



Food Safety

Purpose

This policy will provide guidelines for the committee, staff, parents/guardians, students and visitors in the provision of effective food safety practices that comply with legislative requirements. In the absence of legislative requirements this policy will provide guidelines for a flexible approach to best practice in relation to food safety.

This policy also supports the provision of a safe environment for children attending the centre by outlining procedures to minimise the risk of scalds and burns from hot drinks, and by recognising the role of professionals and early childhood service providers in educating parents/guardians and the community in burn and scald prevention through the provision of information, role-modelling and safe practices.

Refer to Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS), Quality Practices Guide 2005, Principle 6.2.

Policy statement

1. Values

St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care (OHSC) Centre is committed to:

- The safety of all children and adults enrolled at or visiting the centre
- Taking all reasonable precautions to reduce potential hazards or harm to children enrolled at or visiting the centre
- Promoting the practice of safe usage of hot drinks—for example, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, hot water and cup-a-soups—in the centre when children are in attendance or participating in a program
- The education of staff, parents or guardians, other users of the centre and the community in the prevention of scalds and burns from hot drinks
- Complying with the relevant standards of the *Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991* to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children

2. Scope

This policy applies to all those involved in the preparation and provision of food for consumption at the St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care (OHSC) Centre, including children, staff, committee, parents/guardians, volunteers and students on placement.

3. Background and legislation

Food safety is very important, especially for young children, because they may be more vulnerable to the effects of food poisoning than other members of the community. Each organisation that provides food to children has a duty of care under the law to protect children against food poisoning. The best way to prevent food poisoning is through knowledge and safe food-handling practices.

Food poisoning causes gastrointestinal illness, which can occur any time between one and seventy-two hours after eating contaminated food. Food-borne illness can be caused by bacteria, parasites, viruses, chemicals or foreign objects. This means that food provided by a children's service:

- Must be fit for human consumption (it must be OK for people to eat)
- Can't be adulterated or contaminated (must not contain things that should not be in it)
- Must not be deteriorated or perished (must be in good condition).

Note that when your child takes fruit or vegetables for morning tea or takes their own lunch, the centre is not subject to the *Food Act* requirements, even if the staff or parents cut up the fruit and vegetables and place them on a platter to be shared.

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (ECSNR)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Food Act 1984
- Health Act 1958
- *Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991*(Cwlth)
- Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004.

4. Definitions

Centre: The building and grounds, entrance, foyer, children's indoor and outdoor licensed areas, kitchen, storage areas and community room.

Child: A child aged 0–8.

Cleaning: The removal of visible residue, such as food waste, dirt and grease, using hot water and detergent.

Department of Education and Employee workplace relations (DEEWR): federal government responsible for the licensing and regulation of out of hours school care.

Department of Human Services (DHS): State government department responsible for the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

Food allergies: Severe reaction to some foods or food ingredients. Foods that can cause this reaction include eggs, dairy products, shellfish, fish, soya, pulses, seeds such as sesame, and some fruits such as strawberries and avocado. For more information on food allergies, see www.allergyfacts.org.au.

Food safety: Ensuring food provided by the centre is fit for human consumption.

Food safety program: A program set out in a written document that identifies potential hazards in all operations of food handling; and how the hazard can be controlled, monitored and appropriate corrective action when the hazard is found to not be under control. It also includes the requirements for appropriate record keeping.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ): An independent bi-national organisation that provides a focus for cooperation between governments, industry and the community to establish and maintain uniform food regulation in Australia and New Zealand. FSANZ is a partnership between Australia's Commonwealth, state and territory governments and the New Zealand Government.

Good hygiene practices: A program that covers food handling, hygiene of personnel, cleaning of the equipment and monitoring of these practices to ensure the safe production of food

Handling: The making, manufacturing, producing, collecting, extracting, processing, storing, transporting, delivering, preparing, treating, preserving, packing, cooking, thawing, serving or displaying of food

Hazard: A biological, chemical or physical agent in, or a condition of, food that has the potential to cause an adverse health effect in humans.

High-risk foods: Foods that include meat, seafood, poultry, eggs, dairy products, small goods, cooked rice or any food product that contains these foods, such as sandwiches, quiches and prepared salads.

Hot drink: Any receptacle containing a liquid that has been heated or boiled and that remains above room temperature (25°C).

Scalds: Burns by hot fluids, steam and other hot vapours.

