



Food Safety

Children's Services Policy No 2.16

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Replaces issue/policy: Food Safety Program

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Aim:

- To ensure that the food prepared in our services are handled, served and stored in a safe hygienic manner to prevent food contamination, risk of allergies and to maintain freshness.

Background Information:

Children are more susceptible to food related illnesses. It is vital for services to implement food safety practices that meet the Food Standard Code. This policy covers areas of purchasing, preparing, cooking, serving, storing and disposing of food and also includes serving children with known allergies.

Relevant Legislation:

- [Education and Care National Regulations Amendment Regulations 2020](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations](#)
- [Food Regulation 2015](#)
- [Food Standards Australia and New Zealand – Food Safety Standards \(Australia only\)](#)
- [Children \(Education and Care Services National Law Application\) Act 2010](#)
- [NSW Food Authority – Food Act 2003](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011](#)
- [Children \(Education and Care Services National Law Application\) Act 2010](#)

Resources:

- [Food Standards Australia New Zealand \(FSANZ\) Food Standards Code](#)
- [NSW Health, Healthy Eating Active Living - Caring for Children, Birth to 5 years \(Food, Nutrition and Learning Experiences\)](#)
- [Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority - National Quality Standard](#)
 - **Quality Area 2:**
 - Standard 2.1 - Elements 2.1.3 & 2.1.4; and
 - Standard 2.2 - Element 2.2.1.

Note: In this policy "staff" and "educators" refers to staff employed within Children's Services by Willoughby City Council.

Practices:

Staff will follow the guidelines below when purchasing, preparing, cooking, serving, storing and disposing of food.

Potential hazards that may arise during food preparation, cooking, serving, reheating and storage process may be due to:

- Contamination of foods from poorly maintained or unclean delivery vehicles.
- Foods that have passed their use by date and/or best before date.

- Foods delivered/stored/served at the incorrect temperature.
- Cross contamination during delivery/storage/thawing/preparation from raw foods to ready to eat foods.
- Damaged packaging.
- Contamination from storage containers.
- Foods thawed/cooked at incorrect temperatures.
- Cross contamination by staff, equipment, cleaning agents or pests during:
 - Preparation;
 - Cooking;
 - Reheating;
 - Storing; and
 - Cooling.
- The presence, growth and survival of biological contamination in foods during preparation/inadequate cooking process/incorrect cooling procedures.
- Cross contamination of food for children with allergies.
- Children with allergies being exposed to their allergy food (being served or through poor supervision).

Guidelines:

ORDERING /PURCHASING/DELIVERY

When **ordering/purchasing** food for the service **staff must ensure** that:

- The products are ordered/purchased from reliable suppliers – that is, only those suppliers who have appropriate food safety plans in place. A copy of this safety plan must be obtained.

With regard to the **delivery** of food to the service, staff:

- Only receive deliveries during operating business hours, or, if this is not possible, make arrangements for a staff member to be present to receive deliveries or arrive soon after.
- Check the Use-by and/or Best Before dates to ensure there is sufficient time to allow our service to use the product.
- Ensure, where appropriate, food products are labelled with the:
 - product name;
 - declared ingredients;
 - weight;
 - date or batch marking; and
 - business name and address of vendor, packer, manufacturer or importer.
- Reject the delivery if they suspect that the food may be contaminated, if labelling is not correct, if it is delivered at the incorrect temperature, past the use-by date etc.
- Check packaging for any damage and reject swollen or dented cans/tins, torn packaging etc. and return any damaged goods to the supplier.
- Ensure frozen foods are delivered at the identified storage temperatures on packaging, and reject any products that are delivered partially thawed.
- Ensure chilled foods are delivered at **5°C** or below and reject any products that are delivered above this temperature.
- Discontinue using a supplier if foods are of poor quality or out of date.
- Complete the appropriate temperature record check form on delivery.
- Place all delivered foods in the correct storage area as soon as possible and dispose of any empty packaging promptly to prevent pests.
- When all delivered food has been correctly stored, clean and sanitise the surfaces where the items had been placed initially (that is, on delivery), to remove any remaining food particles.

