

Foods that pose a high choking risk to children must not be served unless prepared in accordance with the [Ministry of Health Guidance](#). This guidance outlines foods that should be excluded from services and how to alter other high-risk foods for different age groups, i.e. for one to three years old, and four years up to six years.

[Eating for Healthy Babies and Toddlers](#) outlines how to prepare foods for newborns to one-year olds.

## When food is provided by parents

Services must provide a copy of the [Ministry of Health Guidance](#) [PDF, 84 KB] at the time of enrolment and should record on the enrolment form that this information has been provided and understood by parents.

Services must promote the Ministry of Health Guidance and may demonstrate compliance by developing formal policies and procedure in partnership with whānau ([GMA4- Parent Involvement](#)).

Any policy could include actions the service will take and how they will communicate with whānau if food is provided that is not prepared in accordance with the Ministry of Health Guidance and the service does not consider it to be developmentally appropriate for that child.

## Things to consider

### Safety and Choking

- How is children's safety supported while they are eating? E.g. making sure there are not too many distractions.
- Has a child had a history of early reflux? If so, extra vigilance over the introduction of new foods is essential.
- If food is provided selecting appropriate food for individual children is very important to minimise choking risk. It is important to discuss with a parent or caregiver the foods children can manage safely rather than relying on age alone as the indicator.
- Be aware of foods which are more likely to cause choking.
- Small hard foods that are difficult for children to bite or chew (eg, nuts, large seeds, popcorn husks, raw carrot, apple, celery)
  - small round foods that can get stuck in children's throats (eg, grapes, berries, raisins, sultanas, peas, watermelon seeds, lollies)
  - foods with skins or leaves that are difficult to chew (eg, sausages, chicken, lettuce, nectarines)
  - compressible food which can squash into the shape of a child's throat and get stuck there (eg, hot dogs, sausages, pieces of cooked meat, popcorn)
  - thick pastes that can get stuck in children's throats (eg, chocolate spreads, peanut butter)
  - fibrous or stringy foods that are difficult for children to chew (celery, rhubarb, raw pineapple)
- To reduce the risk of choking on these foods:
  - alter the food texture – grate, cook, finely chop or mash the food
  - remove the high risk parts of the food – peel off the skin, or remove the strong fibres.



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## **Learning whilst eating**

- How do children learn what is expected of them while eating? E.g. to remain seated until they have finished eating
- How is children's learning supported while supervising their eating
- What other learning is happening while eating? E.g. using utensils, textures, colours, appropriate social interactions.