

Policy Title: Management of Eating and Drinking Support in ACT Public Schools
Published: 2010
Identifier: MOEADS201002
Legislation: Education Act 2004 (ACT)
Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)
Disability Services Act 1991 (ACT)
Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)
Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cwlth)

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 This policy addresses the management of eating and drinking support in ACT public schools. It does not address the management of invasive health care procedures such as feeding or hydrating via a tube.
- 1.2 When required to support a student who needs assistance or supervision with the oral intake of food and/or drink, schools will require an Eating and Drinking Plan.
- 1.3 The Education and Training Directorate will facilitate access to appropriate training in specialised health procedures for staff members in schools when required.
- 1.4 This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Eating and Drinking Plan forms.

2. RATIONALE

- 2.1 Some students attending ACT public schools and colleges need assistance with the oral intake of food and/or drink. Others need support to enable them to manage the volume of intake necessary for their health and well being. Students requiring assistance or support with the oral intake of food or drink will require an Eating and Drinking Plan.
- 2.2 Some students are not able to take food or drink orally or maintain an adequate volume of intake. These students may require nutrition via a tube. Tube feeding can be considered an invasive health care procedure and is not covered by this policy. In ACT special schools, assistance for students requiring nutrition via a tube usually involves the school nurse. In regular public schools the level and type of support and responsibility for this procedure will need to be negotiated through the development of an individualised health care plan in consultation with relevant health professionals.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 The **Directorate** refers to the Education and Training Directorate.
- 3.2 The **Act** refers to the ACT *Education Act 2004*.
- 3.3 **Schools** includes public preschools, primary schools, high schools, senior secondary colleges and educational programs delivered by the Directorate for school-age students on other sites, such as Birrigai. School-related institutions established under section 20 of the Act are also included in this definition. **Schools** does not include non-government schools.
- 3.4 **Parents** means persons with parental responsibility for the student.
- 3.5 A **health professional** may include a speech pathologist, physician, dietician or nurse working within the community or hospital health services. For the purposes of this policy, **health professional** does not include a nurse attached to a school.
- 3.6 A **health care plan** is a plan developed by the school and parents for a student, based on health care advice provided by a health professional.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Development of the Eating and Drinking Plan

- 4.1.1 Where schools are asked by parents to assist with the supervision and support of eating and/or drinking for a student and there is no invasive procedure involved, an Eating and Drinking Plan is required. The Eating and Drinking Plan will be retained on file at the school and maintained in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles outlined in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cwlth).
- 4.1.2 In negotiating the Eating and Drinking Plan, priority will be given to student safety and well-being.
- 4.1.3 Staff providing eating and drinking support to students will use the Eating and Drinking Plan to inform the level and type of support they provide to students.
- 4.1.4 The Eating and Drinking Plan can take the following forms:

Plan A

Where there is need for supervision or guidance but where there is no physical impediment to safe eating and drinking, need to modify food or drink, or requirement to provide adjustments to the mealtime environment, the Eating and Drinking Plan will consist of a written agreement between the school and the student's parents signed by both school principal and parents. This plan will document the type and level of supervision required, environmental considerations, amount of food and drink to be offered, communication support required during mealtimes, the time required for eating and drinking, considerations such as allergies, and any potential learning targets.

Plan B

Where there is a need for supervision and assistance or where the student requires modification to their food or drink and/or adjustments to the mealtime environment e.g. the use of specialised equipment, the Eating and Drinking Plan must be provided by a health professional working within the community or hospital health services and signed by the student's parents. This plan can document recommendations such as food texture, fluid thickness, environment and preparation for meals, positioning, equipment, mealtime process and considerations such as allergies, communication, fatigue, independence or other student specific issues. The health professional may be requested to provide additional information, clarification or demonstration if necessary.

4.2 Review of the Eating and Drinking Plan

The Eating and Drinking Plan will clearly specify a review date. The review process will require the development of an updated Eating and Drinking Plan as detailed in section 4.1. Parents or school staff may initiate a review of the Eating and Drinking Plan at any time prior to this date.

A school should request a review of the plan if there is:

- a change in the student's ability to chew or swallow food or drink
- a concern about gagging, coughing, near choking, or distress in the student during or soon after meals, or
- unexplained weight change.

5. POLICY OWNER

Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Student Support.

6. RELATED POLICIES

First Aid

Students with a Disability – Meeting their Educational Needs

Administration of Prescribed Medication, Catheters and Injections to Students

(PLAN A) Eating and Drinking Support Supervision and Guidance only

This form must be used for students who require supervision and/or guidance with eating or drinking but for whom there is no physical impediment to safe eating and drinking, no requirement to modify food or drink and no need to provide adjustments to the mealtime environment.

