



FOOD SAFETY POLICY

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Aims

The policy provides Rotherham Aspire with a framework that ensures the preparation, storage, handling, and consumption of foods within school premises meets legal requirements and that food is safe to eat. It ensures all members of staff understand Natasha's Law and the importance of managing students with food allergens and intolerances.

Scope

This policy was written with reference to the Food Safety Act 1990, the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995, the Food Safety (Temperature Control) Regulations 1995 and Natasha's Law 2021.

While it is acknowledged that The School Food Standards 2014 require food and drinks provided to students to comply with certain nutritional standards, it is understood that food safety is distinct from nutritional standards and must be considered separately.

It is also recognised that for some individuals with food allergies, there is a risk of harm from the presence of food allergens.

Information about Food Safety

Food safety is an important aspect of the control of communicable diseases, and as such affects everyone in the school community.

Inadequate awareness of good hygiene practice in the preparation, handling and/or storage of food can lead to the spread of a number of diseases, predominantly the various types of food poisoning. Diseases such as salmonella, E coli, campylobacter and dysentery can be extremely unpleasant, producing symptoms ranging from headaches and stomach cramps through to fever, diarrhoea, and vomiting.

Most food poisoning is caused by bacterial contamination. The bacteria can come from a variety of sources, including people, raw food, and pests such as flies, rats, mice, and cockroaches. Food poisoning bacteria can also be found in dirt and dust.

The main causes of food poisoning are:

- Lack of hygiene in the storage, preparation, or handling of food.
- Poor personal hygiene/food handlers carrying infections.
- Preparing food in advance and then keeping it at room temperature. If food is cooked on the premises, it should be cooled at room temperature for no more than 90 minutes and then chilled below 8°C.
- Under-cooking or not reheating food to high enough temperatures.
- Cross-contamination from raw food to cooked food.
- Failure to keep hot food above 63°C, allowing the multiplication of any bacteria not destroyed in the cooking process.
- Storing high-risk ready meals in fridges above 8°C.

The procedures and protocols laid out in this policy and adopted by Rotherham Aspire are aimed at mitigating the above risks.

Roles and responsibilities

Rotherham Aspire is responsible for ensuring that food safety is considered in relation to all activities and routines at the school site, and that appropriate personnel, training, guidance, and resource is provided to ensure compliance with the requirements of The Food Safety Act 1990.

The following activities/routines have been considered and related considerations are shown in the sections below:

- Consumption of food and drink by students on the school site.
- Hot and cold school dinners/nurture breakfasts prepared on site or a third-party catering provider off site.
- Snacks and drinks served to students during the school day.
- Packed lunches and snacks brought to school by students.
- School visits and trips.
- Storage and preparation of food by staff for their own consumption.
- Foods at school events.

Consumption of food and drink by students on the school site

Rotherham Aspire must ensure:

- Students are aware of the importance of washing their hands before eating and suitable provision is available for this purpose.
- Designated areas for the consumption of food by students are provided and they are equipped with tables and chairs (children should not be seated on the floor to eat).
- Cleaning protocols are in place to ensure that these areas and the equipment within are clean at the time of use for the consumption of food and they are cleaned, and food waste removed immediately after use.
- Students are appropriately supervised while eating.

Nurture Breakfasts prepared on-site by school employed staff

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to implement and operate the school system for managing food safety that complies with the relevant legislation ensuring:

- There is an appropriately trained and experienced member of staff in place who holds a qualification in food hygiene (level 2) to manage the operation of the food safety system.
- There are sufficient staff who are appropriately trained in food hygiene and in the operation of the school's food safety system and that they are appropriately supervised in preparing and serving food.
- The provision of suitable premises that are well maintained.
- The provision of suitable equipment with support and resources for its maintenance.
- Clarity about roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in the preparation and handling of food and the cleaning of food consumption areas and equipment.

