

Intereach Children's Services

Safe Food Handling Procedure



Applies to	Intereach Family Day Care (FDC) and Intereach Out of School Hours (OOSH)				
Policy	NQS Two: Children's Health and Safety Policy				
Version	2.2	Date approved	18/12/2023	Next review date	1/11/2025

1. Objective

Intereach educators and staff must prepare and provide food in a way that is safe for the children in their care, to reduce the risk of spreading infectious diseases through food. Intereach educators and staff are committed to comply with food safety practices and general requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standard Codes.

Intereach staff and educators must minimise transmission of foodborne illness in children, staff, and educators by practicing safe food handling and preparation procedures.

Education and care services minimise risk of spreading illnesses by increasing awareness of the potential complications that can occur in children and by implementing food safety practices.

2. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisors to:

- implement adequate health and hygiene practices and safe practices for handling food to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for;
- ensure compliance with all requirements of the Food and Safety Act and relevant standards;
- where required ensure Food Safety supervisors have current FSS training certificate; and,
- ensure a qualified Food Safety Supervisor is available at all times when food is being prepared and provided;
- where required ensure staff and educators undergo training in safe food handling as required by Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A. by the 8 December 2024;
 - Recent changes to the Food Standards Code introduced new food safety requirements for children's services, that provide meals as part of their operation. These new food Standards will now apply from December 2024, providing services with an additional 12 months to prepare.
- ensure food handlers are able to understand:
 - safe handling of food;
 - food contamination;
 - cleaning and sanitising of equipment; and,
 - personal hygiene
- monitor staff and educators' compliance with food safety practices; and,
- ensure good hygiene practices are maintained.

It is the responsibility of the Food Safety Supervisors, where available to:

- oversee the day to day food handling;
- ensure food safety risks are managed;
- share skills and knowledge of food safety with educators and staff; and,
- promote food safety activities.

It is the responsibility of Intereach educators and staff to:

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- where meals are supplied ensure the appropriate qualifications are held including a Food Safety Supervisors Certificate by December 2024;
- keep up to date with current legislation, standards, policy, information, and resources relating to food safety;
- be aware of safe food practices and good hygiene practices and undergo training if required;
- discuss food safety with children to increase awareness and assist in developing safe practices;
- discourage children from sharing drink bottles or cups at the service;
- ensure that children do not share lunches to minimise risks in relation to children with food allergies; and,
 - provide adequate supervision of children while they are eating (Refer to *Supervision Procedure*).

3. Procedure

3.1. Food Safety

Where a menu is provided by the service local council will be contacted to ascertain requirements.

Food safety is monitored through audits and inspections as follows:

Process	Victoria	NSW
Audit of the food safety program	Undertaken by licensed businesses. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) approves persons other than DHSS employees to conduct regulatory food safety audits of licensed businesses in Victoria that meet audit performance benchmarks	Undertaken by licensed businesses. The Regulatory Food Safety Auditor System (third party audit system) allows the NSW Food Authority to approve persons other than Food Authority employees to conduct regulatory food safety audits of licensed businesses in NSW that meet audit performance benchmarks
Inspection	The <i>Food Act 1984</i> (the Act) is enforced principally by local councils. Councils are responsible for classifying every food premises within their municipal district under the Act. Councils are also responsible for checking that good food safety practices are in place such as temperature control, cleanliness, hand washing and labelling	Council environmental health officers (EHOs) are authorised officers under the <i>Food Act 2003</i> and check that good food safety practices are in place such as temperature control, cleanliness, hand washing and labelling. This partnership is known as the Food Regulation Partnership

3.2. Storage and display of food

- Food must be stored under temperature control with the relevant Temperature PHF during storage.
- At OOSH daily checks are carried out for freezer and over temperatures before storing food or using them.

3.3. Cleaning and sanitising

- Where possible colour-coded cloths or sponges are used for each area (e.g., blue in the bathroom, yellow in the kitchen) so that it is easier to keep them separate.
- Utility gloves are worn when cleaning and dried by hanging outside. Hands are washed thoroughly after removing the gloves.
- The surfaces that will come in contact with the food and with the utensils that are to be used for the meal are cleaned prior to use.
- The food preparation and serving areas are cleaned and sanitised before each use, when visibly dirty, and at the end of each day.
- For cleaning and sanitising food contact surfaces:
 - a neutral detergent and hot water are used to remove visible contamination such as food waste, dirt and grease (the manufacturer's instructions are followed on how much detergent to use);
 - the surfaces are vigorously rubbed to physically remove germs; and,
 - the surfaces are rinsed with clean water and dried.