STORAGE

Control measures

When **storing regular/dry foods** at the service, the **staff must ensure** that:

- The food storage area is well maintained – that is, clean, dry, well ventilated, in good repair and pest proof
- All food is protected during storage, or placed into non-toxic food grade containers with properly fitting lids. Open packaged foods are stored in clean, dry storage containers with airtight lids.
- All food and storage containers are stored off the floor/ground (at least 15cm), to assist pest control and cleaning.
- Food is stored away from direct sunlight and moisture.
- Food storage areas are labelled to ensure foods are stored in the correct area.
- All stored food is labelled with manufacturers specifications and dated for easy identification and stock/control.
- Over stocking is avoided.
- Stock is rotated, using the 'first in – first out' principle so that food is within its Use-by date/Best Before time period.
- All food is stored so that cross contamination is avoided – for example:
 - cooked food is stored above raw food;
 - raw meat is stored on the lowest shelf or in a purpose built meat storage container or the designated refrigerator meat storage drawer (where one is provided) to prevent blood/meat juices dripping on to, and contaminating, other food;
 - chemicals are stored away from food, in a designated area for chemicals and cleaning equipment; and
 - utensils are not stored in food, for example, ladles in soup, servers in salad.

When **storing frozen foods** at the service, the **staff must ensure** that:

- Frozen food remains completely frozen during storage – the temperature of the freezer is checked daily with temperature of the freezer recorded on the appropriate temperature record check form.
- Where applicable, food is wrapped well and labelled (including the date of purchase or the preparation date).
- Freezers are not overloaded and that there is sufficient space between items to allow for sufficient airflow within the freezer.
- The freezer is cleaned and defrosted regularly (*ice should not be any thicker than ½ cm*).

THAWING

Control measures

When **thawing food** at the service, the **staff must ensure** that:

- Wherever possible, food is thawed in the refrigerator, and when:
 - raw food (for example, meat, poultry) is thawing, it is placed **below** cooked and ready to eat foods in the refrigerator; and
 - ready to eat food (for example, bread) is thawing; it is placed **above** raw foods in the refrigerator.
- Food is **not** to be thawed in water, at room temperature or in the sun, as the temperature cannot be monitored.
- All thawing food is kept protected, wrapped or in a labelled, non-toxic, food grade container.
- Only the quantity required for a particular meal is thawed, (food is frozen in suitable/required amounts).

- Food is completely thawed before cooking (unless the manufacturer's instructions specify that the product can be cooked from the frozen state).
- Food which is not fully thawed is returned to the refrigerator and allowed further time to thaw.
- High risk food (for example, meat, fish, poultry, dairy) that is not used or served within **48 hours** of thawing is discarded.
- Thawed raw meat is never re-frozen unless it has been cooked first

When **thawing in the microwave oven** at the service, the **staff must ensure** that:

- Food thawed in the microwave is cooked/used/served immediately.
- All packaging or wrapping, that is not microwave safe, is removed and manufacturers/suppliers instructions (if available) are followed.
- Food is placed into a microwave proof dish or container before being placed in the microwave.
- Food is completely thawed before cooking or other use.
- Thawed food is not re-frozen.

FOOD PREPARATION

Control measures

When **preparing food** at the service, the staff must ensure that:

- Food is prepared as quickly as possible.
- Potentially hazardous food is not kept between the **5°C** and **60°C** temperature range for more than **2 hours**.
- Food is returned to refrigeration during excessive delays.
- Fruit and vegetables are washed under running water before cooking or serving. Root vegetables are also scrubbed.
- Raw foods, ready to eat foods and cooked foods are kept separately to prevent cross contamination.
- Washed and unwashed foods are separated.
- Separate utensils and other preparation equipment are used (for example, chopping boards, knives, tongs (*colour coded chopping boards are used to identify their purpose*)) when preparing raw and cooked foods to prevent cross contamination.
- All utensils (cutting knives etc.), food contact surfaces and cutting boards are thoroughly cleaned and sanitised before use, and when changing tasks.
- Food prepared in advance, that is not intended to be used immediately, is clearly labelled with a preparation date before placing in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Whenever handling food not intended to be cooked or treated, utensils (for example, tongs) or disposable gloves are used.
- Whenever using gloves, they are used for single tasks and/or changed between tasks for example, between handling raw and cooked food or between handling food or cleaning cloths.
- Hands are washed between changing gloves and between tasks.
- Gloves are replaced immediately if they become torn or contaminated for any reason
- Cleaning cloths are colour coded, cleaned and sanitised.
- If direct hand contact is necessary, hands are washed and dried before handling the food.
- Hands are washed in the dedicated hand washing area/basin – not the food preparation sinks.
- Hands are washed after direct contact with food (including egg shells).
- All utensils, equipment, especially food contact surfaces are kept in good repair and easy to clean.
- An appropriate personal hygiene program is followed.
- Work surfaces are cleaned and sanitised after use.

