



Truro and Penwith
Academy Trust

TPAT EYFS Safe Food Handling and Hygiene Guidance

Status: Operational Guidance

Applicable To: All TPAT nurseries, preschool settings and EYFS provisions where food, drinks, snacks, meals, infant feeds or food preparation activities take place.

Related Documents:

- EYFS Food, Nutrition and Safer Eating Policy
- EYFS Food, Nutrition and Safer Eating Procedures
- [DFE EYFS Nutrition Guidance](#)
- Health and Safety Policy
- Individual Healthcare Plans
- Allergy Action Plans
- Feeding Plans
- Appendix 1: EYFS Safe Food Handling and Hygiene Audit Checklist

1. Purpose

This guidance supports the implementation of the EYFS Food, Nutrition and Safer Eating Policy and Procedures by setting out practical expectations for safe food handling, preparation, storage and serving.

The guidance aims to:

- promote the health, safety and wellbeing of children;
- reduce the risk of food-borne illness and contamination;
- support consistent food safety practice across TPAT settings;
- ensure food is stored, prepared and served safely; and
- provide practical operational guidance for staff involved in handling, preparing or serving food.

This guidance should be followed alongside Food Safety legislation, Environmental Health requirements, local catering procedures and current public health guidance.

2. Responsibilities

Headteachers and Nursery Managers will ensure that:

- suitable food safety arrangements are in place;
- staff understand and follow this guidance;
- staff responsible for preparing, handling or serving food are appropriately trained and competent;
- food safety arrangements are monitored regularly; and
- any identified concerns are addressed promptly.

All staff involved in preparing, handling or serving food are responsible for following this guidance at all times.

3. Hand Hygiene

Effective handwashing is essential in preventing contamination and infection.

Staff must wash their hands thoroughly:

- before preparing, handling or serving food;
- before preparing infant feeds;
- before assisting children with food;

- after using the toilet;
- after supporting toileting or nappy changing;
- after handling waste;
- after cleaning tasks;
- after touching raw food where applicable;
- after coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose; and
- whenever hands may have become contaminated.

Handwashing should involve:

- warm running water;
- liquid soap;
- thorough cleaning of all hand surfaces; and
- effective drying using disposable paper towels or an appropriate hand-drying system.

Children should be supported and encouraged to wash their hands:

- before meals and snacks;
- after toileting;
- after outdoor play; and
- before cooking and food-related activities.

4. Staff Health and Personal Hygiene

Staff responsible for food handling must:

- maintain high standards of personal hygiene;
- keep fingernails clean and suitable for food preparation activities;
- cover cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressings;
- avoid preparing or serving food if experiencing vomiting, diarrhoea or another potentially infectious illness;
- follow any exclusion periods advised through public health guidance; and
- wear suitable protective clothing where required.

5. Food Storage

Settings will ensure that food is stored safely to minimise contamination and spoilage risks.

Food must:

- be stored according to manufacturer instructions;
- be protected from contamination;
- be clearly labelled where appropriate;

- be checked regularly for expiry and use-by dates; and
- be discarded if no longer safe to use.

Refrigeration

Settings will ensure that:

- refrigerators used for storing food are maintained at **5°C or below**;
- fridge temperatures are checked and recorded daily where food is stored;
- action is taken promptly if fridge temperatures exceed 5°C;
- refrigerators are not overcrowded;
- food requiring refrigeration is returned promptly after use; and
- allergen-sensitive foods are stored in a manner that minimises contamination risks.

Freezers

Where freezers are used, settings will ensure that:

- freezers operate at **-18°C or below**;
- freezer temperatures are monitored and recorded regularly;
- food is stored appropriately and protected from contamination;
- frozen food is used in accordance with manufacturer guidance; and
- items showing signs of spoilage, damage or thawing concerns are not used.