3.4. Basics for Meals and Snacks

- Hands are washed and dried thoroughly before preparing or serving food.
- Educators and staff will ensure that all children have washed and dried their hands before they eat or drink.
- All facilities will include a stove or microwave oven, sink, refrigerator, suitable waste disposal, and hot water supply.
- Food or bottle preparation and storage areas are separate from nappy change and toileting areas.
- The individual needs of culturally and linguistically diverse families are considered and accommodated in relation to storing, preparing, and serving foods such as Halal and Kosher food. Educators and staff will seek guidance and information from individual families.
- Educational materials are provided to parents about the storage of foods and transportation of foods, including how to bring food to the service safely.

3.5. During the meal

- If children are sharing food from a common bowl or plate, it is ensured that they understand the need to use tongs, spoons, or other appropriate utensils to take the food they want to eat. Children are reminded that they cannot touch food that is being shared because this can spread germs that might make them or other children ill. Therefore, it is essential to use utensils, not hands when taking food from a common bowl or plate.
- Educators and staff will ensure that children are not sharing individual eating or drinking utensils or taking food from other children's plates or bowls.
- A separate spoon is used for each infant being fed.
- Children are educated to turn away from food when they cough or sneeze, and then to wash their hands.
- If interrupted to care for another child while preparing food or spoon-feeding an infant, it is ensured hands are rewashed before continuing.

Any food that has been heated or removed from original packaging is thrown out. Families are informed of their child's food consumption. Depending on the type of food some foods are thrown out.

3.6. Heating and Cooling Food

- Food is kept hot (more than 60°C) or cold (5°C or less); otherwise, is not kept at all. Heating and cooling food properly will help prevent germs from growing in the food.
 - Australia's Food Safety Standards state that reheated food should reach 60°C. Heating to this temperature will destroy germs that may have grown in the food since it was cooked. However, it is recommended that food is reheated until it reaches 70°C and should stay at this temperature for two minutes. This is because the service may not know if the prepared food has been within the temperature 'danger zone' (5–60°C).
- Food is adequately reheated for any germs in the food to be killed.
- Food, or milk for bottles are heated once only. Food or milk is not allowed to cool and then reheated as this can allow germs to grow.
- It is recommended a food thermometer is used to ensure that cooked or reheated food reaches the correct temperature.
- The food is cooled before giving it to the child. A small piece of food is removed with a spoon to another plate and the temperature of the food is tested with hand. This piece of food is thrown away and the spoon is washed.

3.7. Separating raw and cooked foods

It is important not to let raw food come in contact with cooked food because the raw food may have germs in it.

Cross-contamination between raw and cooked foods are prevented by;

- keeping raw and cooked foods separate, even in the fridge;
- keeping cooked food above uncooked food in the fridge; and,
- using separate utensils (such as cutting boards and knives) for raw and cooked food.

3.8. Preparing, storing, and heating bottles (FDC only)

- Bottles of breast milk and formula is carefully prepared, stored, and heated.
- Filled bottles of water and portions of formula powder are stored in covered containers close to the preparation area.
- All parents/guardians are instructed to clearly label their child's bottles and containers.
- When preparing formula, hands are always washed, and it is ensured that work surfaces, bottles and other equipment are clean. Equipment is carefully cleaned according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Prepared formula or breast milk are kept refrigerated or frozen. All bottles labelled with the child's name and the date the bottle was prepared or brought in by the parent
- Make up a new formula for each feed and given to the child as soon as it is cooled. When this is not possible, formula is freshly made, cooled immediately and stored in the back of the refrigerator (where it is coldest) for no more than 24 hours. Left over formula is always thrown away and will not be reheated or frozen for reuse.
- Breastmilk is stored in the following ways:
 - ensure the following information is on the container of breast milk: the child's name, mother's name and date the milk was expressed;

