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Food Safety Policy

Aims

This policy provides schools with a framework that ensures the preparation, storage, handling and consumption of foods within school premises meets legal requirements and that food is safe to eat.

Scope

This policy was written with reference to the Food Safety Act 1990, the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995, the Food Safety (Temperature Control) Regulations 1995.

While it is acknowledged that The School Food Standards 2014 require food and drinks provided to pupils to comply with certain nutritional standards, it is understood that food safety is distinct from nutritional standards and must be considered separately.

It is also recognised that for some individuals with food allergies, there is a risk of harm from the presence of food allergens.

Information About Food Safety

Food safety is an important aspect of the control of communicable diseases, and as such affects everyone in the school community.

Inadequate awareness of good hygiene practice in the preparation, handling and/or storage of food can lead to the spread of a number of diseases, predominantly the various types of food poisoning. Diseases such as salmonella, E coli, campylobacter and dysentery can be extremely unpleasant, producing symptoms ranging from headaches and stomach cramps through to fever, diarrhoea and vomiting. In some cases, infectious agents can remain in the body for several weeks after the symptoms have disappeared, posing a continuing risk of spreading the infection further unless scrupulous hygiene standards are maintained.

Food poisoning occurs when food contaminated with sufficiently high numbers of bacteria, viruses, other organisms or chemicals is consumed. Most food poisoning is caused by bacterial contamination. The bacteria can come from a variety of sources, including people, raw food and pests such as flies, rats, mice and cockroaches. Food poisoning bacteria can also be found in dirt and dust.

The main causes of food poisoning are:

- lack of hygiene in the storage, preparation or handling of food.
- poor personal hygiene/food handlers carrying infections.
- preparing food in advance and then keeping it at room temperature. If food is cooked on the premises, it should be cooled at room temperature for no more than 90 minutes and then chilled below 8°C.
- under-cooking or not reheating food to high enough temperatures.

- cross-contamination from raw food to cooked food.
- failure to keep hot food above 63°C, allowing the multiplication of any bacteria not destroyed in the cooking process.
- storing high-risk ready meals in fridges above 8°C.

Children are particularly vulnerable to food poisoning and therefore it is critical to ensure the food they eat is safe.

Roles and responsibilities

The school is responsible for ensuring that food safety is considered in relation to all activities and routines at the school site, and that appropriate personnel, training, guidance and resource is provided to ensure compliance with the requirements of The Food Safety Act 1990.

The following activities/routines have been considered and related considerations are shown in the sections below:

- Consumption of food and drink by pupils on the school site
- Hot and cold school meals prepared on site by a third-party catering provider
- Snacks and drinks served to pupils (during the school day and before & after school provision)
- Packed lunches and snacks brought to school by pupils
- Foods prepared by pupils as part of a lesson or for general consumption around the school (eg. tuck shops)
- School visits and field trips
- Storage and preparation of food by staff for their own consumption
- Foods at school events

Consumption of food and drink by pupils on the school site

The school must ensure:

- pupils are aware of the importance of washing their hands before eating and suitable provision is available for this purpose.
- designated areas for the consumption of food by pupil are provided and they are equipped with tables and chairs (children should not be seated on the floor to eat).
- cleaning protocols are in place to ensure that these areas and the equipment within are clean at the time of use for the consumption of food and they are cleaned, and food-waste removed immediately after use.
- pupils are appropriately supervised while eating.

Hot and cold school meals prepared on site by a third-party catering company

In this circumstance, it is the responsibility of the catering company and specifically the person carrying out the senior role in the kitchen to implement and operate an appropriate system for managing food safety that complies with relevant legislation. The school's role is to facilitate and support the effective operation of this system by ensuring:

- the contracted catering company provides a service in line with the agreed contract in place and that the person holding the senior role on site holds a qualification in food hygiene (minimum intermediate level) and understands their role in the operation of the food safety system.
- the provision of suitable premises that are well maintained.
- the provision of suitable equipment and support and resource for its maintenance.
- clarity about roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in the preparation and handling of food and the cleaning of food consumption areas and equipment (e.g. kitchen staff, midday supervisors and cleaning staff).

