

WCS Children's Services

HYGIENE - Food Preparation, Storage and Handling Policy

Policy Statement

The Service follows regulatory food preparation, storage and handling procedures in order to minimise any risk to children from contaminated food. Its practices align with *Food Standards Australia New Zealand*. The Service provides educators and parents with up-to-date information on safe food practices, and intentionally teaches children these practices.

Services are to follow this Policy unless they have a registered Food Safety Plan.

Strategies and Practices

Knowledge

- Every Service with a Food Business License must have a Food Safety Supervisor.
- The Service aligns its food preparation, storage and hygiene practices with the requirements of *Food Standards Australia New Zealand*, and updates them – and its policies and procedures – whenever new information is released.
- Educators have the opportunity to attend professional development and training in food preparation, storage and hygiene practices. All educators are expected to systematically and consistently implement the Service's Policies and Procedures relating to food.
- Educators are considered to be role models and, when eating with the children, are expected to uphold good personal food handling practices.
- The Service makes available information about food safety at enrolment through a variety of means. When required, information is provided to families in their home languages.
- Educators intentionally teach children the importance of food safety and hygiene practices during both planned and spontaneous experiences.

Food Handling

- Before preparing, handling and serving food, educators wash their hands in accordance with the procedures in the Hand washing Poster – NHMRC, and then put on disposable gloves, if required.
- Educators maintain a high level of personal hygiene (e.g. hair tied back, blue bandaids on cuts before putting gloves on).
- To prevent cross-contamination, raw and cooked foods are kept apart, and separate utensils are used. When chopping boards are used to prepare food, educators follow the Chopping Board Colour Chart to select the appropriate board, if required.
- When possible use of non-touch technique is used when handling food.

- Food is always served using tongs/serving utensils. Where possible, food is served in individual plates or bowls.
- Children's leftovers are discarded – never reheated.
- Food cooked at the Service is refrigerated in sealed containers once cool, and reheated once only.
- Prepared food which does not require refrigeration is covered until used. It is discarded after 4 hours.
- Tables are washed with soap and water, sanitised if required, and dried before and after being used for meals.

Kitchen Practices

- The food preparation area is cleaned before and after use. The rubbish bins are emptied at the end of the day or as required. The kitchen floor is swept as and when required and mopped daily.
- To prevent cross-contamination between work areas, educators use the colour coded cloths for specific cleaning duties. In addition, cleaning implements such as gloves and scourers are confined to specific areas. The coloured wash cloths are washed and replaced frequently.
- All plates, bowls, crockery and any other food utensils used by children and in the preparation of food are washed in the dishwasher, where available.
- If the dishwasher is not in service, all plates, bowls, crockery and any other food utensils used by children and in the preparation of food are washed in water as hot as possible with detergent, rinsed in clean hot water and allowed to air dry. If drying is still required, a clean tea towel is used, and the tea towel replaced after use.
- Children's food utensils and crockery are stored with easy access to ensure hygienic handling.
- Plastic plates, bowls and cups with deep scratches are replaced.

Children and Eating

- Educators encourage children to wash their hands using appropriate hand washing techniques before eating and drinking.
- Educators intentionally teach children to turn away from food when they cough or sneeze, and to follow up with washing hands.
- Children are required to sit down when eating.
- Children are discouraged from sharing food.
- Children are provided with their own drinking and eating utensils at mealtimes. Educators ensure that children do not use drinking or eating utensils which have been dropped on the floor or used by another child. They remind children that sharing during meals can spread germs that could make them or other children sick.
- Older children are encouraged to serve their own meals using tongs.
- Younger children are encouraged to wash face and hands after eating.

Cooking experiences

- Educators check that each child and the other educators involved wash their hands before taking part in children's cooking experiences.
- Educators and children follow other food safety and hygiene practices, and cover prepared food until served.

Shelf Items

- Educators inspect all food items to be consumed by the children when first brought into the Service to ensure they are all in good order and well within their use-by period, where possible.
- All items are stored on shelves that are well-ventilated, pest-free and out of direct sunlight.
- Food areas, cupboards and appliances are cleaned thoroughly and regularly.