5. Sources and related centre policies

Sources

- Code of conduct for food safety in children's services, available from Food Safety Victoria
- National Health and Medical Research Council 2005, *Staying Healthy in Child Care*, 4th edition
- Resource Centre for Child Health and Safety (CHAS), Royal Children's Hospital: telephone (03) 9345 5085; email: safety.centre@rch.org.au; website: www.rch.org.au/safetycentre
- Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, available at www.foodstandards.gov.au/thecode/
- Kidsafe: telephone (03) 9251 7725; email: info@kidsafevic.com.au; for a fact sheet on scalds, visit their website: www.kidsafevic.com.au/images/stories/pdfs/scalds.pdf
- Monash University Accident Research Centre 2004, *Hazard 57*, www.monash.edu.au/muarc/VISU/hazard/haz57.pdf, accessed October 2008, page 11
- Monash University Accident Research Centre 2007, *Hot drinks scalds in children aged 0–4*, www.monash.edu.au/muarc/VISU/reports/hotdrinks.html, accessed September 2008
- For information on how organisations can deal with food allergies: www.cateringforallergy.org.uk/
- Health and Safety in Children's Centres, Model Policies and Practices 2003
- Contacts details for important organisations include:

Department of Human
Services
Public Health Branch
Food Safety and Regulatory
Activities Unit
Email:
Foodsafety@dhs.vic.gov.au

Food Safety Victoria
GPO Box 1670N
Melbourne Vic. 3000
Phone: 03 9637 4085
Fax: 03 9637 5320
Toll free: 1300 364 352
Email: foodsafety@dhs.vic.gov.au

Food Standards Australia New
Zealand
PO Box 7186
Canberra ACT 2610
Ph: 02 6271 2222
Fax: 02 6271 2278
Email: info@foodstandards.gov.au
Website: www.foodstandards.gov.au

Centre policies

- Anaphylaxis
- Asthma
- Communication
- Excursions and centre events
- Healthy eating and active play
- Hygiene
- Illness
- Infectious diseases
- Occupational health and safety

Procedures

The committee is responsible for:

- Complying with the requirements of ECSN regulations in relation to hygiene and the provisions of food that is safe for consumption
- Providing up-to-date information to parents/guardians on the safe provision of food for their children

- Ensuring that staff are informed of current information and resources relating to food safety
- Monitoring staff compliance with food safety practices, including those outlined in [Attachments 1](#) and [2](#)
- Hazard identification by identifying the potential hazards that may be reasonably expected to occur at each stage of the food-handling cycle—for example, at the ordering, delivery, storage, thawing, preparation, cooking, cooling, post-cooking handling, reheating and/or serving stage of the food-handling cycle—and developing procedures to minimise those hazards
- Ensuring that all facilities and equipment for food preparation and storage are clean and in good repair and working order
- The provision of a calibrated thermometer, suitable for food preparation areas, to monitor the temperature of the fridge/freezer—glass thermometers with mercury, in or near food preparation areas, are not recommended
- Checking if the thermometer is working at the start of each term
- Ensuring that food provided for sale at a fête, food stall or any other event complies with the requirements of a food safety program (refer to Background information)
- Working with St. Kevin's school to remove pests and vermin from the premises
- Informing DEEW or DHS when an outbreak of gastroenteritis or possible food poisoning occurs at the centre
- Clearly displaying hygiene guidelines in the food preparation areas for the reference of staff and families involved in the preparation and distribution of food to children
- Discussing and communicating with staff/parents/guardians regarding acceptable and responsible practices for the consumption of hot drinks at St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care (OHSC) Centre (refer [Attachment 3](#)).

The staff are responsible for:

- Removing hazardous food and offering child/ren an alternative snack (ECSN regulations)
- Supporting this policy at all times and communicating any concerns to the Committee
- Ensuring students and volunteers are informed of this policy
- Being aware of the risks associated with handling and serving food
- Washing their own hands when participating in food preparation and cooking activities
- Documenting and implementing procedures (referred to as food safety programs or food safety plans) to manage food safely
- Being aware of and implementing the relevant procedures outlined in [Attachment 1 & 2](#), 'Food safety tips'
- Ensuring all lunchboxes are kept indoors and, where necessary, refrigerated
- Keeping lunchboxes away from heat sources, such as direct sunlight
- Involving children in discussions about food safety to increase their awareness, which will encourage them to develop safe practices
- Informing children against sharing drink bottles
- Ensuring lunches are not shared as a precaution in relation to allergies that other children may have, and discussing with children the reasons for this
- Ensuring that benchtops are clean and that colour-coded dish cloths, sponges, brushes and tea towels are clean and replaced regularly
- Maintaining good kitchen hygiene; for example, wash dirty dishes in hot, soapy water or put in the dishwasher
- Keeping the fridge cleaned, uncrowded and temperature controlled at or below 5°C
- Teaching children to wash their hands before eating, and ensure they always wash and dry hands:
 - o Before touching or eating food