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- refrigerated for 3–5 days at 4°C or lower (4°C is the typical temperature of a standard fridge). always store breast milk at the back of the refrigerator, not in the door. Breastmilk can be stored without refrigeration (if needed) for 6–8 hours if the room temperature is less than 26°C;
- frozen in a separate freezer section of a refrigerator for up to 3 months. if the freezer is a compartment inside the refrigerator, rather than a separate section with its own door, then only store the breast milk for 2 weeks; or,
- frozen in a deep freeze (–18 °C or lower) for 6–12 months.
- Oldest milk is used first when thawing frozen breast milk. Frozen breast milk is thawed by:
 - leaving it in the refrigerator and used within 24 hours. or,
 - by standing the bottle in a container of lukewarm water and used straight away.
- . Bottles are heated using one of the following methods:
 - best practice- stand the bottle in a container of hot water for no more than 15 minutes or use a microwave (not for breast milk);
 - before feeding the infant, check the temperature of the milk by letting a little drop onto the inside of your wrist—it should feel comfortably warm or even a little bit cool;
 - never microwave breast milk;
 - never refreeze thawed breast milk. and,
 - only warm the milk once and discard any warmed milk that has not been used.
- If a microwave is used to heat formula, it is ensured that the bottle is shaken vigorously to distribute heat evenly and milk temperature is checked on wrist before feeding.
- Bottles are only heated once as allowing a bottle to cool and then reheating can allow germs to grow.
- Young babies are held while feeding their bottle. Older babies may lie down against pillows and hold their own bottles. Educators will monitor feeding at all times and follow all best practice guidelines.

3.9. Cooking with children

Children love to cook. Cooking is a safe and enjoyable activity for children in education and care services.

It is ensured that all children:

- wash and dry their hands before and after the cooking class;
- be aware of the dangers of heat; and,
- long hair is tied up.

The chances of germs being spread through food is reduced by:

- allowing children to only prepare food that will be cooked afterwards so germs in the food are destroyed. However, if the food will not be cooked, the risk is lowered by letting children only prepare food to eat themselves; and,
- children who had vomiting or diarrhea are not allowed to participate in cooking activities until they are symptom-free for 48 hours. If the education and care service has recently had, or is currently experiencing, an outbreak of gastrointestinal disease, children's cooking activities will be cancelled. The cooking activities will only resume after checking with the local public health authorities.

3.10. Medical Management and Risk Minimisation Plan

It is ensured that the guideline outlined in the Medical Management Plan and Risk Management plan is followed during handling, preparation, and consumption of food for children with identified medical conditions. (Refer to the Dealing with Medical Condition Procedure, Medical Management Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan).

4. Monitoring, evaluation, and review

This procedure will be reviewed every three years and incorporate feedback and suggestions from children, families, educators, coordinators, volunteers, and students.

5. National Quality Framework

Standard/ Elements	Concept	Descriptor
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values, and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
7.1.2	Management System	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

6. Context

6.1. Legislation or other requirements	Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Food Act 2003 (NSW) Food Regulation 2015 (NSW) Food Act 1984 (Vic) Version 116
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6.2. Standards or other external requirements	<p>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), <i>National Quality Standards</i></p> <p>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), <i>Guide to the National Quality Framework</i></p> <p>Early Childhood Australia (2016), <i>Code of Ethics</i></p> <p>Australian Breastfeeding Association. Breastfeeding information, Accessed November 2023 from www.breastfeeding.asn.au</p> <p>Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 5th Edition 2013: Staying Healthy Preventing Infectious Disease in Early Childhood Education Care Services, Accessed November 2023 from https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code including 3.2.2, 3.2.2A & 3.3.1</p> <p>Bottle-feeding babies: giving the bottle, Accessed November 2023 from https://raisingchildren.net.au/</p>
6.3. Internal Documentation	<p>Dealing with Medical Conditions Procedure</p> <p>Medical Management Plan</p> <p>Medical Risk Minimisation Plan</p> <p>Communication Plan</p> <p>ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis</p> <p>ASCIA First Aid Plan for Anaphylaxis</p> <p>ASCIA Action Plan for Allergic Reactions</p> <p>Asthma Action Plan</p> <p>OOSH Freezer Temperature Log</p> <p>OOSH Fridge Temperature Log</p> <p>OOSH Oven Temperature Log</p>

7. Document control			
Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
1.0	02/03/2020	R. Phillips - Acting Senior Manager, Children and Family Services	02/03/2023
2.0	01/11/2022	M. Tai – General Manager, Operations	01/11/2025
2.1	21/11/2023	M. Piffero – General Manager, Operations – early review to include changes to Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A	01/11/2025
2.2	18/12/2023	M. Piffero – General Manager, Operations – minor update to include time frame for compliance	01/11/2025