Packed Lunches and Food Brought from Home

Where children bring packed lunches or food from home, settings will ensure that:

- lunchboxes are stored in a clean area away from direct sunlight, radiators and other heat sources;
- lunchboxes remain clearly identifiable to the individual child;
- food brought from home is protected from contamination;
- staff are aware of any allergy risks associated with packed lunches;
- food sharing between children is not permitted;
- refrigerators may be used where available and appropriate; and
- parents and carers are encouraged to use insulated lunch bags and ice packs where cold storage is not available.

Where a setting identifies concerns about the safety, condition or suitability of food brought from home, staff will discuss these concerns with parents or carers.

Stock Rotation

Where appropriate, food stocks should be rotated using a first-in, first-out approach.

6. Allergy and Cross-Contamination Controls

Staff must follow the setting's Allergy Management Procedure at all times.

This includes:

- checking ingredient labels and allergen information before serving food;
- ensuring allergy registers and action plans remain accessible;
- preventing cross-contamination between foods;
- using separate utensils, equipment or preparation areas where necessary;
- clearly identifying meals prepared for children with allergies or dietary requirements; and
- following individual healthcare plans, allergy action plans and feeding plans.

A designated member of staff must check that meals and drinks meet the dietary, allergy, medical and feeding requirements of each child before food is served.

7. Food Preparation

Before preparing food, staff must ensure that:

- preparation areas are clean and hygienic;
- equipment is clean and suitable for use;
- food preparation materials are fit for purpose; and
- allergy information has been checked where relevant.

Staff must:

- prepare food hygienically;
- minimise contamination risks;
- prepare foods in accordance with safer eating requirements;
- ensure food textures are appropriate for children's developmental needs;
- ensure foods requiring adaptation are cut, sliced or modified appropriately; and
- follow any site-specific catering procedures.

8. Food Serving

Food should be served safely and in a manner that promotes positive mealtime experiences.

Staff will ensure that:

- children are appropriately supervised while eating;
- meals and snacks are served hygienically;
- food is suitable for children's age and developmental stage;
- food is not excessively hot before being served;
- all allergy and dietary checks have been completed before service; and

- the correct meal is provided to the correct child.

9. Cleaning and Disinfection

Suitable cleaning arrangements must be maintained for all food preparation, storage and eating areas.

This includes:

- cleaning food preparation surfaces before and after use;
- cleaning tables before and after meals and snacks;
- cleaning highchairs after each use;
- regular cleaning of refrigerators and food storage areas;
- cleaning feeding equipment and utensils after use; and
- maintaining any required cleaning schedules or records.

Cleaning products must be stored securely and out of children's reach.

10. Infant Feeding Equipment

Where babies are cared for, settings must ensure that:

- feeding equipment is cleaned appropriately after use;
- bottles, teats and feeding equipment are sterilised where required;
- expressed breast milk is clearly labelled and stored safely;
- formula feeds must be prepared hygienically using sterilised bottles, teats and feeding equipment, and in accordance with current NHS guidance and manufacturer instructions
- feeding equipment is stored hygienically;
- feeding arrangements follow agreed individual feeding plans.

11. Food Safety During Activities

Where children participate in cooking, baking or food preparation experiences:

- activities will be appropriately supervised;
- allergy, dietary and medical requirements will be considered;
- suitable hygiene arrangements will be followed;
- children will wash their hands before handling food; and
- equipment will be used safely according to children's age and stage of development.

12. Monitoring and Record Keeping

Headteachers and Nursery Managers should ensure that the following records are completed, reviewed and retained in accordance with local procedures.

Daily Monitoring

Where applicable:

- refrigerator temperatures are checked and recorded daily;
- freezer temperatures are checked and recorded regularly;
- concerns relating to food storage temperatures are acted upon promptly; and
- food preparation and serving areas are maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Ongoing Monitoring

Settings should routinely monitor that:

- staff follow handwashing and personal hygiene expectations;
- food is stored safely and protected from contamination;
- allergy management arrangements are implemented consistently;
- meals provided for children reflect dietary, allergy, medical and feeding requirements;
- packed lunches are stored safely and food sharing does not occur;
- infant feeding equipment is cleaned and sterilised appropriately where required;
- cleaning schedules are completed; and
- food handling practices remain safe and consistent.

