

Cottesbrooke Infant & Nursery School

Food Classroom Safety Policy

AIMS

1. to maintain or improve the health of the whole school community through education –increasing knowledge and understanding of how to ensure that food is prepared and stored healthily and safely.
2. to ensure that the food provision in school reflects the medical needs of pupils e.g. catering for the needs of those with food allergies

INTRODUCTION

This policy provides practical guidance and advice on food hygiene and safety for teachers, support staff and parents, who may be handling food as part of a lesson, or assisting with extra curricular activities.

GETTING STARTED

There are 3 main areas to remember for good food hygiene. You should think about them whenever you are handling food in the classroom:

1. Preparation
2. Cleaning
3. Storage

You must ensure premises used for the storage and preparation of food must be kept clean and maintained in good repair and condition. Food should not be prepared if there is any evidence of vermin or insect infestations.

Personal Hygiene

- You should not be handling food if you are suffering from any form of tummy upset, nose, throat or skin infection. If you have had Diarrhoea or vomiting you should not handle food for 48 hours after symptoms have ceased.
- Cover any cuts and grazes with a waterproof dressing.
- Tie back long hair and remove any watches and ornate hand jewellery.
- Do not cough or sneeze over food.
- Your hands can easily spread bacteria onto food and food preparation surfaces. It is important to always wash your hands thoroughly with soap ('Antibacterial' soap is even more effective) and warm water and then dry them at each of the following times:
 - Before starting to prepare food
 - Between handling raw and cooked foods
 - After going to the toilet
 - After blowing your nose
 - After emptying bins
 - After touching pets

- After handling any dirty cloths or cleaning materials
- After looking after a sick pupil or changing dressings
- Never cough or sneeze over food

Purchasing and Cultivating Foods

- Always buy food from a reputable supplier or shop. Check 'use by' and 'best before' dates and ensure that any foods that are required to be kept cold are placed in a refrigerator as soon as possible.
- Foods such as fruit or vegetables which will be eaten without any cooking or peeling should be washed first in cold running water.
- Vegetables or fruit grown in school grounds should be free of harmful /toxic substances. If these are grown in school grounds a 'risk assessment' should be carried out to determine if there has been any previous activity on the land that may cause contamination. A soil test may need to be carried out if contamination is suspected.

Cleaning

Keeping food storage and preparation areas clean is essential to keep food safe, otherwise bacteria can grow and spread

Preparation surfaces/equipment

- Always ensure that all work surfaces or chopping boards are thoroughly cleaned and then disinfected before use with the cleaning fluid supplied by the school.
- If a sink is used for food preparation, i.e. washing of fruit or vegetables, then you should ensure that it has been thoroughly cleaned before use, especially if it has been used for cleaning dirty items of equipment. Only use mains fed water.
- Alternatively use a separate food-use only washing up bowl.
- Wipe up spilt food straight away.

Knives, spoons and other utensils

Keep knives, wooden spoons, tongs etc clean and make sure they are washed thoroughly after use. Separate utensils should be used for raw and ready to eat foods.

Cloths

- A dirty cloth can spread bacteria around a classroom. It is therefore important to wash kitchen cloths regularly and leave them to dry before using them again. Ideally a washing machine could be used. (the washing cycle should be 80°C or over)
- Where possible try to keep different coloured cloths for different jobs, e.g., one cloth to wipe work surfaces and boards and another to wash dirty plates.
- Ideally disposable kitchen cloths should be used.
- Use different cleaning cloths for kitchen and toilet use areas
- Towels used to dry hands should be kept separate from tea towels and other cleaning cloths.

Storage

It is important to take care how you store food, to make sure it is safe to eat.

Keeping food in the fridge

- High risk foods i.e. ready to eat meat, fish, poultry and dairy products will need to be kept in the fridge to help prevent bacteria from growing on them. (Such foods will have a 'use by' date and the label will say 'keep refrigerated'). Always make sure they are within the 'use by date'.
- The fridge should be capable of keeping food at 5°C or below and must not be overloaded.
- Keep food covered and either refrigerated or piping hot. Any food or drink that requires heating will be heated immediately prior to serving and not left standing. No food or drink will be reheated
- Ready to eat foods should be stored on the top shelves and raw foods at the bottom. Whenever possible keep food covered. This will help prevent cross contamination.
- Once opened meats, cheeses and any other high risk foods should be date labelled, placed under refrigeration and used within 2 days.
- Any food or drink that requires heating will be heated immediately prior to serving and not left standing. No food or drink will be reheated.