- o After touching chicken or raw meat
- o After using the toilet
- o After blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing
- o After playing with a pet or outside in the sand pit
- Good supervision of children while they are eating
- Ensuring children do not to pick up food from the floor and eat it
- Ensuring children placed uneaten food in the rubbish bin or back into their own lunch boxes (not left on table or in another child's lunch box)
- Sitting down to eat with the children
- Providing a flexible approach to serving and consuming food for children attending the centre
- Covering all wounds or cuts on hands or arms with brightly coloured wound strips or bandage; if the wound is on the hand, disposable gloves are to be worn over the top of the wound strip if involved in food handling
- Providing opportunities to speak with parent/guardians about any nutritional requirements, food allergies or food sensitivities that their child may have
- Seeking parent/guardian input on cultural values or religious expectations for food handling
- Informing the licensee representative and parents of any outbreaks of gastroenteritis or possible food poisoning that has occurred at the centre
- Being aware of the safety of children in relation to the consumption of hot drinks and complying with the guidelines set out in [Attachment 3](#), 'Responsible consumption of hot drinks in early childhood centres'
- Informing parents and visitors about the guidelines outlined in [Attachment 3](#), 'Responsible consumption of hot drinks in early childhood centres'.

Parents are responsible for:

- Washing hands when participating in food preparation and cooking activities
- Ensuring food preparation surfaces, utensils, lunchboxes and reusable drink bottles are clean
- Washing all fruits and vegetables thoroughly
- Packing something cold, such as a frozen water bottle with the lunch; as well as packing perishable foods, such as cold meats, chicken or egg sandwiches, between the cold items
- Complying with the requirements of this policy
- Providing details of specific nutritional requirements (including allergies) on their child's enrolment form, and discussing these with the qualified staff member prior to the child commencing at the centre and whenever these requirements change

Evaluation

Regular reviews of food safety plans are necessary to ensure the food safety plan is working effectively.

Reviews should be undertaken at least once per year. A review should also be carried out when corrective action is required, or when a change is made to a procedure/process at any stage of the food-handling cycle.

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes, the committee will:

- If appropriate, conduct a survey in relation to this policy or incorporate relevant questions within the general parents'/guardians' survey
- Take into account feedback from staff on the policy
- Monitor and investigate any issues related to food safety, such as reports of gastroenteritis.

Attachments

[Attachment 1](#): Food safety tips

[Attachment 2](#): Food safety and hygiene Procedures

Attachment 3: Responsible consumption of hot drinks

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care (OHSC) Centre committee of management at a committee meeting on **18th October 2016**.

Review date: October 2018

Attachment 1 - Food safety At St. Kevin's Out of House School Care

Food poisoning and infectious disease can be a serious health problem for children. The committee, staff, parents/guardians and any other person involved in handling food has a responsibility to maintain safe and hygienic food practices.

The use of safe and hygienic food storage and handling practices can prevent food contamination and the transmission of bacteria and infectious disease among children and adults. If food is not safely stored or properly handled, bacteria can multiply to dangerous levels and cause illness.

Food/snack Providers:

After school care - An afternoon 'snack' will be provided by the centre and the children will be instrumental in its preparation.

School Student free days – Students must bring their own morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea. Some other snack items such as fruit will be available to the children, provided from the centre

1pm School finishes – 2 snacks will be provided by the centre

Cooking – will occur at the centre as an activity on a regular basis

When food is provided by the Centre

The *Food Act 1984* applies where the centre is purchasing and providing the food as part of the fees charged for attendance. In these situations the centre will require local government registration and must meet the requirements as a registered kitchen. Poster to be displayed:

[http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/A0DA905A22EE0166CA2579B1002307CF/\\$FILE/food%20safety%20rules%20poster%20A4%20-%20Feb%202012%20v2.pdf](http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/A0DA905A22EE0166CA2579B1002307CF/$FILE/food%20safety%20rules%20poster%20A4%20-%20Feb%202012%20v2.pdf)

Storage of food

Food poisoning is caused by the growth of bacteria in food. This occurs when high-risk foods such as meat, poultry, eggs, seafood and dairy products are left to sit in the 'temperature danger zone' (between 5°C and 60°C). Centres need to ensure that any food in this temperature zone stays there for as little time as possible.