Hot and cold school meals prepared off site by a third-party catering company

In this circumstance, it is the responsibility of the catering company and specifically the person carrying out the senior role in their kitchen to implement and operate an appropriate system for managing food safety that complies with relevant legislation. Rotherham Aspire's role is to facilitate and support the effective operation of this system by ensuring:

- The contracted catering company provides a service in line with the agreed contract in place with the RMBC Food Services Team (who manage this contract and ensure all regulations are being adhered to).
- The third party deliver the food within the agreed time frame and to an agreed standard, accompanied by all relevant allergen information and temperature probe results.
- The contracted provider holds a Food Standards Agency Food Hygiene Rating of 4 (good) or 5 (very good). Ratings can be found at <https://ratings.food.gov.uk/>
- there are appropriate procedures in place for the receipt of food to site which include:
 - Assessment and recording of the temperature of hot and chilled foods on receipt and action in the case of non-compliance.
 - Assessment of the cleanliness of food containers and transportation containers on receipt and action in the case of non-compliance.
 - Handling of food and food containers from the point of receipt to the point of service so the food is protected from contamination and the temperature of the food is maintained.
 - Equipment and containers used to store food (e.g. fridges, hot cabinets, or Bain-marie) are regularly cleaned and sanitised.
- The provision of suitable areas and equipment (e.g. crockery, cutlery, serving utensils) for the serving and consumption of food.
- The provision of suitable areas and equipment for washing and drying of crockery, cutlery, and utensils and for their storage to protect them from contamination.
- Disposal of hot/chilled foods ('leftovers') that are not consumed within 3 hours of delivery to site.
- Clarity about roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in the handling and service of food and the cleaning of food consumption areas and equipment.

Snacks and drinks served to students (during the school day)

Rotherham Aspire must ensure:

- There are appropriate procedures in place for the receipt of food (e.g. fruit) and drinks (e.g. milk) to site which include:
 - Assessment and recording of the temperature of chilled foods on receipt and action in the case of non-compliance.
 - Assessment of the cleanliness of food containers and transportation containers on receipt and action in the case of non-compliance.
- Proper handling of food/drinks and containers from the point of receipt to the point of service so the food is protected from contamination and the temperature of the food is maintained where appropriate.
- Equipment and containers used to store food/drinks (e.g. fridges) are regularly cleaned and sanitised.
- The provision of suitable equipment (e.g. crockery, cutlery, serving utensils) for the serving and consumption of food.
- The provision of suitable areas and equipment for washing and drying of crockery, cutlery, and utensils and for their storage to protect them from contamination.
- Staff involved in the receipt, handling, preparation and service of food are appropriately trained in food hygiene and understand their role in food safety.
- Clarity about roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in the preparation and handling of food and the cleaning of food consumption areas and equipment.

Packed lunches and snacks brought to school by students

The preparation of packed lunches provided by parent/carers for consumption by their own children is not covered by the Food Safety Act, however schools have a responsibility to ensure that arrangements in place for the storage and consumption of packed lunches do not pose a risk to food safety.

Rotherham Aspire must ensure:

- Parent/carers are made aware that packed lunches will not be refrigerated and will be stored at room temperature prior to consumption, and for this reason, they should be allowed and encouraged to provide meals in insulated bags or boxes.

Foods prepared on site by students as part of a lesson

Rotherham Aspire must ensure:

- Staff who oversee such activities should have the appropriate knowledge and training to provide effective supervision and management of the students and activities concerned to ensure food safety.
- Students are made aware of the importance of hygienic practices when preparing food and are appropriately supervised.
- Risk assessments (which include food safety) are carried out by an appropriately experienced and qualified member of staff prior to the activity, and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of the food produced.

Refer to the Food Safety for classroom baking and nurture procedure

School visits and field trips

The safety of food consumed on an educational visit should form part of the risk assessment carried out for all aspects of the trip. While food which is commercially prepared and sold, e.g. in restaurants, cafés, hotels, hostels, outdoor activity centres etc. could reasonably be assumed to comply with the law in terms of food safety, it would nevertheless be advisable to carry out a check (e.g. by checking Food Standards Agency Food Hygiene ratings at <https://ratings.food.gov.uk/>).

Where packed lunches are provided by parents/carers for consumption on a trip, then the points mentioned for packed lunches eaten in school should be taken into consideration.

Storage and preparation of food by staff for their own consumption

Rotherham Aspire will ensure:

- An appropriate designated area is provided for staff to prepare and consume their own food that is equipped with appropriate storage space/equipment to protect food from contamination.
- The area and equipment are regularly cleaned and sanitised.

Food at events (e.g. School training sessions, meetings etc.)

Rotherham Aspire has a duty of care to ensure that foods provided at any event are safe to eat, whether or not they are prepared by the school. It is therefore important to carry out a full food safety risk assessment prior to any event and to implement actions to minimise the risks. This should be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced person within each centre.