- All spills are cleaned up as they occur.

COOKING

Control measures

When **cooking food** at the service, the **staff must ensure** that:

- Raw, potentially hazardous foods are cooked to a core temperature of **60°C** or hotter, or an alternative time/temperature relationship is used that will not affect microbial safety of the food. (*Note: temperature should be measured at the centre or thickest point or core of cooked, potentially hazardous foods – if the core temperature is not achieved food poisoning bacteria will not have been killed*).
- Poultry juices are checked to ensure they are clear (red meat juices may be pink).
- Food is stirred or turned during the cooking process to allow thorough heating.
- Cooked foods are recorded on the appropriate temperature record check form before serving.

COOLING & POST COOKING HANDLING

Control measures

When **cooling food** at the service, the **staff must ensure** that:

- Food is placed into shallow containers (approximately 5 cm deep) to hasten the cooling process.
- Foods are cooled to **5°C** or less in **6 hours**. That is:
 - foods are cooled from **60°C** to **21°C** within **2 hours**;
 - foods are cooled from **21°C** to **5°C** within the next **4 hours**; or
 - food is discarded if not cooled to **5°C** within **6 hours**.
- Hot foods are not cooled on a bench for longer than **20-30 minutes**.
- Foods are protected when cooling, and placed in a low traffic/preparation area, to avoid physical contamination.
- Non-toxic food grade packaging or storage containers are used for cooling foods, and the containers are always labelled with the ingredients, time and date.
- Food containers are not stacked on top of each other when food is cooling. They are arranged to allow for good air circulation.
- The refrigerator is not overloaded, and the temperature is checked regularly.

Wherever possible, appropriate quantities of food are prepared to avoid having 'left overs', however when **storing cooked food** at the service, the **staff must ensure** that:

- Already served, leftover food (that is, food that has already been offered to the children and returned to the kitchen) is *not* saved/stored.
- Left-over food *not used or served* within **24 hours** (including extra portions made for future use), is disposed of appropriately.
- When extra portions are prepared and frozen for future use, they are stored in appropriately sized containers, labelled correctly (that is, with the preparation date, the food/dish name etc.) and refrigerated promptly.

REHEATING

Control measures

When **reheating food** at the service, the **staff must ensure** that:

- Where applicable, the manufacturer's instructions on cooked, packaged foods are always followed.
- Food is reheated to serving temperature if it is to be consumed immediately. If the food is to be held hot, the core temperature of the reheated, potentially hazardous food is regularly checked to ensure it is **60°C** or more with the temperature recorded

on the appropriate temperature record check form. (Food needs to be reheated to **60°C** to ensure that contaminants are destroyed).

- Food is never reheated for a second time – leftovers are discarded.
- Food is discarded within **2 hours** if it is not reheated to **60°C**.
- Food is stirred or turned during reheating (using a clean spoon on each occasion) to ensure thorough heating throughout.
- Clean and sanitised cooking equipment and utensils are used for reheating.

SERVING

Control measures

When **serving food** at the service, the **staff must ensure** that:

- High risk foods are not kept out of the refrigerator for longer than **2 hours** in total (that is, including preparation, serving and eating times) and a temperature record form is filled in before serving foods.
- The serving of food is scheduled so that prepared foods are not left in the *temperature danger zone* for more than **2 hours**.
- Plated salads and sandwiches are stored covered in the refrigerator until required for serving.
- Good personal hygiene, including regular hand washing, is practiced.
- Disposable gloves, tongs, spoons and other utensils are used correctly to minimise the direct handling of food.
- All food contact surfaces such as cutting boards and bench tops, are cleaned and sanitised before and after use.
- All serving utensils such as tongs and scoops are cleaned and sanitised before use, and after each use.
- Hands do not directly touch food surfaces, plates, insides of glasses, cups, etc.