Snacks and drinks served to pupils (during the school day and before & after school provision)

The school must ensure:

- there are appropriate procedures in place for the receipt of food (eg. fruit) and drinks (eg. milk) to site which include:
 - assessment and recording of the temperature of chilled foods on receipt and action in the case of non-compliance.
 - assessment the cleanliness of food containers and transportation containers on receipt and action in the case of non-compliance.
- proper handling of food/drinks and containers from the point of receipt to the point of service so the food is protected from contamination and the temperature of the food is maintained where appropriate.
- equipment and containers used to store food/drinks (eg. fridges) are regularly cleaned and sanitized.
- the provision of suitable equipment (e.g crockery, cutlery, serving utensils) for the serving and consumption of food.
- the provision of suitable areas and equipment for washing and drying of crockery, cutlery and utensils and for their storage to protect them from contamination.
- staff involved in the receipt, handling, preparation and service of foods are appropriately trained in food hygiene and understand their role in food safety.
- clarity about roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in the preparation and handling of food and the cleaning of food consumption areas and equipment (e.g. school / club staff and cleaning staff)

Packed lunches and snacks brought to school by pupils

The preparation of packed lunches provided by parents for consumption by their own children is not covered by the Food Safety Act, however schools have a responsibility to ensure that arrangements in place for the storage and consumption of packed lunches do not pose a risk to food safety.

The school must ensure:

- parents are made aware that packed lunches will not be refrigerated and will be stored at room temperature prior to consumption, and for this reason, they should be allowed and encouraged to provide meals in insulated bags or boxes.
- Where storage is provided for packed lunches, this should ensure that meals are kept away from heat sources and direct sunlight, away from possible sources of contamination (e.g. inside, away

from open windows/doors and off the floor) and trolleys/shelving etc should be regularly cleaned.

Foods prepared on site by pupils as part of a lesson or for general consumption around the school e.g. tuck shops

The school must ensure:

- staff who oversee such activities should have the appropriate knowledge and training to provide effective supervision and management of the pupils and activities concerned to ensure food safety.
- pupils are made aware of the importance of hygienic practices when preparing food and are appropriately supervised.
- risk assessments (which include food safety) are carried out by an appropriately experienced and qualified member of staff prior to the activity, and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of the food produced.

School visits and field trips

The safety of food consumed on an educational visit should form part of the risk assessment carried out for all aspects of the trip. While food which is commercially prepared and sold, eg in restaurants, cafés, hotels, hostels, outdoor activity centres etc. could reasonably be assumed to comply with the law in terms of food safety, it would nevertheless be advisable to carry out a check (e.g. by checking Food Standards Agency Food Hygiene ratings at <https://ratings.food.gov.uk/> or equivalent if travelling abroad).

Where packed lunches are provided by parents for consumption on a trip, then the points mentioned for packed lunches eaten in school should be taken into consideration.

Storage and preparation of food by staff for their own consumption

The school should ensure:

- an appropriate designated area is provided for staff to consume their own food that is equipped with appropriate storage space/equipment to protect food from contamination.
- the area and equipment are regularly cleaned and sanitized.

Food at events (eg. school fairs)

The school has a duty of care to ensure that foods given away or sold at school fairs are safe to eat, whether or not they are prepared by the school. It is therefore important to carry out a full food safety risk assessment prior to any event and to implement actions to minimize the risks. This should be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced person.

Food Allergies

The school recognises that although most food intolerances produce symptoms that are uncomfortable, some pupils can suffer a severe food allergy with more serious consequences and in some instances, these may even be life threatening.

