



Food Hygiene Policy October 2025

This Policy defines the precautions to be taken, and the arrangements in place, to ensure that food hygiene standards in nursery rooms conform to the highest standards when serving food to children.

Rules for serving and clearing up food:

1. Always wash your hands before handling food and after using the toilet.
2. Ensure that cuts and sores are covered with waterproof dressings.
3. Wear an apron when serving food, which should be cleaned over with anti-bac cleaning spray before and after use.
4. All surfaces coming into contact with food serving are to be cleaned over with anti-bac cleaning spray before and after use (with soapy hot water first for large spills/stains).
5. Wiping over is to be done with disposable j-cloths and blue roll and disposed of after use.
6. Keep food covered until ready to serve.
7. Keep hands off food as far as possible.
8. Never cough or sneeze over food.
9. Replace cutlery that has dropped on floor or unclean services – do not reuse.
10. Use separate serving equipment for foods that contain allergens to avoid cross contamination.
11. Keep allergens well away from children with allergies.
12. Staff must ensure that children do not access food that they are allergic too, staff must supervise children very closely and be close enough to physically intervene if a child makes a grab for food that they are not permitted to consume.
13. Staff responsible for supervising children with allergies must not allow themselves to get distracted from this task while there is a risk of a child accessing foods that they are allergic to.
14. Cooked food that has been at room temperature for over 90 minutes must be reheated to 75°C before serving to children to kill any bacteria that has developed in that time.
15. Ensure food waste is disposed of promptly after use and potential allergens are out of reach of children.
16. Clear up food waste properly and leave in an orderly state on trays so that it can be carried away and washed up in kitchen without creating additional hygiene risks. This means scraping all food waste off plates and bowls before piling so that they can be directly paced into the dishwasher or washing up bowl in the kitchen. Waste should be put in separate containers, ready for putting into the kitchen bin and not mixed with cutlery.

All staff handling food should complete a basic food hygiene course. Kitchen staff responsible for preparing food have undertaken the Food Allergy Online Training CPD module available at <http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>.

Kitchen staff refer to Eat Better, Start Better (Action for Children 2017) and Example menus for early years settings in England (PHE 2017) which contains guidance on menu planning, food safety, managing food allergies and reading food labels.

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that the requirements in Better Business for All, Hertfordshire Safer Food Pack, A Food Safety Management System for Businesses are complied with.

Purchasing and storing food

- Food is purchased from reputable suppliers.
- All opened dried food stuffs are stored in airtight containers.
- Dried packaged food is not decanted from packaging into large bins or containers as this prevents monitoring of sell by/use by dates and allergen information.
- Food is regularly checked for sell by/use by dates and any expired items are discarded.
- Bottles and jars are cleaned before returning to the cupboards.
- Items are not stored on the floor; floors are kept clear so they can be easily swept and mopped.
- Soft fruit and easily perishable vegetables are kept in the fridge at 1- 5 Celsius.
- Packaged food should be used by use by dates.
- Freezer containers should be labelled, dated and used within 1-3 months.
- Fridge and freezer thermometers should be in place. Recommended temperatures for fridge 5 degrees Celsius, and freezers -18 degrees Celsius. Temperatures must be checked and recorded daily to ensure correct temperatures are being maintained.
- Freezers are defrosted every 3 months or according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Meat/fish is stored on lower shelves and in drip-free dishes.
- Fruit and vegetables stored in the fridge are washed thoroughly before refrigeration to reduce risk of pests and E.coli contamination.
- Items in fridges must be regularly checked to ensure they are not past use by dates.

Preparation of food

- Food handlers must check the content of food/packets to ensure they do not contain allergens.
- Food handlers wash hands and cover any cuts or abrasions before handling food.
- Separate boards and knives are used for chopping food.
- Raw and cooked foods are prepared separately.
- All vegetables and fruit are washed before preparing.
- Food left out is covered, for example when cooling down.
- A food probe is to be used to check temperature of cooked foods.
- Where a microwave is used, food is cooked according to manufacturer's instructions. Generally, it is not used to heat children's food and never used to heat babies' bottles.
- Microwaved food is left to stand for a few minutes before serving.
- A food probe is used to check temperature of food, including where heated in a microwave; it is checked in a number of places to avoid 'hot spots'.
- Food is cooked in time for serving and is not prepared in advance of serving times.
- Hot cupboards or ovens are not used to keep food warm.
- Potatoes and vegetables are peeled when needed, not in advance and left in water.
- Food prepared and cooked for different religious dietary needs and preferences is cooked in separate pans and served separately.
- Food cooked for vegetarians does not come into contact with meat or fish or products.
- Food cooked and prepared for children with specific dietary needs is cooked in separate pans and served separately.
- Food prepared for children with dietary needs and preferences is clearly labelled and every effort is made to prevent cross-contamination.

Serving Food

- Food is served for children in separate covered containers.
- Children with allergies/food preferences are not made to feel 'singled out' by the methods used to manage their allergy/food preference.
- Food served to children with identified allergies is checked by key persons to ensure that the meal (and its ingredients) does not contain any of the allergens for that child.
- Tables are cleaned before and after, with soapy water or a suitable detergent..
- Members of staff serving food wash their hands and cover any cuts with a blue plaster.
- A first aid trained member of staff will always be present at mealtimes just in case of a choking incident.

Further guidance

Eat Better, Start Better (Action for Children 207) www.foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/

Example Menus for Early Years Settings in England (PHE 2017)
www.gov.uk/government/publications/example-menus-for-early-years-settings-in-england

Safe Food Better Business www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-sfbb

Allergen information for loose foods (Food Standards Agency 2017)
www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf

Campylobacter (Food Standards Agency) www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/campaigns/campylobacter/fsw-2014