Refrigerator and Freezer Items

- The operating temperatures of the refrigerators and freezers are checked daily, if required, with a thermometer and the results recorded on the daily Temperature Control Log. Foods are stored at the correct temperature depending on the product. Cold foods need to be stored at less than 5 degrees (C) and frozen foods at minus 18 degrees (C).
- Refrigerators and freezers are cleaned regularly, and seals checked for signs of mould.
- Appropriate storage containers and wraps are used (e.g. freezer safe containers, moisture-proof wrap such as foil and freezer bags). When wraps are used, food is completely covered.
- Educators inspect all food items to be consumed by the children when first brought into the Service to ensure they are all in good order and well within their use-by period, where possible.
- Raw and cooked foods are stored separately to avoid cross-contamination. Raw foods are stored on shelves below cooked foods so that juices do not drip and contaminate the cooked food.
- A refrigerator is available for children's lunch boxes in the refrigerator. The lunch box is to be clearly labelled with the child's full name.
- Cooked hot food to be consumed by the children is served as soon as possible, or refrigerated until eaten. Reheated food is heated to 60 degrees C, and then left covered until it is sufficiently cool for children to eat.
- Foods are thawed overnight in the fridge or defrosted in the microwave – never on a bench top.

Expressed Breast Milk/Formula Bottles

- Children's bottles containing EBM or formula are stored at the rear of the body of the refrigerator and not in the doors.
- Bottle contents are thawed and/or heated according to the Service's Expressed Breast Milk (EBM) and Formula – Storing and Heating Procedure. Breast milk is not to be heated in the microwave.
- The temperature of the milk is tested before giving it to the child. Educators test the temperature by shaking the bottle and sprinkling a few drops onto the inside of the wrist. The temperature should match body temperature.
- The educator responsible for feeding a particular child checks that the name on the bottle being used is the name of the child to be fed.
- Any milk not consumed is discarded.
- Children are not allowed to walk around with bottles, and babies are never left unattended to feed with bottles 'propped-up' to them.
- The amount a child drinks is recorded and made available to parents at the end of each day.
- Dummies or bottles are never shared.
- Bottles, teats and teat covers are rinsed well in cold running water as soon as possible after the completion of the feed and left to air dry. It is recommended that parents wash these items thoroughly at home.

Responsibilities of parents/guardians

- To correctly prepare and deliver bottles of EBM/formula for their child to the Centre in accordance with safe food guidelines (available from the Centre).
- To communicate with the educator regarding their child's nutrition progress.

Links to other policies

- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Hand washing Policy
- Nutrition Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2018

Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	78	Food and beverages
	79	Service providing food and beverages
	80	Weekly menu

QA	2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
	2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
	2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
	2.2.2	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.
	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting access of every child.
	3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

Sources, further reading and useful websites

Sources

- Early Years Learning Framework 2009
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, 2017
- Food Safety Information Council. (2003). *Knowing your fridge*.
<http://www.foodsafety.asn.au/factsheets/knowingyourfridge.cfm> accessed 29 March 2012
- Food Safety Standards Australia New Zealand. (2001). *Safe Food Australia 2nd Ed.*
<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/scienceandeducation/publications/safefoodaustralia2nd519.cfm> accessed 29 March 2012
- National Health and Research Council. (2005). *Staying healthy in childcare*.
http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch43.pdf accessed 29 March 2012
- National Quality Standard 2011, 2018
- Queensland Health. (n.d.). *Formula Feeding*.
<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/childhealth/28107.pdf> accessed 21 March 2012
- Dr. B. Abbey and P. Maclean, NQS - the complete system of policies, procedures and forms, www.childcarebydesign.com.au.

Further reading

- Food safety Knowing your fridge
http://www.foodsafety.asn.au/srcfiles/knowning%20your%20fridge_2b.pdf

Useful websites

- Australian Breastfeeding Association – www.breastfeeding.asn.au
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand – www.foodstandards.gov.au
- Nutrition Australia – www.nutritionaustralia.org/vic/nutrition-services-early-learning-centres
- Queensland Health – www.health.qld.gov.au
- Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne – www.rch.org.au

- Safe Food Australia – www.safefoodaustralia.com.au

Policy Review

This policy is a living document and will be monitored and reviewed as issues are identified or within 24 months. Proposed changes will be circulated and discussed by all programs and any external stakeholders for approval.

Person Responsible for Review:

Manager, Children's Services

Implementation Date:	3 November 2014	Review Date:	July 2016
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Modification History

Date	Sections and/or Paragraphs	Source	Details
2016/12/05	Template	WCS	formatting
2018/02/08	Quality Areas	Revised National Quality Standard 2018	

Related Documents

Refer to HR Manual –cross reference to WCS documents such as: WCS Services Guide, WCS Values and Strategic Plan.

Approved by Susan Henderson, Manager, Children's Services.



Date: 16 January 2017