

## **Food Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to clearly set out the responsibility of all staff in providing high quality safe mealtime experiences for children.

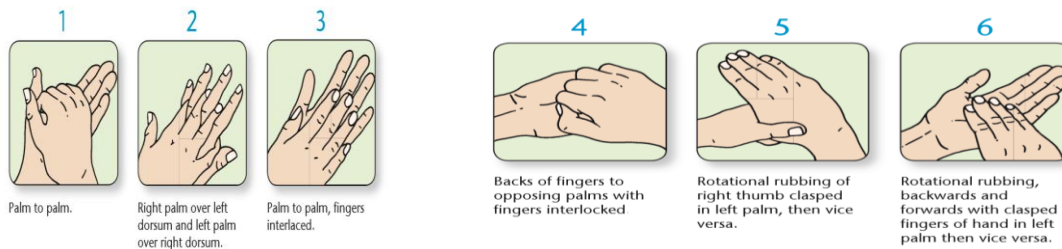
### **Who is responsible?**

1. It is the overall responsibility of the SMT to ensure that staff preparing and serving food have a good working knowledge of food hygiene and follow the procedures within this policy and other relevant policies such as Infection Control.
2. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that children are provided with mealtimes that are safe, happy and nurturing.
3. It is the overall responsibility of the SMT to ensure that staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to maintaining a safe, clean and hygienic environment.

### **How will this policy be implemented?**

4. All staff who prepare food will be trained to the REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene standard as soon as possible from starting within their post. New staff will be closely supervised by experienced staff to ensure that the required procedures are followed prior to any training taking place. All staff should familiarise themselves with standard circular 026 Food Allergy and Intolerance and also complete the allergy awareness learnpro module.
5. **Hand Washing**
  - Staff must wash hands on arrival at the centre, before handling food, after handling raw food, after using the toilet, after blowing own/child's nose, after touching waste bucket/cleaning, and at other appropriate times. The six step hand washing method should be followed (see below).
  - Liquid hand cleanser will be provided at all sinks for staff, children, parents/carers and visitors to use when needed.
  - Staff should dry their hands thoroughly using disposable paper towels/roll.

## Six step hand washing method



### 6. Food Storage

- If packets are opened and not all content consumed, these should be placed in an air tight container and labelled with the date it was opened, the use by or best before date according to the instructions on the packet and the allergen information contained in the product.
- The fridge and freezer temperatures should be recorded daily. Fridges should be between 1 and 5 degrees at all times and freezers colder than -18 degrees. If this is not the case, staff must record this and take note of the corrective action. If the temperature does not resume to a safe level within a reasonable timescale, items may have to be disposed of in the bin.
- The fridge and freezer must both have a working thermometer at all times.
- Staff should store food effectively by covering raw food, including meat, and keeping it separate from ready-to-eat food.
- Raw and ready to eat foods should be stored in their designated areas. Please note flour is classed as a raw food and should be stored away from ready to eat foods.
- High risk food should be stored in the fridge.
- Make regular checks to ensure the shelf life has not exceeded and the food has not deteriorated in quality.

### 7. Food Preparation and Handling

- All areas that are used for food preparation must be cleaned following a two-stage cleaning process.

1. (a) Pre Clean soiled surfaces with Suma Multi D2.3 SmartDose to remove all visible dirt, food particles and debris from equipment and surfaces that come into contact with food.

(b) Wipe thoroughly using a clean cloth or disposable blue roll. If centres use reusable cloths for stage one, these must be discarded/laundered immediately after use.

2. Staff will spray the clean surface with Suma Bac D10 Smartdose and leave the solution on for 30 seconds. After this staff will wipe the surface thoroughly with disposable blue/paper roll and allow it to air dry.

- Suma Bac D10 solution must be changed on a weekly basis.
- Staff must wash their hands and put on an apron before handling food, and change in between preparing different food groups if needed. Surfaces should be wiped at this time again as above. If staff leave the area for any reason, their apron must be disposed of. On return hands must be washed again and a fresh apron applied before continuing to prepare food.
- Unwashed fruit and vegetables are classed as a raw food and must be kept separate from ready to eat food until they are thoroughly washed. Particular care must be taken with any vegetable which are visibly dirty with soil. When dealing with fruit and vegetables staff should unpack, handle and peel if required in the raw area.
- All unwashed fruit and vegetables should be placed in the basin until washed. This should happen as soon as possible. Once washed it may be treated as ready to eat.
- After washing, staff should wash hands and transfer to the ready to eat area and use ready to eat equipment. Once finished, sink and work areas must be cleaned following the two stage cleaning process. All equipment used in the preparation of raw food must be washed in the dishwasher on the highest temperature.
- Extra care is required when dealing with visibly soiled vegetables. In addition to following the above procedure, staff should change and dispose of their apron once the vegetables have been peeled and washed. Staff should promptly clean the area following the two stage cleaning process and wash their hands before handling any ready to eat food.
- Staff must ensure areas/equipment are cleaned following any food preparation. Kitchen areas should be left clean and tidy following any use by ECC staff.
- Staff must ensure they use the appropriate chopping board and cooking utensils when preparing different foods. Separate utensils, plates and chopping boards should be used for raw and cooked food.

Yellow – cooked meats

Green – salads and fruit

Brown – Vegetables

White – dairy products

- Separate knives should also be used for each chopping board/food group.
- Keep preparation time short to ensure that high risk food is not left at ambient temperatures for excessive periods of time.
- Jewellery on hands and wrists should be removed and nail varnish is not permitted. Staff with nail varnish/acrylics must wear gloves.

