

POLICY AIM

We aim to promote children's general wellbeing by creating an environment that supports healthy dental and oral health habits and practices that can be maintained throughout the child's life. Our services will provide food and drinks with consideration to the sugar content and ensure that drinking water is always available. The Service will provide a learning environment that raises dental health awareness and supports the development of valuable life skills and habits for children and families.

RATIONALE

Early childhood is an important time for developing good dental hygiene practices. From the time a baby starts teething, keeping gums and teeth clean can safeguard against cavities in the 'baby' teeth which can also cause damage to the permanent teeth underneath. Our Service promotes the importance of good dental health to children and families.

SCOPE - WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY?

- Child
- Educators
- Management
- Families

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD

QUALITY AREA 2 - CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Standard 2.1 (Health) - *Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.*
- Element 2.1.2 (Health practices and procedures) - *Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.*
- Element 2.1.3 (Healthy Lifestyles) - *Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.*

RELATED POLICIES & LEGISLATION

RELATED SWEETPEAS POLICIES:

- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Bottle Preparation Procedure
- Nutrition and Dietary Requirements Policy
- Food Preparation, Safety and Storage Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Sleep and Rest Policy

RELATED EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS:

- 78 Food and beverages
- 87 Incident, injury, trauma and illness record

TERMINOLOGY

- **Dental** - relating to teeth

IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES

We believe it is important for all children to practice a high level of dental hygiene. We follow the guidelines of the Australian Dental Association and State Government Health Departments when caring for children's teeth.

We provide information and guidelines on good dental health practices, which are implemented into the daily routine, including swish and swallow after mealtimes, providing information about brushing teeth and tooth friendly snacks and drinks, and going to the dentist.

To minimise the risk of cavities forming we encourage children to eat nutritious foods and to avoid sticky and sugary foods. All food served and prepared at our Service comply with these guidelines by providing a variety of recommended vegetables, fruit, and dairy products. Children will be encouraged to drink water.

DENTAL EMERGENCIES

It is important for educators to be aware of how to manage dental accidents and emergencies. Our Service will:

- ensure there is an educator on duty with current first aid qualifications to follow dental accident procedures
- ensure procedures for Adminstrating First Aid are adhered to (including completing an *Incident Report* on *HubHello*)
- ensure families are notified of any injury as soon as is reasonably practicable
- ensure that emergency numbers are located near the office phone
- ensure children are supervised at all times to minimise accidents and incidents.

RESPONSIBILITIES

MANAGEMENT / NOMINATED SUPERVISOR / RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL:

- ensure that food and drinks provided by the Service adhere to recommendations from organisations such as *Munch and Move* and *Get Up and Grow*, and recognised authorities. The Royal Children's Hospital of Melbourne recommends that children should avoid foods and drinks such as:
 - Chocolate
 - Lollies
 - Sweetened breakfast cereals
 - Biscuits
 - Fruit bars
 - Dried fruit
 - Muesli bars
 - Soft drink
 - Flavoured milk
 - Juice
 - Sports drinks
 - Cordial
 - Flavoured water
- always ensure children have access to safe drinking water
- ensure the routine incorporates 'swish and swallow' after each mealtime
- provide information to families about the Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS)
- ensure enrolment form collects information about each child's family dentist (in case of emergency)

EDUCATORS WILL:

- provide opportunities to discuss dental health education and food and drink choices to support dental health with children.
- provide resources to support dental health learning such as books, posters, 'giant' teeth and toothbrushes, etc.
- pay particular attention to meal and snack times to ensure healthy food is being eaten
- encourage 'swish and swallow' after each mealtime.
- give children bottles before they go to bed. When children take a bottle to bed it allows the lactose (sugar) in the milk to sit on their teeth which can cause tooth decay.
- report to the family any sign of tooth caries (decay), any accident, injury or suspected injury to teeth and gums, gum swelling, infection in the mouth, or problems, pain or discomfort the child has with chewing, eating or swallowing.
- arrange visits by dental professionals so that children and families can learn correct brushing techniques and oral care.
- provide dental care information to families through newsletters, posters, professional visits, web links and brochures. Where possible, information will be provided in different home languages.
- promote Dental Health Week with children and families each year.

REFERENCES

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Australian Dental Association: <https://ada.org.au/>

- Dental Health Week: <https://www.adansw.com.au/Community/Dental-Health-Week>
- Child Dental Benefits Schedule: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/child-dental-benefits-schedule>
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).
- Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011)
- Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (amended 2020)
- NSW Public Dental Services: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/oralhealth/Pages/default.aspx>
- Raising Children Network: www.raisingchildren.net.au
- Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
- Teeth.org.au <https://www.teeth.org.au/>

REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

This policy will be updated regularly to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with *Regulation 172* of the National Regulations, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.

Version	Amendment(s)	Review Date	Updated By
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented under new Management 	Feb 2017	Cassandra Way (Educator/Admin)
1.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checked links. No changes required. 	Feb 2018	Cassandra Way (ECT/Admin)
1.2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated sources. No other changes. 	Feb 2019	Cassandra Way (ECT/Admin)
1.3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated sources, including NQS. • Added sleep and rest to related policies. 	Feb 2020	Janine Evans (Director)
1.4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed no changes necessary 	March 2021	Janine Evans (Director)
1.5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed no changes necessary 	April 2022	Janine Evans (Managing Director)
1.6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed, no changes. Need to update to new template. 	April 2023	Janine Evans (Managing Director)
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic changes, policy transferred to new template. • Checked and updated sources, adding new sources relating to Dental Health Week • Reordered sections in line with template • Added <i>Responsibilities</i> section • Updated wording, edited grammar • Updated <i>Related Policies</i> list • Added <i>Dental Emergencies</i> section 	April 2024	Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager) Janine Evans (Managing Director)