Food Allergies - REFER TO THE FOOD ALLERGEN POLICY

Rotherham Aspire recognises that although most food intolerances produce symptoms that are uncomfortable, some students can suffer a severe food allergy with more serious consequences and in some instances, these may even be life threatening.

Rotherham Aspire is committed to student safety and therefore to reduce the risk of students having allergy-related events while in its care. The school's position is not to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, rather to minimise the risk of exposure by hazard identification, encourage self- responsibility and plan for effective response to possible emergencies.

Food Safety Management System

All centres have a manual food management logging system. The Centre Manager is responsible for managing the system on a weekly basis. The management system contains:

- A record of all foods delivered to centre that require temperature probe checks and any subsequent reheating and further probe checks. (This applies to food prepared by a third party off site).
- A record of daily cleaning routine and times.
- A record of all foods delivered from suppliers that require a temperature check (currently Tesco's).
- Van temperature to be recorded and invoices logged.
- Weekly checks for pests to be recorded.
- All fridges on all sites to be checked daily and logged.
- Termly report to be completed by the Head of Centre.
- All records are to be checked and signed by the Head of Centre on a weekly basis.

Relationships to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- Food Allergen Policy
- Food Safety for classroom baking and nurture breakfast Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions
- Generic Risk Assessment Records of Allergies (if required)
- First Aid Policy

The Food Policy and all foods provided by the school will be published on the school website.

RMBC Catering and Facilities Services will ensure menu planning and all aspects of food preparation support the needs of those within the school community who have food allergies and intolerances, with clear labelling of items of food stuffs that may contain allergens.

All relevant employees will be made aware of the students' medical needs in order for correct meals to be consumed.

Rigorous food hygiene is maintained to reduce risk of cross contamination.

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/prepacked-for-direct-sale-ppds-allergen-labelling-changes-for-schools-colleges-and-nurseries>

<https://www.food.gov.uk/allergen-ingredients-food-labelling-decision-tool>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/allergy-guidance-for-schools>

Appendix 1 – Food Safety Guidance

The information below can be used to inform risk assessments and food handling- procedures.

Fridges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operate between 1°C and 8°C (check at least daily with a calibrated thermometer / check the fridge display).• Do not over-fill (to allow air circulation and proper functioning).• Do not place hot foods into a fridge (cool to room temperature).• Consider risk of cross-contamination from raw to cooked foods (e.g. use separate fridges or shelves and place raw foods such as meat or raw vegetables below ready to eat foods).• Removal of out of date foods and cleaning of fridges should be on a schedule, fridges should be cleaned to remove soiling then sanitised with an antibacterial agent
Freezers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operate at -18oC or below (check at least daily with a calibrated thermometer / check the freezer display).• Do not place hot foods into a freezer (cool to room temperature).• Consider risk of cross-contamination from raw to cooked foods (e.g. use separate units or shelves and place raw foods such as raw meat or raw vegetables below ready to eat foods)• Removal of out of date foods and cleaning of freezers should be on a schedule, fridges should be cleaned to remove soiling then sanitised with an antibacterial agent
Dishwashers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use an appropriate cleansing agent and rinse aid.• Ensure that the final rinse is above 90oC.• Ensure dishwashers are properly cleaned, descaled, and maintained.• If tea-towels are used, they must be laundered after every use on a hot (90°C) wash.
Crockery, cutlery & serving utensils
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be washed immediately after use, ideally using a dishwasher. If it is necessary to hand wash, items should be washed with hot water and dishwashing soap and then rinsed with hot water.• Items should be allowed to air-dry thoroughly or if dried with tea towels, these must be washed after every use and replaced once wet.• Plates etc. must only be stacked once properly dry and must be stored so they are protected from contamination between uses.
Chilled foods
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be stored between 1oC and 8oC.• Can be out of chilled storage for up to 4 hours before consumption, however this time should be kept to a minimum.• Do not use after the Use by Date.• Do not use after a period out of chilled storage (e.g. If chilled items such as sandwiches / yogurts / milk have been put out at room temperature for service and not consumed, they must be discarded).