The school is committed to pupil safety and therefore to reduce the risk of children having allergy-related events while in its care. The school's position is not to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, rather to minimise the risk of exposure by hazard identification, encourage self-responsibility and plan for effective response to possible emergencies.

Definitions

Allergy: A condition in which the body has an exaggerated response to a substance (e.g. food or drug), also known as hypersensitivity.

Allergen: A normally harmless substance, that triggers an allergic reaction in the immune system of a susceptible person.

Anaphylaxis: Anaphylaxis, or anaphylactic shock, is a sudden, severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction to a trigger (food, stings, bites, or medicines).

Adrenaline device: A syringe style device containing the drug adrenaline. This is an individual prescribed drug for known sufferers which is ready for immediate intramuscular administration. This may also be referred to as an Epi-Pen/ Ana pen or Jext which are particular brand names.

Allergy Information

True food allergies are reproducible adverse reactions to a particular food that involve the immune system. Virtually all known food allergens are proteins. They can be present in the food in large amounts and often survive food-processing conditions. Allergic reactions are characterised by the rapid release of chemicals in the body that cause symptoms, which can occur within minutes or up to an hour or more after ingestion of the allergen. The proportion of the population with true food allergy is approximately 1-2% of adults and about 5-8% of children, which equates to about 1.5 million people in the UK.

The common causes of allergies are the 14 major food allergens:

- Cereals containing Gluten
- Celery including stalks, leaves, seeds and celeriac in salads
- Crustaceans, (prawns, crab, lobster, scampi, shrimp paste)
- Eggs - also food glazed with egg
- Fish - some salad dressings, relishes, fish sauce, some soy and Worcester sauces
- Soya (tofu, bean curd, soya flour)
- Milk - also food glazed with milk
- Nuts, (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio, cashew and macadamia (Queensland) nuts, nut oils, marzipan)
- Peanuts - sauces, cakes, desserts, ground nut oil, peanut flour
- Mustard - liquid mustard, mustard powder, mustard seeds
- Sesame Seeds - bread, bread sticks, tahini, houmous, sesame oil
- Sulphur dioxide/Sulphites (dried fruit, fruit juice drinks, wine, beer)
- Lupin, seeds and flour, in some bread and pastries
- Molluscs, (mussels, whelks, oyster sauce, land snails and squid).

The allergy to nuts is the most common high-risk allergy and, as such, demands more rigorous controls. However, it is important to ensure that all allergies and intolerances are treated equally as the effect to the individual can be both life-threatening and uncomfortable, if suffered.

Coeliac disease is not an allergy. Whilst it is classified as a food intolerance it is not like other intolerances in that it is an ‘auto-immune’ disease, which means that the body produces antibodies that attack its own tissues. In coeliac disease this attack is triggered by gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye and barley.

This intolerance to gluten causes an inflammatory response that damages the gut. Villi (tiny, finger-like projections that line the gut) become inflamed and then flattened (villous atrophy), leading to a decreased surface area for absorption of nutrients from food. People with undiagnosed coeliac disease can, as a result, have a wide range of digestive symptoms and can suffer from nutritional deficiencies. Other food intolerances may also require management and awareness.

Potential Threats

- Any food on the school premises provided by the school or from outside.
- Allergens in food brought into school via snacks/lunches from home.
- Food brought into school for food projects.
- Contact between persons who have handled related foodstuffs (in or outside school) and allergy sufferers, without appropriate handwashing.
- Catering on school/residential trips.
- Events where food is served on the premises but not prepared on the premises i.e. Cake Sales, school fairs or Friday Tuck Shop.
- Misinterpretations or lack of understanding of the differences between a life threatening ‘allergy’ or an ‘intolerance’ which may produce milder symptoms.
- Lists of ingredients not explicitly naming the allergen (e.g. casein and whey as milk derivate, arachis oil as another name for peanut oil...).

Procedures and Responsibilities

The school has clear procedures and responsibilities to be followed in meeting the needs of pupils with medical needs relating to food allergies or intolerances.