General Storage

- Many foods don't need to be kept in a fridge to keep them safe, for example, dry foods such as biscuits and pasta or fresh produce such as fruit (unless the fruit has been cut or peeled). However it is important to take care how these foods are stored. Here are some useful tips:
 - Try to keep foods in sealed bags or containers. This helps to keep them fresh and stops anything falling into the food by accident.
 - Do not store food or drinks near cleaning products or other chemicals.
 - Do not store food in containers that have been used for other purposes.
 - Do not use old food containers to store household chemicals.
 - Do not store food on the floor, because this can allow contamination to occur and encourage pests.
 - Keep the storage area cool and dry and avoid storing food in direct sunlight.

Preparation

It is very important to prepare food safely, to help stop harmful bacteria from spreading and growing. It is important to identify foods that are *'high risk'* in terms of controlling food poisoning.

***High risk' foods are those foods that support growth of food poisoning organisms and intended to be eaten without further treatment. eg ready to eat meat, fish, poultry and dairy products.**

Separate surfaces/chopping boards and knives should be used for preparing raw foods and cooked or ready to eat foods. If this is not possible then surfaces and boards should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected both before and between uses. When preparing food, keep it out of the fridge for the shortest time possible. If you have made a dish and it's not going to be eaten straight away then keep it in the fridge until you're ready to eat it. (The longest period food should be left out of a fridge is 1 hour). It is always best to keep food covered to prevent contamination. Cracked or chipped china or utensils will not be used.

Cooking

Meats should be piping hot all the way through with no pink or red in the centre and juices should be clear. If practical a temperature probe can be used to measure the core temperature of Food. (All meats should be cooked to 75 °C) unpasteurised milk or egg should not be used in any ready to eat dishes. Raw eggs should bear the 'lion' quality mark and be thoroughly cooked before being eaten.

Service/Display

- High risk foods, including rice, should not be displayed for long periods at ambient temperatures as this will allow the growth of food poisoning organisms. The period of display outside of refrigeration should be no longer than 1½ hours.
- Ensure there are adequate hand washing facilities with soap and water nearby when handling open food.

Allergies

Most allergic reactions to food are mild, but sometimes they can be very serious. If someone has a food allergy they can react not only to eating just a tiny amount of the food they are sensitive to, but also from airborne particles or touching the food.

- Staff should know what to do if a child has a food allergy because sometimes they can be life threatening. There is no cure for food allergy or intolerance, so the only way to prevent a reaction is to be fully aware of foods that pupils may need to avoid.
- All pre-packed foods must give a list of ingredients. Always check the ingredients on a food product to see if it contains the food that any of your pupils need to avoid.
- If you know that a child has a severe allergic reaction to a product or ingredient then you should avoid using that product in the classroom.
- Some pupils may also have special pens for injecting themselves with.
- These and the child's full contact details etc are kept together on the top shelf of the designated cupboard which is labelled on the outside. Staff are updated annually on use of the pen and signs/symptoms of an allergic reaction and what to do in case of an emergency.

School Events

When you are making food for large numbers of people it's especially important to keep food safe.

- Only shop bought items in their original sealed packet will be brought in to the class. Fruit may be brought in without sealed packing but will be washed thoroughly.
- Make sure that rice, cheesecakes and any cakes or desserts containing cream are out of the fridge for the shortest time possible.
- Avoid handling cakes – use tongs or a cake slicer instead.
- In general, foods that need to be chilled (which include most of the foods people tend to serve on buffets, and most sandwich fillings) should be left out of the fridge for the shortest time possible.
- When you're eating outdoors you should also remember to keep food covered whenever possible. Protect food from insects, birds and pets, which can carry bacteria.

TOP TEN TIPS FOR KEEPING FOOD SAFE

- 1. Always buy food from a clean and reputable seller.**
- 2. As soon as you arrive at school place all fresh or frozen foods straight into the fridge or freezer.**
- 3. Check that the temperature of your fridge is below 5°C by using a fridge thermometer.**
- 4. All foods should be covered or stored in sealed containers.**
- 5. Never exceed 'use by' dates.**
- 6. Always wash your hands before handling food and wear suitable apron / covering.**
- 7. Always store raw foods and cooked/ready to eat foods separately.**
- 8. Use different chopping boards/work surfaces/utensils for raw and ready to eat food.**
- 9. Clean and where necessary disinfect worktops, knives and other utensils thoroughly before and after use. (Where possible use separate equipment & utensils for raw and ready to eat foods)**
- 10. Use disposable cloths or make sure cleaning cloths are regularly cleaned and disinfected.**