When preparing food

- Use separate utensils, chopping boards and other equipment for raw and ready-to-eat foods to avoid cross-contamination. If this is not possible, thoroughly wash and sanitise equipment between uses.
- Thoroughly wash all fruits and vegetables before use.
- Remove food items in damaged packaging, such as dented cans, leaking packages or cracked eggs.

When handling food

- Use utensils such as tongs, spoons, and spatulas for cooked or ready-to-eat foods. Raw food that will be cooked can be safely handled with bare clean hands.
- Wash hands before putting on gloves, and put on new gloves when changing from raw food to ready-to-eat food.
- Where required, maintain hot food at over 60°C and cold food at below 5°C.
- Check the operating temperature of refrigerators and freezers and report malfunctioning equipment to the committee.
- Ensure that any item placed in the fridge/freezer is covered with a lid, foil or plastic film.
- Use paper towels to clean up spills.

Drinks

Food safety standards will apply when offering drinks to children:

- Jugs must have lids.
- Cups and jugs must be cleaned, handled and stored in accordance with the hygiene guidelines.
- The sharing of cups is not permitted.
- The sharing of water bottles (from home is not permitted). Children's bottles must be clearly labelled

Involving children in cooking

- Ensure that adequate supervision is available for the planned experience.
- Ensure that long hair is tied up.
- Choose age-appropriate cooking experiences with regard to size and texture of food.
- Provide children with clean protective aprons or smocks.
- Respect cultural and/or personal food differences.
- Ensure that children wash their hands before participating in the cooking experience.
- Only prepare foods that will be cooked before eating, such as biscuits, pizza and soup.
- Immediately clean up any spillages or food dropped on the floor.
- Cater for children who have special dietary requirements, including allergies, for health, medical or cultural reasons.

Food brought from home for special occasions

- Ensure that food provided for celebrations is kept in a container or covered with foil or plastic wrap.
- Where appropriate, keep food in the refrigerator until it is to be served.
- Provide details to families on safe food-handling practices when providing food for special occasions.
- Provide details to families on appropriate ingredients to use, including ingredients to exclude due to allergy risks.

Food brought from outside

Safe storage of food is a key issue for parents/guardians providing food for their children to consume at the centre. Relevant information could be provided to parents/guardians by including an article in the centre's newsletter at the start of the year and again prior to summer. In addition, brochures can be provided on safe food handling from Food Safety Victoria.

Parents/guardians should be advised to:

- Put a frozen container, such as a frozen drink, in the lunchbox with food that is normally refrigerated. Alternatively, they can use an insulated lunchbox or a cooler.
- Avoid including food that are normally kept in the refrigerator, especially during the summer months.
- Not to include perishable foods that have just been cooked or warmed, such as hamburgers or boiled eggs. Such food should be cooled in the refrigerator before being packed for lunches.

Food provided by parents for sharing

- Staff/parents must wash and dry their hands thoroughly before preparing the food.
- Children must wash and dry their hands before eating.
- Children take the food they touch and do not touch other children's food.
- Each table to be provided with a bowl for food scraps for children to use for discarding unwanted or partially eaten food.
- Where appropriate, children may use tongs to pick up food from a shared platter.

Food stalls

If food is intended to be sold at a street stall or fête, the committee may be required to obtain a temporary registration from the council.

In May 2001 the *Food Act 1990* was amended to include a requirement for organisations to provide a food safety program before being issued a permit from their local council's Health Services Unit to hold a food stall.

A food safety program template has been developed by the Department of Human Services to assist centres to comply with this requirement. This can be accessed from www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety.

Events conducted in a private area of a shopping centre will require permission from the shopping centre's management and or traders association. Where a traders' association is not established, permission should be sought from the traders.

Attachment 2 - Food safety and hygiene Procedures

Hand washing

The following procedure must be followed in relation to handwashing:

- Use liquid soap (preferable) and running water.
- Wash hands vigorously and count to ten.
- Rinse hands well and count to ten.
- Turn off the tap with a piece of paper.
- Dry hands well with new paper towel (preferable), a dryer or your own cloth.

Poster to be displayed with this information at each hand-washing area.

http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/downloads/hand_wash_poster.pdf

Using gloves

Gloves are not a substitute for hand washing. If gloves are used, care should be taken to ensure that hygienic practices are still implemented when handling food.

Cleaning schedule

A cleaning schedule ensures that cleaning is conducted in a structured and routine manner. *The Health and Safety in Children's Centres, Model Policies and Practices* (2003) recommends the use of a neutral detergent and water for general cleaning and a chemical sanitiser for food contact surfaces and utensils.