Parents and Carers’ responsibilities:

Parents and carers of pupils with an allergy or food intolerance must inform the school on admission and provide any medical documentation necessary as well as any appropriate medicines as prescribed by the pupil’s doctor. The medicines must be in date and replaced as necessary.

They must keep the school up to date with any changes in allergy management. Any change in a pupil’s medical condition during the year must be reported to the school immediately.

Pupils who suffer from severe allergies and have been prescribed an auto-adrenaline injector (AAI) require a Severe Allergy Plan. This needs to be completed by a healthcare professional and then shared with the school. Alternatively, the school will complete a full comprehensive risk assessment in conjunction with the parents/carer.

Where a pupil is attending a trip or educational visit parents/carers must discuss allergies/medical requirements with the Trip Leader at the time the trip is proposed.

Parents and carers will highlight any classes/topics or activities which in the parent's view may need to be avoided or flagged up as 'high risk' e.g food preparation.

Parents and carers sending food into school such as snacks and lunches will be requested that this will not contain **nuts**.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to educate their child and to increase independence in the awareness and management of their allergy.

Parents and carers should check the weekly menu and contact the school or the caterers should they have concerns regarding the menu or any other item for sale.

Pupils' Responsibilities

Learning to recognise personal symptoms.

Informing a member of staff immediately if they have any symptoms of an allergic reaction.

Taking responsibility for avoiding food allergens, including informing staff of his/her allergy at times of potential risk.

Being proactive in the care and management of their own allergies and reactions.

Keeping emergency medications where appropriate, in the first aider's office or in an agreed suitable location. This may include carrying the medication with them at all times.

Proper hand washing before and after eating and throughout the school day.

Avoiding sharing or trading of foods or eating utensils with others.

Avoiding eating anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.

School's responsibilities:

Medical information

When parents and carers inform the school about their child's allergy or food intolerance, this information will be recorded in the School Management System and kept on the pupil's personal record.

Medical information for pupils is private and confidential, however in order to ensure that medical needs can be properly managed, information is shared with school staff. The school Medicines Lead will ensure that all staff, including supply and agency staff, and volunteers working with their class know which pupils might require emergency auto-immune injectors (AAI) and where this can be found.

A register of pupils with severe allergies and their photos should also be displayed in the School Office and Staff Room along with their Severe Allergy Plan (under data protection criteria) and the procedures for recognising and managing anaphylaxis. (Please refer to Appendix 12 of the Administration of Medicines and supporting Pupils with Medical conditions policy).

All school staff involved in supporting pupils with severe allergies are appropriately trained in the correct use of the AAI and the procedures required to deal with an emergency situation.

There should be two emergency AAIs which are in date at all times and stored in line with school procedures. AAIs will not be administered to anyone unless they have been prescribed this medication and have written permission from their parents for its use (for anyone under the age of 16).

Curriculum activities

As part of the school curriculum, pupils may take part in activities that involve preparing food (e.g. DT lesson) or tasting food (e.g. tasting food from other countries). Staff members will take the needs of pupils with food allergies into account when planning these activities and will make modifications where possible to allow participation. When a third party is involved in delivering a food related workshop, the class teacher will be responsible for ensuring that the dietary needs of pupils are taken into consideration.

Parents and carers will be informed by the school when a class is embarking upon a food project. All staff should be aware of allergy triggers and are advised to seek advice before introducing activities that might involve using allergy triggers such as fruit or flowers, sweet stalls, fairs, school packed lunches, snacks for extra-curricular activities are all carefully sourced to avoid allergy triggers.

School Events

Parents and carers will be informed of any particular event that will involve food, other than that served at lunchtime, being available in school. It is important that no food poses a risk to the end user. Where products are not made on site, appropriate signage should be in place. All products should be plated separately and stored as such (wrapped where possible) to prevent cross contamination to other items for sale. It should be left to the discretion of the person buying the food that they accept the risk that allergens may be present.

