

CATERING AND ALLERGY MANAGEMENT

The Outdoor Education Group has a dedicated Catering Department who provides healthy meals for active students from fresh, locally sourced produce. All our menus are carefully tailored to the program's location, duration, focus, anticipated weather conditions and students in terms of age, gender and specific dietary needs and preferences.

The health and safety of all participants is of paramount importance to The Outdoor Education Group. In line with our Inclusive Learning Policy, we support participation in positive outdoor experiences for all individuals. We are conscious of the challenges faced by those with allergies and pre-existing dietary conditions especially in new and sometimes challenging situations. To support in this, we collect and review medical information, ensure our staff are suitably qualified in first aid, and provide a variety of dietary menus.

Communication between all parties involved in program delivery is vital. We liaise with participants, parents/guardians and schools to identify control measures and strategies to effectively support participants in the field. Our staff are always available to discuss catering options for participants to allow parents/guardians to make informed decisions on the appropriateness of menus.

Mealtimes are a crucial component of an outdoor education program; our participants can develop useful life skills by cooking and sharing meals, in addition to gaining necessary nutrition to sustain them throughout programmed activities.

Throughout journey-based programs, staff provide a thorough safety briefing and demonstration regarding camp stove use and allergy management including cross-contamination, safe food preparation and cleaning procedures. Students are provided with a menu and cooking method/instructions to ensure the cooking process is both enjoyable and inclusive.

Throughout centre-based programs, participants are catered for by an experienced catering team who prepare high quality and nutritious meals. These meals are not your usual camp fare; they are sometimes supplemented by fresh produce grown onsite, in addition to an ethos of using seasonal produce and local products where possible.

Our Catering Department is experienced in catering for participants with a wide variety of food allergies and intolerances. To allow for adequate preparation and planning, please support us by ensuring any medical information is completed a minimum of twenty days prior to program commencement. If direct communication from the Catering Department is requested, this communication will typically occur the week prior to the program start date. If information is received outside of these timelines, we may not be able to accommodate requirements. Further information on dietary management can be obtained from the school via an Outdoor Education Group staff representative.

A TYPICAL DAY ON A PROGRAM MAY INCLUDE:

BREAKFAST: Cereals with milk, fruit loaf with spreads, tinned or dried fruits such as peaches and bananas.

LUNCH: Meat (e.g. tuna or salami), salad wraps and crackers. Fillings may include cheese, capsicum, cucumber, carrot, avocado, dips/mayonnaise and fresh fruit is also provided.

MORNING AND AFTERNOON TEA: Designed to provide a much-needed energy boost in between activities; it may include dried fruits and seeds, dried broad beans, pretzels, soy crisps, biscuits and fresh fruit.

DINNER: Dinners always contain a carbohydrate such as pasta, rice, noodles or potato with a protein such as meat or legumes and a range of fresh vegetables. These meals are designed for easy cooking in one or two pots. Where food may spoil, freeze-dried vegetables and meats may replace fresh items.

DESSERT: Varies from simple pre-prepared items such as lamingtons or hot chocolate and marshmallows.

NUT MANAGEMENT ON OEG PROGRAMS

- The Outdoor Education Group maintains a policy of no peanut, tree nut, or their derivative as listed ingredients (e.g. peanut oil or almond meal) in any food items provided, this includes dietary substitutes.
- The Outdoor Education Group catered food will not contain any peanut, tree nut, or their derivative as a listed ingredient.
- Products carrying variants of ‘may be present’ or ‘contains traces’ warnings are used in The Outdoor Education Group catering. These warnings indicate that whilst nuts or nut derivatives are not ingredients; traces may still be present. For example, the product has been processed on the same equipment that processes products containing nuts. These items are used in OEG catering.
- This policy applies during any program including but not limited to subcontractor catering, journey- based catering and catering in our hardtop centres.
- We request that any food items supplied from home comply with this policy. This includes snack foods and any food provided for self-catered programs.