



Food and Drink Policy Te Kaupapa Here mō te Kai me te Inu

Version 1 | Mahi Tuatahi

Effective Date | Whakamana tahito: July 2026 | Hūrae 2026

Next Review | ā houanga arotake: July 2028 | Hūrae 2028

Policy Owner | Rangatira Kaupapa Māhere: Chief Executive Officer

Key Accountabilities | Ngā Takonga Tuatahi: Chief Operating Officer

Introduction | Timatanga Kōrero

The purpose of this policy is to:

- To ensure that all food and drink provided for children by kindergartens and in home-based services is appropriate for their nutritional and developmental needs and supports the whānau and cultural values.
- To encourage and promote healthy eating guidelines for parents/whānau who provide their children's food and drink.
- To provide advice on how to manage any risks associated with providing food in early childhood and home-based services including food that is provided by whānau for children to have while at kindergarten or in home-based care.

Applies To | Ko Wai Whakahāngaitia

This policy applies to all He Whānau Manaaki o Tararua Free Kindergarten Association teachers and TONI educators.

General Principles | Mātāpono Whānui

1. Kindertartens and home-based services that provide food for children will abide by the Licensing Criteria which prohibits providing certain foods and specifies how other foods must be prepared.
2. Kindertartens and home-based services 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.
3. Kindertartens and home-based services will ensure that food is available at appropriate times while children are attending.
4. Where food is prepared onsite, the service will meet Food Act 2014 requirements.
5. Kindertartens and home-based services will provide information for whānau to let them know of the guidance that has been developed by the Ministry of Health, at enrolment, contained in the publication '*Reducing food – related choking for babies and young children at early learning services*' (and annually thereafter).
6. Information shared with whānau on appropriate food textures for newborns to one-year-olds is consistent with the Ministry of Health complementary feeding advice.
7. When parents/whānau provide food for their child at a kindergarten or home-based service, they are encouraged to follow the Ministry of Health's Guidelines for safe and healthy food and drink. Teachers and TONI educators will reach a shared understanding with parents/whānau, taking into consideration the socio-cultural background of each whānau.
8. On occasion and where appropriate to support the health and safety; or cultural beliefs/values of a child, teachers and TONI educators may alter any food that is provided by



whānau or provide an alternative option for the child. Senior Teachers and Visiting Teachers may be contacted for advice in these situations.

9. Drinking water will be available at all times for children to access independently.
10. 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,
 - Have an appropriate ratio of adults to children at mealtimes,
 - Minimize distractions and encourage children to focus on eating,
 - Ensure there is a designated space where children can sit down to eat,
 - 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 teachers, long-term relieving teachers and TONI educators will hold a current first aid certificate.
11. Kindergartens and home-based services must develop procedures that detail how they will actively supervise children while children are eating. These procedures must include active supervision of rolling kai times where applicable. [DRAFT-Supervision-plan-February-2025.docx](#)
12. Infant milk formula given to a child under the age of 12 months must be of a type approved by the child's parent/caregiver. Infants under six months or children unable to drink independently must be held semi upright while being fed.
13. Appropriate health and hygiene practices including food safety expectations are adhered to in the preparation of food; and the cleaning of all food and drink utensils (including refrigeration requirements; safe food temperatures; storage duration) (refer to cleaning guidelines).
14. All fridges must have a thermometer that is checked daily (5 Degrees).
15. There will be no food or liquids given to children when they are in their beds.
16. Self-help skills in eating and drinking are encouraged.
17. Children are encouraged to follow health and safety routines before, during and after the consumption of food and drink.
18. Positive attitudes towards healthy food will be encouraged.
19. Kindergartens and home-based services will keep a written or digital register/record of food they provide, e.g. any baking experiences offered which will include a list of ingredients (kept for 3 months).
20. Kindergartens participating in the KidsCan Food Programme for Early Childhood Centres will keep written or digital records of staff training and positions, kitchen cleaning schedules, meal preparations and receiving goods.
21. Teachers and TONI educators will uphold special dietary/health needs/cultural requirements of children.





22. Kindergartens and home-based services will develop written procedures specific for their service around the provision of food and drink including how they will actively supervise the consumption of both food and drink, including consideration of the following points:
 - the cleaning and management of infant formula and bottles
 - the process of active supervision during mealtimes
 - hygiene practices and storage of food.
23. Kindergartens and home-based services will ensure that they have documented allergy management plans – including Anaphylaxis response; staff awareness and training; emergency medication protocols.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations | **Whaitake Ture me Waeture**

Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008

Licensing Criteria for Home-based Education and Care Services 2008

Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008

Ministry of Health Reducing food – related choking for babies and young children at early learning services. [Reducing food-related choking for babies and young children at early learning services | Ministry of Health NZ](#)

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

Appendices:

- Ministry of Health ‘How to alter high-risk food to lower its choking risk’
- Ministry of Health ‘High Risk Food to Avoid’
- Celebrations Policy
- Kindergarten Supervision Procedures
- Kindergarten Cleaning schedule

Policy Review Cycle | **Kaupapa Arotake Hurihanga**

This policy is to be reviewed every two years. Whānau Manaaki may amend or cancel this policy or introduce a new policy, as it considers it necessary within the current cycle of the policy. Any amendments will be considered by the policy Working Group and will need to be approved by the Senior Leadership Team and the Board. The policy will continue on the same review cycle.