Educational trips and residentials

The Trip Leader will check with any food provider and ensure 'safe' food is provided, or that an effective control is in place to minimise risk of exposure for pupils with allergies. They must also check the requirements of all pupils they are taking off site on educational visits. The risk assessments must include this information.

Residential trip providers will be notified in advance of our visit of pupils in the group with allergies or intolerances. Parents will also be involved in establishing their child's dietary needs with these organisations.

The Food Policy will be shared with all parents and carers or be published on the school website.

Catering Staff responsibilities

Ensuring menu planning and all aspects of food preparation support the needs of those within the school community who have food allergies.

Clear labelling of items of food stuffs that may contain allergens.

They will be made aware of the pupils' medical needs in order for correct meals to be consumed.

Rigorous food hygiene is maintained to reduce risk of cross contamination.

School Management of severe allergies (ANAPHYLAXIS)

The management of these pupils is outlined in the Administration of Medicines and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and the First Aid Policy.

Please refer to the following appendices of the Administration of Medicines and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy:

Appendix 12: Recognition and management of an allergic reaction/ anaphylaxis

Appendix 13: Auto Adrenaline Injector (AAI) kit contents

Relationships to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Administration of Medicines and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Generic Risk Assessment Record
- First Aid Policy

Appendix 1 – Food Safety Guidance

The information below can be used to inform risk assessments and food handling- procedures.

Fridges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate between 1°C and 8°C (check at least daily with a calibrated thermometer / check the fridge display) • Do not over-fill (to allow air circulation and proper functioning) • Do not place hot foods into a fridge (cool to room temperature) • Consider risk of cross-contamination from raw to cooked foods (eg. Use separate fridges or shelves and place raw foods such as meat or raw vegetables below ready to eat foods) • Removal of out of date foods and cleaning of fridges should be on a schedule, fridges should be cleaned to remove soiling then sanitised with an antibacterial agent
Freezers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate at -18oC or below (check at least daily with a calibrated thermometer / check the freezer display) • Do not place hot foods into a fridge (cool to room temperature) • Consider risk of cross-contamination from raw to cooked foods (eg. Use separate units or shelves and place raw foods such as raw meat or raw vegetables below ready to eat foods) • Removal of out of date foods and cleaning of freezers should be on a schedule, fridges should be cleaned to remove soiling then sanitised with an antibacterial agent
Dishwashers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use an appropriate cleansing agent and rinse aid • Ensure that the final rinse is above 90°C • Ensure dishwashers are properly cleaned, descaled and maintained • If tea-towels are used, they must be laundered after every use on a hot (90°C) wash

Crockery, cutlery & serving utensils
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be washed immediately after use, ideally using a dishwasher. If it is necessary to hand wash, items should be washed with hot water and dishwashing soap and then rinsed with hot water. • Items should be allowed to air-dry thoroughly or if dried with tea towels, these must be washed after every use and replaced once wet • Plates etc must only be stacked once properly dry and must be stored so they are protected from contamination between use
Chilled foods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be stored between 1oC and 8oC • Can be out of chilled storage for up to 4 hours before consumption, however this time should be kept to a minimum • Do not use after the Use by Date • Do not use after a period out of chilled storage (eg. If chilled items such as sandwiches / yogurts / milk have been put out at room temperature for service and not consumed, they must be discarded)
Frozen foods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be stored at -18°C or below • Must be thoroughly defrosted in a fridge before cooking to ensure that they will be cooked properly (this can be checked using a sanitised probe thermometer) • When freezing foods, care should be taken to ensure they freeze quickly – they should be cool (room temperature or colder) and portioned and placed in the freezer so that air can circulate • Foods that have been frozen then defrosted should not be re-frozen
Ambient foods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be used within their Best Before Date • Dried foods such as rice, pasta and flour should be kept in airtight containers to keep them dry and free from pests
Cooking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foods must reach a core temperature of 75°C or above • Core temperature can be checked using a sanitised probe thermometer. It may be necessary to test every item (e.g if cooking several joints of meat of different sizes) or test a representative sample (eg. Oven-cooked pies that are all the same size and shape and have been stored and cooked together) • Ready-prepared foods must be cooked in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.
Cooling