- Any individuals suffering from sickness and/or diarrhoea should not be involved in food preparation until at least 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.
- Staff involved in the preparing or serving of snacks/meals should not deal with nappy changing or sick children during this time.
- All cuts and sores must be covered with a waterproof plaster, staff should wear gloves when dealing with food until cuts/sores have completely healed.

#### 8. Heating and Probing

- When heating food it must be heated to 75 degrees. If food is being reheated it must be heated to a temperature of **82 degrees** and checked in several places in the food. Allow to cool to a temperature that is safe for the children to eat without burning themselves and serve immediately. Care should be taken to handle the food as little as possible.
- Temperatures of heated foods should be recorded by staff/catering assistants.
- Staff should ensure probes are disinfected before and after every use to avoid contamination.
- Any unused reheated food should be discarded – never cool and refrigerate or put in the freezer.
- Never place hot food in the fridge as it can cause condensation and bring the temperature up for other foods already being stored.
- The following foods should never be reheated:
  - Celery, spinach, beets
  - Mushrooms
  - Eggs
  - Potatoes
  - Rice
  - Chicken
- Please ensure if raw meat such as poultry is being used from frozen, it must be completely thawed before cooking and left to defrost in an entirely separate area from other foods in a cool room.
- Food defrosted must be immediately refrigerated and used within 24 hours and handled as little as possible.

#### 9. Mealtimes

- The 14 food allergens as identified by the Food Standards Agency, should be cross checked with all foods provided and allergen information shared with parents/carers. Parents/carers should be updated of any changes to the daily menu as and when required.
- Information in relation to children's cultural and dietary needs should be displayed clearly with the child's photograph within the kitchen area of the ECC and a copy made available for staff. This information must be gathered in consultation with parents/carers during induction.

- Information about medical and allergy needs must be shared with staff prior to a child starting within the service. Children should only receive foods/drinks which are deemed safe for them by parents/carers. Care must be taken when preparing foods to minimise any contamination for children with specific allergies such as gluten. Meals for children with allergies should be labelled and checked by both the catering team and ECC staff before served to children.
- All staff involved in supporting mealtimes should complete the EAC online allergy awareness learnpro module.
- Foods provided should be healthy, low in sugar and salt and meet national nutritional guidelines.
- Staff must wash hands and put on an apron before beginning to serve food. Staff sitting at the table with the children during mealtimes must do the same.
- If staff leave the area during mealtimes, aprons and gloves should be discarded. On return staff should wash hands and put on a new apron and gloves.
- The table where food is eaten must be cleaned before and after meal provision using the 2 stage cleaning process.
- Staff serving hot food must ensure it is never served over a child's head. Hot foods in the form of a liquid such as soup or custard should be served from a jug with a lid at all times from the side of a child directly in to the bowl.
- Opportunities to promote children's independence skills should be provided.
- Water must be freely accessible to children throughout the day – (Health & Social Care Standard 1.39).
- Cow's milk (free through the SMHSS) will be offered with mealtimes. Children with an allergy to cow's milk can be offered an alternative to cow's milk during mealtimes. This must be stored as directed by the manufacturer's instructions and labelled in the same way as all other food items once opened. Cartons with liquids that cannot be fully resealed should not be used. Staff should ensure foods/drinks for children with allergies are separated to prevent contamination.
- Opportunities should be provided for children to enjoy sitting and eating with others and helping one another with their food and drink. A member of staff should be seated at each table to encourage this.
- Staff should encourage and support all children to follow appropriate hygiene routines by promoting good hand hygiene at all times.
- If children help prepare snack they should wash their hands prior to handling food and wear an apron. If children help to serve snack, staff should ensure hands are washed and aprons changed if those children leave and return to the snack area.
- Children should be encouraged and supervised whilst brushing their teeth at all times.

## 10. General hygiene

- Cleaning chemicals must be stored separately from food and equipment within a safe area in the kitchen and/or laundry room.
- The food bin within the kitchen must have a lid and be emptied daily to prevent food waste from accumulating.
- Daily and weekly cleaning checklists should be completed within all areas.
- Work surfaces must be kept clutter free at all times within areas where food may be prepared.

#### 11. Dishwasher

- Dishes and utensils should be cleaned in the dishwasher on the highest setting.
- If no dishwasher is available, dishes and utensils should be washed in hot water with washing up liquid and dried with blue roll soon afterwards. Water temperature should be at least 60 degrees (optimum temperature for killing bacteria). Children helping to dry dishes should wash their hands beforehand to minimise transfer of bacteria.

#### **Guidance used to inform this policy:**

- Setting the table - Nutritional guidance and food standards for early years childcare providers in Scotland, NHS Health Scotland, 2015. This guidance is due to be updated.  
Accessed at: <http://www.healthscotland.com/documents/21130.aspx>
- Food Matters, Care Inspectorate, 2019. Accessed at: <https://hub.careinspectorate.com>
- Health & Social Care Standards, 2017, 1.33 – 1.39 – Eating & Drinking.  
Accessed at: [www.newcarestandards.scot](http://www.newcarestandards.scot)
- Food Standards Scotland. Accessed at: <https://foodstandards.gov.scot>
- Eatwell Guide – NHS. Accessed at: <https://www.nhs.uk>
- Infection Prevention and Control in a Childcare Setting - <https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/infection-prevention-and-control-in-childcare-settings-day-care-and-childminding-settings/>
- Practice note Keeping children safe: supporting positive mealtime experiences in early learning and childcare (ELC) Accessed at: [elc-practice-note-4-mealtimes.pdf \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com/elc-practice-note-4-mealtimes.pdf)
- Standard Circular 026 - Food Allergy and Intolerance. Accessed at: [026-Food-Allergy-and-Intolerance](https://www.careinspectorate.com/026-Food-Allergy-and-Intolerance)

**Policy created:** July 2022

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