Food Serving - Children with Allergies and Anaphylaxis

1. Prior to serving any food staff will check dietary restriction charts (located in each playroom, kitchen, office and on trolley) to identify children's allergies and dietary requirements.
2. Staff will then check the food to ensure the appropriate meals have arrived for each child - including dessert - and if not call through to the kitchen and ask for the appropriate meals to be provided.
3. Staff – where possible – should encourage children with similar allergies to sit with each other, however, not isolated.
4. Staff will serve children with allergy meals first and these meals will be crossed checked by a second staff member before serving to the child.
5. Staff will supervise meal times **AT ALL TIMES** and – where possible – will ensure they sit with or close to children with allergies, to minimize the risk of cross contamination of food.
6. Staff will ensure they change their gloves whenever they are handling allergy meals or assisting children with allergies.
7. Once children with allergies have finished the first part of their meal, staff will prepare their dessert and cross check with another staff member, before handing the dessert to the child.

NOTE:

- Casual staff **must not** under any circumstance serve children food in Long Day Care.
- In OOSH Services casual staff who regularly work at the service are permitted to serve food at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor/ 'Responsible Persons'. In that instance the Nominated Supervisor/ 'Responsible Person' is to ensure the

casual(s) serving food have been made aware of their obligations and responsibilities when serving food.

In the event a child with an allergy displays symptoms of ingesting a known or unknown allergen staff will:

1. Stay calm.
2. Follow the child's Emergency Action Plan.
3. Immediately notify the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person on premises – who will then follow the *When Medical Attention Is Required Procedure* displayed at the centre.

HEALTH & HYGIENE OF FOOD HANDLERS

Health

- All food handlers at each service are responsible for ensuring food is handled as safely as possible.
- Food handlers suffering from a food borne and/or potentially contagious illness (for example, *diarrhoea, vomiting, sore throat, fever or jaundice*) must **not** handle food and should report their symptoms to the director. A food handler, who has been excluded from handling food, must not return to handling food until they have received clearance from a doctor.
- Conditions such as infected *skin sores, boils, acne and cuts and abrasions* are to be treated, and any open sores to be covered with waterproof, coloured (preferably blue) Band-Aids.
- Cuts and areas of broken skin should be washed and dried immediately.
- Cuts or sores are to be covered with a waterproof, bright Band-Aid (preferably blue).
- When handling food, the Band-Aid area is to be covered with a waterproof, disposable glove and the area kept clean and dry as far as possible. If the area cannot be covered with a glove, the staff member should **not** handle food.
- Food, which has blood on it, should be disposed of immediately.
- Equipment that has blood on it should be cleaned and sanitised promptly

Clothing -

- Aprons are not to be worn to work, particularly if travelling on public transport.
- Aprons are to be washed when necessary and at least daily.
- Aprons are to be changed as soon as they become soiled.
- Aprons are to be removed before leaving the food preparation area.
- Aprons are to be removed before going to the toilet.
- Strong (supportive), comfortable, flat shoes that cover your foot, and that will not slip on the floor, are to be worn when working in the kitchen area.
- Dressing/undressing/changing clothes should not be undertaken in the food preparation area.
- Cooking staff are not to travel to work in their protective clothing (apron) or work uniform. A full length apron is to be worn if the cook is not changing into a cook's uniform.

Hygiene

When *preparing and serving food* that does not require cooking (for example, sandwiches, salads etc.) food handlers are required to protect the food from contaminants by using gloves, tongs, a spoon, fork or other suitable utensil.

When **wearing gloves**, food handlers are required to:

- Wash their hands before and after wearing gloves, and when changing gloves.
- Change their gloves regularly (for example, when changing preparation/cooking activities, when one would normally wash hands etc.) to prevent the build-up of perspiration and bacteria.
- Change their gloves if they inadvertently touch their hair, face or cough or sneeze.

