

Gloucester City Council

Factsheet

GUIDANCE FOR CHILDMINDERS

INTRODUCTION

What you may not realise is that, as a childminder, if you provide food for the children you look after you are running a food business.

This means you are required to comply with the requirements of the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006. Food Safety Enforcement Officers from the local Council may, after giving at least 24 hours notice, inspect the parts of your house used to store or prepare food.

This factsheet is designed to help you comply with the Regulations, and take the necessary steps to ensure that the food you serve is safe. It covers the minimum standards required by this authority.

There are 4 main points to remember for good food hygiene, they are called the 4 C's : **Chilling, Cross Contamination, Cleaning and Cooking.**

Chilling / Storage of Food

Always buy your food from reputable suppliers.

When purchasing chilled or frozen food it is important to make sure that it is kept cool and does not defrost, this will prevent bacteria from growing. Defrosted food should never be re-frozen. In warm weather a cool box and ice pack could be used.

Food should be put into fridges and freezers straight away. This also applies to packed lunches, baby food and milk.

Always store raw food covered at the bottom of the fridge and cooked food at the top to stop juices from raw food dripping onto cooked food (cross contamination).

Fridges and freezers should be checked regularly to ensure they are working correctly, it is a good idea to have a thermometer to easily check the internal temperature. This should be 5°C or less for a fridge and between -18°C and -21°C for a freezer.

Check 'Use By' and 'Best Before' dates on your food. Food must NEVER be used past its 'Use by' date. Check the manufacturers instructions on how long to keep food once it has been opened. Also jars of sauces, jams, etc. may need to be stored in the fridge once opened, check the labels.



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Cross Contamination / Preparation

Ensure frozen food is thoroughly defrosted before use, this is best done covered in the bottom of the fridge. (Check manufacturers instructions).

It is recommended NOT to wash raw meat under a running tap as this can splash bacteria around the sink area.

Always keep raw and cooked food separate. Clean and disinfect chopping boards and utensils between using them for raw or cooked food.

Clean and disinfect surfaces before preparing food for children in your care.

Wash vegetables, salad and fruit before use.



Handwashing / Infection Control

Correct handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent contamination of food. This should be done:

- Before preparing food
- After going to the toilet
- After touching raw food, including eggs and vegetables.
- After changing nappies or taking children to the toilet
- After handling pets



Nappy changing must not be done in the kitchen. Soiled nappies must not be left in the kitchen. Hands should be dried with clean hand towels or paper towels.

Cuts and skin infections must be covered with a waterproof dressing.

If you or a family member shows symptoms of food poisoning (vomiting, diarrhoea, stomach cramps, fever) you must not prepare food or look after other people's children for at least 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.

If your child or a child in your care vomits in your home this can lead to contamination of surfaces and flooring. Effective cleaning and disinfection is essential, put soiled clothing in a sealed bag. Disinfect hand contact surfaces i.e. door/fridge handles, telephones, toilets. Exclude sick children for 48 hours after symptoms cease.

Laundry should not be carried out during times of food preparation and any soiled clothing and detergents should not come into contact with food preparation areas.

Cooking of Food

Meat, especially burgers and sausages, must be thoroughly cooked to kill most bacteria. This can be done by cutting into the food to make sure there are no pink bits or checking that the juices run clear. The core temperature of meat and fish should reach 75°C or above if you are using a probe thermometer. If food is not to be served straight away it should be either kept hot or cooled quickly and put in the fridge.

Re-heating food should only be done once and must never be just warmed up; it should be re-heated until it is piping hot or to the same temperature as for cooked food and left to cool slightly before being eaten.

If using eggs ensure they are cooked so that the yolk is hard. Do not serve raw egg dishes to children, e.g. homemade mousses, mayonnaise, homemade ice cream.

Cleaning



Dishcloths can carry millions of bacteria. It is recommended to use disposable cloths and a food safe sanitizing spray when cleaning work surfaces. If dishcloths or tea towels are used they must be changed regularly and washed on a hot wash in a washing machine on their own and not with personal clothing.

Allergens

Some foods can cause an allergic reaction in some people. It is important to know if the children in your care are allergic to any foods and what to do if they have an allergic reaction in your care. The most common foods are nuts, dairy, gluten, eggs, fish, shellfish.



Training

Whilst there is no requirement for you to have formal food hygiene training you must understand what you need to do to ensure food is safe to eat.



Pets



Pets should be kept out of food rooms. If you think your cat has been on the surface then disinfect the surface before food preparation.

Documentation / Records

It is good practice to keep records to show enforcement officers when they visit. This can be in a diary where you note down temperatures of fridges / freezer, any training undertaken, any illness (adults or children), complaints and what was done to rectify any problems. This is known as exception reporting.