

5.1 Food Handling and Storage Policy

The service recognises the need for effective food handling and storage practices to ensure that the food provided is not contaminated, nor allowed to become contaminated, or is unfit to be eaten. All food which is handled (including preparing, eating or storing) at the service is to be handled according to the recommended food handling and storage guidelines as set out in the Australian and New Zealand Food Standards Code.



Relevant Laws and other Provisions

The laws and other provisions affecting this policy include:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2010 and Regulations 2011*
- *Duty of Care*
- *Local Authority (e.g. Brisbane City Council) Food Handling By-laws*
- *Australian and New Zealand Food Standards – Chapter 3 Food Safety Standards (Australia only)*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety*
- *Policies: 4.1 – General Health and Safety, 4.3 - Hygiene, 4.4 – Preventative Health and Wellbeing, 4.10 – Anaphylaxis Management, 5.5 – Cleaning and Sanitising, 8.13 – Employee Health, 9.2 – Enrolment.*



Procedures

Refer to Policy 4.3 regarding general hygiene procedures, and in relation to the preparation and handling of food.

The Coordinator/Responsible Person will be responsible for ensuring that all food preparation practices and areas in which food is prepared comply with all laws and regulations, including local council by-laws (or equivalent) where applicable.

The service will provide the necessary food handling equipment and/or utensils (e.g. gloves, colour-coded cutting boards) to prevent cross contamination.

Educators will ensure their hair is tied back and does not fall into the food.

All food preparation surfaces and utensils will be cleaned and sanitised before use. Refer to the service's Cleaning and Sanitising Policy 5.5.

Educators will ensure that they, and the children, use effective hand hygiene practices before handling, preparing and eating of food. Refer to the service's Hygiene Policy 4.3 – Hand Hygiene.

Educators will be made aware of and kept up to date about children who may suffer dietary issues and/or allergies relating to food and/or food ingredients through signs in the kitchen area and regular discussions at team meetings. All care and attention will be taken when preparing, serving and storing food for children with dietary and/or allergy issues. Families may be requested to provide their child's food if the service is unable to cater for their specific need.

Children will not be in the food preparation area unsupervised. Food activities that require heating and/or cooking will be fully supervised by an educator.

Educators and/or children who are unwell will not be permitted to handle food, whether it is a food activity or preparation of snacks or meals.

After opening, perishable items will be suitably covered and refrigerated, and non-perishable items will be stored in airtight containers in the food storage/pantry area. All items will be clearly labelled to include food items name and date stored and/or use by/expiry date.

The service will ensure regular pest and vermin maintenance is conducted to prevent contamination.

Perishable food brought from home by children and/or educators, will be refrigerated as soon as possible. The refrigerator, stove/oven, microwave and pantry will be cleaned weekly. As part of the weekly refrigerator and pantry clean, foods will be rotated according to their use-by date.

The 'use-by' dates of all foods for use at the service will be carefully monitored. Foods noted with expired 'use-by' dates will be suitably disposed.

Educators will not eat, nor permit food that has fallen on the ground, or has been handled by another child. Food that is not fit to be eaten is to be immediately disposed of, in an appropriate manner, so that it will not be eaten.

Food Recall

The service shall monitor foods purchased for any associated recall alerts. Recall alerts may be distributed via television, newspaper and radio communications from the manufacturer or recognised health authority.

All foods recalled under food alerts will be repackaged and returned or destroyed according to instructions as per the food recall alert.

<https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/food-recalls/recall-alert>

References

Food Standards Australia & New Zealand, Food Standards Code, retrieved 09/2025,
<https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/food-standards-code>

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