Training Records

Settings should maintain records of:

- food hygiene training;
- allergy awareness training;
- safer eating and choking prevention training; and
- any additional training relevant to food preparation, handling or serving.

Incident and Concern Records

Where applicable, settings should record and review:

- food-related incidents;
- allergy incidents;
- choking incidents and near misses;
- concerns regarding food brought from home; and
- food safety concerns, including fridge or freezer temperature breaches.

Leadership Review

Headteachers and Nursery Managers should review food safety arrangements at least termly through:

- routine monitoring activities;
- audits and spot checks;
- review of incident records;
- review of fridge and freezer temperature records; and
- discussion with staff regarding implementation of procedures.

Findings from monitoring should be used to identify training needs, address concerns promptly and support continuous improvement in food safety practice.

13. Review

This guidance will be reviewed in line with changes to legislation, public health guidance, Environmental Health requirements and Trust procedures, or sooner where monitoring identifies a need for revision.

Appendix 1: EYFS Safe Food Handling and Hygiene Audit Checklist

School/Nursery: _____

Completed By: _____

Date: _____

RAG Rating Key: S= Secure; PS= Partially Secure; AR= Action Required

Area	Audit Question	RAG	Evidence / Comments	Actions Required
Food Safety Arrangements	Food safety arrangements are in place and staff understand this guidance.			
Staff Training	Staff involved in food preparation, handling or serving food have received appropriate training.			
Hand Hygiene	Staff follow handwashing requirements before handling food and after potentially contaminating activities.			
Children's Handwashing	Children are supported to wash their hands before			

	meals, snacks and food activities.			
Personal Hygiene	Staff demonstrate appropriate personal hygiene and food handling practices.			
Fridge Temperatures	Fridges are maintained at 5°C or below and daily temperature records are completed.			
Freezer Temperatures	Freezers are maintained at -18°C or below and temperature records are completed where applicable.			
Food Storage	Food is correctly labelled, protected from contamination and checked for expiry dates.			
Stock Rotation	Food stocks are rotated appropriately using a first-in, first-out approach where applicable.			
Allergy Management	Allergy registers and allergy action plans are current and accessible.			
Allergy Communication	Relevant allergy information has been communicated to all staff involved in food handling and supervision.			
Cross-Contamination Controls	Appropriate measures are in place to minimise allergen and food contamination risks.			
Food Preparation Areas	Food preparation areas are clean, hygienic and fit for purpose.			
Food Preparation Practice	Food is prepared safely and in accordance with safer eating requirements.			
Food Serving	Meals and snacks are served safely and hygienically.			
Dietary Checks	A designated member of staff checks dietary, allergy,			

	medical and feeding requirements before food is served.			
Packed Lunches	Packed lunches are stored safely and food sharing is not permitted.			
Food Brought from Home	Staff are aware of allergy and food safety risks associated with food brought from home.			
Infant Feeding Equipment	Bottles, teats and feeding equipment are cleaned, sterilised and stored appropriately.			
Formula and Breast Milk Storage	Formula, expressed breast milk and feeding equipment are managed safely.			
Cleaning Arrangements	Cleaning schedules are implemented and food preparation, storage and eating areas are maintained appropriately.			
Highchairs and Feeding Equipment	Highchairs and feeding equipment are cleaned after use.			
Food Safety During Activities	Cooking and food-related activities are supervised and hygiene measures are followed.			
Record Keeping	Food safety records, training records and incident records are maintained appropriately.			
Incident Monitoring	Food safety concerns, allergy incidents and any relevant concerns have been reviewed appropriately.			
Leadership Monitoring	Leaders routinely monitor food safety arrangements and address identified concerns.			

Summary Evaluation

Strengths

Areas for Development

Overall Judgement

- ☐ Fully Secure
- ☐ Secure with Minor Actions
- ☐ Improvement Required

Priority Actions

Action	Lead	Completion Date