

**Version 3**

**Effective Date: 13 September 2023**

**Next Review: March 2025**

**Document Approver: Chief Executive**

**Document Owner: Facilities & Services**

## **Applies To | Ko Wai Whakahāngaitia**

All kindergarten staff.

## **General Principles | Mātāpono Whānui**

- To ensure that all food and drink provided for children at kindergarten is appropriate for their health needs.
- To provide advice on how to manage any risks associated with providing food in early childhood centres including food that is provided by whānau for children to have while at kindergarten.

## **Related Procedures or Processes and Documents | Pākanga Tukanga me Pukapuka**

Not Applicable.

## **References | Tohutoro / Huānga ki**

Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008.

Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008: HS19-23, GMA9, PF15-17.

Ministry of Health Reducing food – related choking for babies and young children at early learning services.

## **Display Document | Whakamātakitaki Pukapuka – No**

## **Practice Statement | Whakaharatau Tauākī – Required - Yes**

## **Policy Review Cycle | Kaupapa Arotake Hurihanga**

This policy will be reviewed every two years and in conjunction with reviews of the related procedures or processes and documents outlined above.

## **Policy**

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- Kindergartens that provide food for children will abide by the Licensing Criteria which prohibits providing certain foods and specifies how other foods must be prepared.
- Kindergartens that provide food will ensure that they avoid serving the food that has been identified by the Ministry of Health as high-risk food and is included in Appendix 2 of this policy.
- Kindergarten Taranaki will provide information for whānau to let them know of the guidance that has been developed by the Ministry of Health contained in the publication 'Reducing food – related choking for babies and young children at early learning centres.
- Kindergartens will consult with whānau when food is provided from home that does not meet the Ministry of Health Guidelines and may where appropriately alter any food that is provided or provide an alternative option.

- Drinking water will be always available for children.
- Kindergartens will provide a safe physical environment for babies and children while they are eating including:
  - Children shall sit while eating and will be actively supervised at all times.
  - Ensure there is a designated space where children can sit down to eat.
  - Have an appropriate ratio of adults to children at mealtimes.
  - Minimise distractions and encourage children to focus on eating.
  - Encourage children to not talk with their mouths full.
  - Have children sit up straight when eating, do not allow walking, running, or playing while children are eating.
  - Place food directly in front of child to prevent twisting or cause them to lose control of the food in their mouth.
  - Monitor the amount of food on a child's plate to avoid putting too much food in their mouth at one time.
  - All permanently appointed and long term relieving teachers will hold a current first aid certificate.
- Kindergartens must develop procedures that detail how they will supervise children while children are eating. These procedures must include supervision of rolling kai times where applicable.
- Infant milk formula given to the child under the age of 12 months must be of a type approved by the child's whānau. Infants under six months or children unable to drink independently must be held semi upright while being fed.
- Food is prepared and shared in a hygienic environment.
- Appropriate health and hygiene practices are adhered to in the cleaning of all food and drink utensils.
- There will be no food or liquids in the sleeping/resting area while children are resting or sleeping.
- If whānau are asked to provide food for their child, they are encouraged to follow the Ministry of Health's Guidelines for safe and healthy food and drink. Teachers will reach a shared understanding with whānau, taking into consideration the socio-cultural background of each family.
- Self-help skills in eating and drinking are encouraged.
- Children are encouraged to follow health and safety routines before, during and after the consumption of food and drink.
- Positive attitudes towards healthy food will be encouraged.
- Teachers will keep a log of food provided by the kindergarten e.g., any baking experiences offered which will include list of ingredients.
- Teachers will keep a log of food provided by whānau for events such as children's birthday parties e.g., goodie bags, baking, including a list of ingredients.
- Teachers will provide special dietary/health needs/cultural requirements of children.

## Procedure

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1. Kindergartens will develop a written practice statement specific for their kindergarten around the provision of food and drink including how they will supervise the consumption of both food and drink.
2. These procedures will be provided to whānau, along with the Kindergarten Taranaki Food and Drink Policy.

## Appendix 1

### Ministry Of Health Guidelines On How To Alter High-Risk Food To Lower Its Choking Risk

Food characteristics	Examples	Choking risk	Changes to reduce risk	
			1-3 years old	4-6 years old
<b>Small hard food</b>	Pieces of raw carrot, apple or celery	Difficult for young children to bite through and break down enough to swallow safely. Pieces can become stuck in children's airways.	Grate raw carrot, apple or celery, spiralise to create vegetable or fruit spirals, slice thinly using a mandolin.  Cook until soft and cut into strips (around 4–6 cm long) that can be picked up with one hand.	Prepare as for 1–3 years.  Raw or cooked vegetables or fruit cut into sticks (approx. 4–6 cm long) that can be picked up with one hand.
<b>Small round or oval food</b>	Fruit with stones and large seeds or large pips like watermelon.  Grapes, large berries, cherry tomatoes.  Raw green peas	Small round foods can lodge in children's airways	Remove stones and large seeds or large pips.  Quarter or finely chop grapes, berries and cherry tomatoes to an 8mm x 8mm size or smaller (about half the width of a standard dinner fork).  Cook and squash with a fork.	Halve or quarter grapes, berries and cherry tomatoes.  Whole cooked green peas are acceptable.
<b>Food with skin on or leaves</b>	Chicken  Lettuce and other raw salad	Food skins are difficult to chew and can completely seal	Remove skin from chicken.  Finely slice or chop salad leaves, spinach and cabbage.	

	leaves, spinach, cabbage.	children's airways.	Grate raw carrot, apple or celery, spiralise to create vegetable or fruit spirals, slice thinly using a mandolin.	
	Stone fruit (eg, plums, peaches, nectarines)  Apples and pears  Tomatoes		Cook until soft and cut into strips (around 4–6 cm long) that can be picked up with one hand.	Raw or cooked vegetables or fruit cut into sticks (around 4–6 cm long) that can be picked up with one hand.
<b>Compressible foods</b>	Pieces of cooked meat	Can fit into the shape of the airway and get wedged tightly.	Cook meat until very tender.  Choose mince, shred or chop meat to 8mm x 8mm sized pieces.	Prepare as for 1–3 years; or offer thin strips of meat (around 4–6 cm long) that can be picked up with one hand or with a fork.
<b>Food with bones</b>	Fish  Chicken nibbles	Small bones present a choking risk.	Remove all bones.	
<b>Thick pastes</b>	Nut or seed butter	Can fit to the shape of a child's airway or stick to side of airway.	Use smooth thick pastes sparingly, spreading thinly and evenly onto bread.	
<b>Fibrous or stringy food</b>	Raw pineapple	Fibres make it difficult for children to break up the food into smaller pieces.	Peel the skin or strong fibres off where possible.  Slice these foods thinly across the grain of fibres.	

## Appendix 2

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### High Risk Food to Exclude

- Whole of pieces of nuts
- Large seeds, like pumpkin or sunflower seeds
- Hard or chewy sweets or lollies
- Crisps or chippies
- Hard rice crackers
- Dried Fruit
- Sausages, saveloys and cheerios
- Popcorn
- Marshmallows

## Forms

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1. Record of Food Provided at Kindergarten Form.