Frozen Foods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be stored at -18oC or below. • Must be thoroughly defrosted in a fridge before cooking to ensure that they will be cooked properly (this can be checked using a sanitised probe thermometer). • When freezing foods, care should be taken to ensure they freeze quickly – they should be cool (room temperature or colder) and portioned and placed in the freezer so that air can circulate. • Foods that have been frozen then defrosted should not be re-frozen.
Ambient foods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be used within their Best Before Date. • Dried foods such as rice, pasta and flour should be kept in airtight containers to keep them dry and free from pests.
Cooking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foods must reach a core temperature of 75oC or above. • Core temperature can be checked using a sanitised probe thermometer. It may be necessary to test every item (e.g. if cooking several joints of meat of different sizes) or test a representative sample (e.g. oven-cooked pies that are all the same size and shape and have been stored and cooked together). • Ready-prepared foods must be cooked in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
Cooling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooked foods such as meats, quiches etc. that are to be eaten cold should be cooled to less than 8oC within 4 hours of cooking – this may be facilitated by portioning or the use of a blast-chiller. • Foods that are cooling must be covered to protect from contamination. • Once cooled, foods should be placed in a fridge or freezer immediately.
Hot holding (using a hot-cabinet or bain-marie)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooked foods such as meats, quiches etc. that are to be eaten cold should be cooled to less than 8oC within 4 hours of cooking – this may be facilitated by portioning or the use of a blast-chiller. • Foods that are cooling must be covered to protect from contamination. • Once cooled, foods should be placed in a fridge or freezer immediately.
Hot holding (using a hot-cabinet or bain-marie)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot food must be held at 63oC or above and for a maximum of 2 hours. • Food must be covered whenever practical to prevent contamination. • Hot-holding equipment must be regularly cleaned and maintained.
Personal Hygiene, sickness reporting and handwashing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illnesses (particularly symptoms of food poisoning such as nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea) should be reported and anyone suffering should not handle food. • Hands must be washed before handling any food or food equipment, after handling raw foods, after cleaning or removing waste, after using the toilet, after sneezing or coughing with soap and hot water and dried thoroughly. • Food handlers should not wear jewelry, tie back or cover hair and keep fingernails short and easy to clean. • Broken skin should be covered with a clean, waterproof dressing (and plastic gloves if appropriate).

Cleaning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate cleaning chemicals should be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, these should include an antibacterial agent to sanitise surfaces after cleaning. • Cleaning chemicals must be appropriately used and stored according to COSHH regulations. • A cleaning schedule, protocols and records should be put in place. The schedule should consider each area / piece of equipment and when, how and by whom it is to be cleaned. • Cleaning equipment used for food-contact surfaces should be disposable (paper-towel) or laundered after every use on a hot (90oC) wash cycle. • Cleaning equipment such as mops & buckets used in food areas should be dedicated to that area. • Care must be taken when cleaning that there is no open food present to prevent contamination of foods with cleaning chemicals.
Prevention of cross-contamination (contamination of ready-to-eat foods with bacteria from raw foods, or another source by direct contact, via a person or via equipment. Raw foods include raw meat, raw fruits and vegetables, raw eggs etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessments should consider if it is necessary to use raw ingredients (especially when cooking with students/students or at events). • Store raw foods in a separate fridge or freezer from ready to eat foods, if this is not possible, store on separate shelves with raw foods below ready-to-eat (to avoid drips). • Keep all foods properly wrapped at all times during storage, if containers are used, these must be discarded or thoroughly cleaned in a dishwasher after use. • Prepare raw foods in a dedicated area with dedicated chopping boards, knives, and other utensils (colour coded for clarity). • Personnel must wash their hands immediately after handling raw food (taking care not to contaminate taps and soap dispensers), gloves may be used, but these must be discarded, and hands washed immediately after use. • An apron should be worn to handle raw foods – this should be removed immediately afterwards and laundered on a hot (90oC) cycle. • All equipment and surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised immediately after use for the preparation of raw foods. Chopping boards, bowls etc. and utensils should be washed in a dishwasher on a hot (90oC) cycle and surfaces such as workbenches, sinks must be cleaned to remove food traces then sanitised with an antibacterial agent • Items used in the cooking of raw foods (e.g. tongs for turning meat in a pan) should be washed after every use. Only clean utensils must be used with cooked foods. • Temperature probes must be sanitised with an anti-bacterial agent before and after every use.
Waste disposal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste bins in food areas should be accessible without the need for staff to touch the bin –pedal bins are ideal. • Food waste should be removed at least daily, and the receptacle cleaned and sanitised regularly. • Food handlers must always wash their hands after handling waste.