- Cooked foods such as meats, quiches etc that are to be eaten cold should be cooled to less than 8°C within 4 hours of cooking – this may be facilitated by portioning or the use of a blast-chiller
- Foods that are cooling must be covered to protect from contamination
- Once cooled, foods should be placed in a fridge or freezer immediately

Hot holding (using a hot-cabinet or bain-marie)

- Hot food must be held at 63°C or above and for a maximum of 2 hours
- Food must be covered whenever practical to prevent contamination
- Hot-holding equipment must be regularly cleaned and maintained

Personal Hygiene, sickness reporting and handwashing

- Illnesses (particularly symptoms of food poisoning such as nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhoea) should be reported and anyone suffering should not handle food
- Hands must be washed before handling any food or food equipment, after handling raw foods, after cleaning or removing waste, after using the toilet, after sneezing or coughing with soap and hot water and dried thoroughly
- Food handlers should not wear jewellery, tie back or cover hair and keep fingernails short and easy to clean
- Broken skin should be covered with a clean, waterproof dressing (and plastic gloves if appropriate)

Cleaning

- Appropriate cleaning chemicals should be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, these should include an antibacterial agent to sanitise surfaces after cleaning
- Cleaning chemicals must be appropriately used and stored according to COSHH regulations
- A cleaning schedule, protocols and records should be put in place. The schedule should consider each area / piece of equipment and when, how and by whom it is to be cleaned
- Cleaning equipment used for food-contact surfaces should be disposable (paper-towel) or laundered after every use on a hot (90°C) wash cycle.
- Cleaning equipment such as mops & buckets used in food areas should be dedicated to that area.
- Care must be taken when cleaning that there is no open food present to prevent contamination of foods with cleaning chemicals.

Prevention of cross-contamination (contamination of ready-to-eat foods with bacteria from raw foods, or another source by direct contact, via a person or via equipment. Raw foods include raw meat, raw fruits and vegetables, raw eggs etc)

- Risk assessments should consider if it is necessary to use raw ingredients (especially when cooking with pupils/students or at events)
- Store raw foods in a separate fridge or freezer from ready to eat foods, if this is not possible, store on separate shelves with raw foods below ready-to-eat (to avoid drips)
- Keep all foods properly wrapped at all times during storage, if containers are used, these must be discarded or thoroughly cleaned in a dishwasher after use
- Prepare raw foods in a dedicated area with dedicated chopping boards, knives and other utensils (colour coded for clarity)
- Personnel must wash their hands immediately after handling raw food (taking care not to contaminate taps and soap dispensers), gloves may be used, but these must be discarded and hands washed immediately after use.
- An apron should be worn to handle raw foods – this should be removed immediately afterwards and laundered on a hot (90°C) cycle
- All equipment and surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised immediately after use for the preparation of raw foods. Chopping boards, bowls etc and utensils should be washed in a dishwasher on a hot (90°C) cycle and surfaces such as workbenches, sinks must be cleaned to remove food traces then sanitised with an antibacterial agent
- Items used in the cooking of raw foods (eg. Tongs for turning meat in a pan) should be washed after every use. Only clean utensils must be used with cooked foods.
- Temperature probes must be sanitised with an anti-bacterial agent before and after every use.

Waste disposal

- Waste bins in food areas should be accessible without the need for staff to touch the bin – pedal bins are ideal
- Food waste should be removed at least daily and the receptacle cleaned and sanitised regularly
- Food handlers must always wash their hands after handling waste.