Note:

1. *Gloves should not be worn when working with hot equipment (for example, a toaster).*
2. *Non-latex gloves are preferable to latex gloves.*

Food handlers **should**:

- Bath or shower daily;
- Keep fingernails trim, clean and free from nail polish;
- Tie back long hair and cover hair with suitable covering;
- Use disposable tissues to blow their noses in preference to handkerchiefs. Tissues should be placed in an appropriate rubbish bin immediately after use, and once again, wash your hands, change your gloves etc.;
- Keep the wearing of jewellery to a minimum, for example, a wedding band (plain);
- Wear suitable, protective, clean clothing while preparing and handling food; and
- Inform visitors of personal hygiene rules, and ensure the rules are observed at all times, whilst they are in a food preparation area.

Food handlers **should not**:

- Touch their nose, mouth, hair and skin during food preparation;
- Place their fingers in their mouth to, for example, bite their nails or lick their fingers in the kitchen;
- Smoke in food preparation areas;
- Cough or sneeze near food;
- Allow staff to sit on dining tables or food preparation areas;
- Wear stone jewellery or wrist watches in food preparation areas; or
- Eat or drink in the food preparation areas.

When **washing hands**, food handlers must observe the Hand Washing procedure. Hands must only be washed in the dedicated hand basin.

In addition to the **Children's Services Policy 2.8 - Hand Washing**, food handlers must wash their hands **after**:

- Handling raw food (including egg shells);
- Eating and/or drinking;
- Engaging in habits that may cause contamination such as licking fingers, biting nails, smoking, touching sores;
- Coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose using a handkerchief or disposable tissue;
- Disposing or handling waste;
- Handling anything else other than the food (for example, money, cleaning cloths, cleaning equipment, picking an item up from the floor); and
- Handling any food that may potentially contaminate other food products.

CLEANING

- All food preparation areas are to be kept clean and sanitary at all times. Our cleaning schedule is documented on the appropriate cleaning forms.
- All spillages are cleaned up immediately.
- All equipment and utensils are cleaned after use ('clean-as-you-go').
- Food scraps are scraped or rinsed off before the cleaning process is commenced.
- Washing water temperature is at least **45°C**, to remove grease and dirt.

- Rinsing water is above **77°C**, and applied for at least **30 seconds**, to clean items.
- Only clean dish cloths are used and, if reusable, are washed after each use.
- Air-drying is the preferred method for drying equipment. If a tea towel is used, it should come straight from the storage cupboard/drawer **not** from a towel rack, and be used once only. Paper towels are a good choice as they can be used once only.

When **cleaning utensils and equipment**, staff should:

- Remove unwanted food or scraps from utensils and equipment.
- Wash all utensils and equipment in hot water and detergent.
- Use a scrubbing brush (or other cleaning tool) as necessary.
- Rinse off any excessive detergent on the utensils or equipment.
- Clean utensils or equipment in hot water (above **77 °C**).
- Wherever possible, air-dry all utensils and equipment. When manually drying utensils and equipment, use either a paper towel or a clean, dry tea towel.
- Change cleaning water at regular intervals, particularly when it is cold or dirty.

When **cleaning the thermometer**, staff should:

- Wipe away any visible contamination.
- Wash the probe with warm water and detergent.
- Sanitise the probe in hot water or use alcohol swabs.
- Dry the probe with a single use paper towel or air dry.

When **using and storing chemicals** in the food preparation area, staff will refer to the **Children's Services Policy 2.10 - Chemicals** as well as:

- Store chemicals in a designated area, separate from food preparation and storage areas.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions with regards to storage, use and dilution.
- Retain the original packaging/containers wherever possible. However, if the chemical is to be decanted, the container, it must be clearly labelled and free from damage or leaking.
- Decant into non-toxic chemical grade containers with properly fitting lids/seals. Chemicals must not be stored in food or drink containers.
- Decanting and/or diluting must be undertaken away from the food preparation area.
- Chemicals that are unlabelled, or past their Use-by/Best Before date, must be discarded.

WASTE DISPOSAL

When **disposing of waste** in the food preparation area, **staff are to ensure** that:

- Waste disposal bins are placed conveniently around the food preparation area.
- Waste and rubbish bins are clearly identifiable from storage containers.
- Waste disposal bins have tightly fitted lids.
- Plastic liners are used in waste disposal bins.
- Waste disposal bins are regularly emptied to avoid overfilling or spillages.
- Bag liners are tied off before removal.
- Waste disposal bins are cleaned and sanitised daily, and allowed to drain overnight rubbish/waste is **not** left in the food preparation area overnight.