

Position Description

Very Special Kids believes that all children and young people have the right to quality of life, no matter how long or short their life may be.

Position Title:	Cook
Location:	Malvern
Department	Hospice
Reporting To:	Hospice Manager
Main Purpose of Position:	Prepare, coordinate, and cook nutritious balanced meals that meet the individual dietary needs of the children and young people who access the service. This includes preparing family-style meals and specialised meals for children with complex medical and feeding requirements, such as texture-modified diets or PEG feeding. The Cook ensures all food is prepared safely, sensitively, and in alignment with each child's clinical and cultural needs.
Number of Direct Reports	0
Decision Making Authority	As per Very Special Kids' Delegation of Authority
Key Relationships	Internal: • Nurse Manager • Catering/volunteer assistants • Admissions Coordinator • Intake Coordinator • Hospice and Family Support Team External: • Very Special Kids children, young people, and families • Suppliers of perishable and non-perishable goods
Key Selection Criteria	Qualifications/ Education Training and Work Experience. • Minimum Tertiary qualifications in commercial cookery or equivalent required • Previous experience as a commercial cook in a health care, disability, aged care or similar setting involving specialist dietary preparation. Knowledge and Skills • Extensive Knowledge and certificates in safe food handling • First Aid Certificate (desirable) • Proven experience of creating and developing meal plans

	• Providing balanced nutritious meals within a budget • Sourcing and ordering fresh produce to provide balanced nutritious meals • Knowledge and understanding of all catering regulations such as allergens, food safety, fire regulations and health and safety • Understanding of the Dietary Guidelines for Australia and for children and young people Personal Attributes • Effective interpersonal and communication skills, both written and verbal, and a proven track record in engaging with consumers. • Ability to work well under pressure and be flexible to changing priorities and environment. • Growth mindset with the ability to actively listen, process feedback, reflect, learn and help others learn • Demonstrated high levels of initiative and self-actualisation • Strong values connection with the Very Special Kids values and genuine empathetic regard for people • Principles • We offer compassionate, individualised care for families across their entire journey • We collaborate to deliver the best support for families • Our approach is forward thinking, positive and authentic • We are purpose driven and act with integrity, respect and kindness
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Key Areas of Responsibility

Collaboration

Key Performance Indicators

• Work collaboratively with the hospice leadership team, children and young people and their families to prepare individualised meal plans.	• Collaborate closely with nursing and admissions/intake team to understand each child's nutritional and texture requirements (e.g. pureed diets, PEG feeding). • Children and young people are provided with a creative and nutritious meal plan that meets their dietary needs
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Menu planning

Key Performance Indicators

• Review and develop menus daily that include family meals and adhere to paediatric dietary guidelines and in accordance to activity in the house and modify accordingly	• Adapt and be able to make relevant changes to meal plans within time constraints • Maintain a record of meal plans and feeding protocols for each child
• Ensure meals are prepared to meet different cultural and religious requirements as necessary	• Provide meals that meet the cultural needs of the children and young people

Kitchen Operations

Key Performance Indicators

Prepare weekly orders for perishable and non-perishable foods in line with nurse manager's authorisation	- Very Special Kids House is fully stocked to cater for children and young people's dietary needs at all times. - Prepare meals in accordance with allergy, texture and swallowing guidelines as prescribed.
Coordinate all meal preparation required when on duty and ensure children and young people's meals are catered for on days off	Cook and prepare snacks, lunch and dinner that are individual to the child/young person's meal plan
Provide catering support for small-scale events and gatherings hosted by Very Special Kids, ensuring meals/refreshments are provided	Small scale catering provided to events such as morning or afternoon teas
Assume responsibility for health and safety in the kitchen	- Act as the Food Safety Supervisor for Very Special Kids - Ensure Very Special Kids is compliant with its Food Safety Program requirements and records are kept up to date for auditing and inspections. - Maintain a high standard of cleanliness and hygiene in the kitchen at all times. - Ensure safe storage, labelling, and segregation of food prepared. - Compliance with food safety requirements including allergen management, and infection control standards maintained
Provide leadership and guidance to volunteers when they are available ensuring they feel supported, valued and confident in their role.	Foster a positive and inclusive team environment enhancing the volunteer experience.

Other

The incumbent will be expected to undertake other adhoc appropriate duties as required for the effective operation of the Very Special Kids House in supporting our Very Special Children

Quality, Safety, and Improvement

Very Special Kids employees have a responsibility and accountability to contribute to the organisation's commitment to Quality, Safety, and Improvement by:
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- Acting in accordance and complying with all relevant Safety and Quality policies and procedures
- Identifying risks, reporting, and being actively involved in risk mitigation strategies
- Participating in and actively contributing to quality improvement programs
- Complying with the requirements of the National Safety & Quality Health Service Standards
- Complying with all relevant clinical and/or competency standards
- Complying with the principles of Patient and Family Centred Care that relate to this position
- Complying with the principles of Child Safe Standards that relate to this position

Conditions of Service	
Hours	Permanent Part Time Alternate Weekend Day Work Required Position may require occasional out of hours work.
Other	Victorian Driver's License
Salary Package	Salary packaging available as Not for profit organisation
Tenure	Permanent position after completion of six months probationary period.
General	Employment with Very Special Kids is subject to a satisfactory Police Check, a Working with Children Check and evidence of up-to-date COVID vaccination.

Privacy Statement: Personal Information may be collected and stored for the purpose of recruitment and selection. The information will only be used and disclosed for the primary purpose of its collection. Some exceptions exist. These may be obtained from the Privacy Officer.

Approvals:	
Created by:	Hospice Manager
Approved by:	General Manager People & Culture
Date of Last update:	October 2025