DAILY CLEANING SCHEDULE:

Task	Method	Participants	Responsible
Put away activities	Put equipment in its rightful home	Children	Educator
Clean tables	Spray cleaner, green cloth , warm soapy water	Children	Educator
Put away snack foods	Put equipment in its rightful home	Children	Educator
Wash snack dishes, dry and put away	Detergent, warm soapy water, bucket, clean tea towel	Children	Educator
Throw away left overs	Into food bin, recycling bin	children	Educator
Wipe down tables/benchtops	Spray cleaner, green cloth, warm soapy water	Children	Educator
Wipe-out stove/microwave if used	Spray cleaner, pink cloth, warm soapy water	Children	Educator
Wipe down food trolley	Spray cleaner, green cloth , warm soapy water	Children	Educator
Sweep Floors	Broom, dust pan boom	Children	Educator
Mop Floors	Mop & bucket , warm soapy water	Children	Educator
Vacuum Rug	Vacuum cleaner	Children	Educator
Take rubbish to outside bin		Children	Educator
Wipe over bin	Spray cleaner, pink cloth, warm soapy water	Children	Educator

- Clean areas with warm soapy water as soon as practicable after the preparation of food and drinks.
- Wash all utensils, crockery, plastic wear and glasses in warm, soapy water and rinse in hot water. Leave dishes to air dry; do not place a tea towel over them.

WEEKLY

Task	Responsible
School cleaners clean hall	cleaners
Wash tea towels	Committee Roster
Wash smocks	Committee Roster

MONTHLY

Task	Responsible
Clean out fridge	Educator
Clean out pantry of items past used by	Educator
Wipe out fridge, pantry	Educator
Clean and wipe out any other food areas	Educator
Wash out rubbish bins	Educator

EVERY TERM

Task	Method	Responsible
Wipe down toys	vinegar on cloth	educator
Wipe down computer screens	metholated spirits, vinegar on cloth	educator
Wash couch cover		committee

- Discard any plastic plates, bowls, cups or chopping boards with deep scratches.

CLOTHS FOR WIPING UP

Cloth colour	Used for
Green	tables and hard surfaces
Pink	dishes, ovens etc
Yellow	floors
Paper towels	floors, paints, messy spills
Tissues	for noses, body fluids

Working bees

If working bees are introduced a list of items will be created in conjunction with staff, children and committee.

Attachment 3 - Responsible consumption of hot drinks

'Burns and scalds are among the most distressing injuries that a child can receive. Although rarely fatal in children they may cause considerable pain, often need prolonged treatment and can result in lifelong disfigurement through scarring.'

Monash University Accident Research Centre (2004)

The most common scenario for scalds is a child pulling, for example, a cup of tea, coffee or hot water from a table or running into a person holding a hot drink with the hot drink spilling over the child's head and face, upper arm and chest.

The use of lukewarm drinks in mugs, cups or lidded mugs in areas accessed by children should be considered with caution as they may be practical but are not necessarily a safe practice. This practice may also be considered as poor role-modelling as it gives the impression that it is acceptable to consume hot drinks around children.

Procedure

For the preparation and consumption of hot drinks are:

- Hot drinks should only be prepared and consumed in areas not accessed by children, such as kitchen, staff room and office.
- Hot drinks should not be taken into or through children's rooms, outdoor areas or any other area accessible to children while children are in attendance or participating in the program.

The committee and staff should ensure that:

- No hot drinks are consumed in children's areas while children are in attendance or participating in a program.
- Parents or guardians on duty, visitors to the centre, students, volunteers and any other persons participating in the program are informed of the centre's hot drink procedures and the reasons for it.
- Children enrolled and participating in the program do not have access to unlicensed areas of the building. This includes **main school area, staffroom, classrooms, library, adult toilets**.
- Parents or guardians assisting with the program or performing committee-related duties actively supervise children in their care who are not enrolled in the program, such as siblings.
- A staff member with a current first-aid qualification is present during ALL SESSIONS.

Committee and staff should also consider:

- Educating users of the centre in the prevention of burns and scalds by providing information on safe practices to prevent burns and scalds in the home, including appropriate first aid for scalds. This can be provided in newsletters, noticeboard displays, informal discussions and by role-modelling.

Special events

Safety procedures in relation to hot drinks should be considered and implemented at any social events during and outside operational hours where children will be present at the centre, such as working bees, family barbecues and special visitor days. This could include:

- Offering alternative drink/s to adults at social events during operational hours; for example, juice, water and iced coffee
- Safe location of any urns and power cords
- Preparation and consumption of hot drinks only in a limited area, which is not accessed by the children.