For Use in ACT Schools

CONFIDENTIAL

Name of student: Date of birth:

Date: Review Date:

| Routine mealtime care needs | Recommended support |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Please tick appropriate boxes | Please describe recommended care |
| Level of support required for student | |
| <p>Level of supervision</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> requires close supervision – (small group)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> requires some assistance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> independent</p> <p>Time required for mealtime</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> less than 15 minutes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> about 15 minutes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> longer (specify)</p> | |
| Type of support needed | |
| <p>Adjustments to the mealtime environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> calm, consistent approach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> positive reinforcement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> minimal distractions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> social settings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)</p> | |

Communication

Communication to be used by staff member

- offer choice (indicate how many)
- simplify instructions / use key words
- use visual cues
- other (specify)

Communication used by student

- spoken language
- gesture
- behaviour
- other (specify)

Preparation and presentation of food and drink

Food portions to be offered

- no restriction on amount taken at a time
- modified (specify)

Drink portions

- no restriction on amount taken at a time
- modified (specify)

Quantity

- self directed
- minimum amounts required (specify)

Rate and order of intake

- self directed
- direction / assistance required (specify)

Allergies or Intolerances

- no restriction on foods to be offered
- some restriction on foods to be offered (specify)
- Only food provided by the parents to be offered

Potential learning targets

Independence

increasing independence

Behaviour targets

(specify)

Food or drink Intake

(specify)

Other

(specify)

Emergency Management Plan

Provide details or attach plan

Authorisation

The Education and Training Directorate (the Directorate) is collecting the information on this form to enable the Directorate to provide a safe environment in which students can eat and drink whilst in the care of a public school. The Directorate does not usually disclose this information to third parties.

I have read, understood and agreed with this plan.

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

Principal..... Signature Date.....

(PLAN B) Eating and Drinking Support Supervision and Assistance

This form (or an alternate form provided by a health care professional) must be used where a student requires direct assistance with eating or drinking, modification to their food or drink and/or adjustments to the mealtime environment e.g. the use of specialised equipment.

This plan must be completed by a health care professional and signed by the parent.

For use in ACT schools

CONFIDENTIAL

Name of student: Date of birth:

Date: Review Date:

| Routine mealtime care needs | Recommended support |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Please tick appropriate boxes | Please describe recommended care |
| Level of support required for student | |
| <p>Information about how closely the student needs to be supervised and for how long.</p> <p>Level of supervision</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> requires constant supervision e.g. risk of choking or aspiration</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> requires close supervision – (small group)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> requires some supervision</p> <p>Level of Assistance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> requires full assistance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> requires some assistance (specify)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> independent</p> <p>Time required for mealtime</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> less than 15 minutes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> about 15 minutes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> longer (specify)</p> | |

Type of support needed

Preparation

- additional hygiene / safety measures
- positioning for comfort and safety
- facilitation techniques (e.g. jaw support)
- stimulation (e.g. facial tapping/stroking)
- other (specify)

Equipment

- modified utensils (eg. spoon)
- modified cup / plate etc
- mirror
- positioning equipment
- other (specify)

Adjustments to the mealtime environment

- calm, consistent approach
- positive reinforcement
- minimal distractions
- social settings
- other (specify)

Positioning and care after mealtimes

- need to remain upright for minutes
- need to check no food is left in the mouth
- teeth brushing
- other (specify)

Communication

Communication used by staff member

- offer choice (indicate how many)
- simplify instructions / use key words
- use visual cues
- other (specify)

Communication used by student

- spoken language
- gesture
- behaviour
- other (specify)

Preparation and presentation of food and drink

The following information is provided as a safety check for staff. Food and drink should routinely be brought to school already prepared. If some preparation is requested of staff, this should be documented and negotiated with staff.

Food consistency

- no restriction or consistency
- modified (specify)

Drink consistency

- no restriction or consistency
- modified (specify)

Food portions

- no restriction on amount taken at a time
- modified (specify)

Drink portions

- no restriction on amount taken at a time
- modified (specify)

Quantity

- self directed
- minimum amounts required (specify)

Rate and order of intake

- self directed
- direction / assistance required (specify)

Specific strategies required

- spoon fed
- finger fed
- drinking
- general (including behaviour management)
- other (specify)

Allergies or Intolerances

- no restriction on foods to be offered
- some restriction on foods to be offered (specify)
- Only food provided by the parents to be offered

Potential learning targets

Independence

increasing independence

Behaviour targets

(specify)

Intake

(specify)

Other

(specify)

Emergency Management Plan

Provide details or attach plan

Health Professional Professional Role

Name / address of agency
.....

..... Phone

Signature Date

The Education and Training Directorate (the Directorate) is collecting the information on this form to enable the Directorate to provide a safe environment in which students can eat and drink whilst in the care of a public school. The Directorate does not usually disclose this information to third parties.

I have read, understood and agreed with this plan.

Parent / Guardian Signature Date

Principal Signature Date.....