

STORING, PREPARING, HANDLING AND COOKING OF FOOD POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy and procedures must be read in conjunction with The Beeches Risk Assessments for storing, preparing, handling and cooking food.

Personal Hygiene

Every person working in a food handling area must maintain a high level of personal cleanliness. He or she must wear suitable, clean clothing and, where necessary, protective clothing.

Fitness for Work

You must not handle food or enter a food handling area if you:

- Are suffering from, or carrying, a disease likely to be transmitted through food
- Have infected wounds, skin infections, sores
- Have sickness or diarrhoea

Anyone working with/ preparing food that is affected by any of these must tell the Head of Education immediately about the illness or symptoms and, if possible, what has caused them.

Staff with diarrhoea or vomiting should not handle or prepare food until they have had no symptoms for 48 hours.

Hand-Washing

Effective hand washing is extremely important to help prevent harmful bacteria from spreading from people's hands to food, work surfaces, equipment etc. All staff that handles food must wash their hands properly:

- When entering the kitchen
- Before preparing food
- After touching raw food, such as meat/poultry and eggs
- After handling food waste or emptying a bin
- After cleaning
- After blowing their nose

Don't forget that you should dry hands thoroughly on a disposable towel – harmful bacteria can spread more easily if your hands are wet or damp.

Foods

Must be stored according to manufacturers instructions e.g. in a cool, dry cupboard, once opened store in fridge, to be refrigerated etc. 'Use By' and 'Best Before' dates must be adhered to. Once food packaging has been opened it must be properly stored and labelled with the date it was opened/defrosted/cooked and it must have the date to be consumed by clearly marked.

Temperatures

You must not keep foods at temperatures that might cause a risk to health (see below).

The 'cold chain' must not be interrupted for foods that rely on temperature control for their safety. However, you are allowed to have foods outside temperature control for limited periods of time to allow you to prepare, store, display and serve food, as long as this does not cause a risk to health.

If foods are going to be kept or served at chilled temperatures, you must cool them as quickly as possible after cooking (or other heat processing, or after final preparation if you are not heating the foods, to a temperature that does not cause a risk to health (see below).

Cold foods must be kept at 8 degrees C or below. Hot foods must be kept at 63 degrees C. When you reheat food, make sure that it is piping hot all the way through.

The fridge and freezer temperatures are to be recorded daily, in the morning. Any action taken by staff due to the temperatures being too hot or too cold should also be recorded on the Fridge/Freezer temperature book.

Service and Display

When you are serving or displaying food, you can keep it out of temperature control for a limited period of time:

- Cold foods can be kept above 8 degrees C for up to four hours. You should only do this once. If any food is left after this time, you should throw it away or keep it chilled at 8 degrees C or below until it is used.
- Hot foods can be kept below 63 degrees C for up to two hours. You should only do this once. If any food is left after this time, you should throw it away, reheat it to 63 degrees C or above, or cool it as quickly as possible to 8 degrees C or below. Remember to keep the food at a safe temperature until it is used.
- Remember you should only do this if you need to and it is very important not to keep food out of temperature control for longer than these times.

Defrosting

If you defrost any foods you must do this in a way that minimizes the risk of harmful bacteria growing, or toxins forming, in the foods. While they are being defrosted, you must keep foods at a temperature that would not result in a risk to health.

Where liquid coming from the defrosting food may present a risk to health (e.g. when defrosting raw meat) you must drain it off adequately.

Following defrosting, foods must be handled in a way that minimizes the risk of harmful bacteria growing or toxins forming (e.g. keeping it in the fridge).

Training

All staff who handle/prepare foods ***must*** have their Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.

Updated by Kathryn Black in February 2018, this policy will be updated annually.