

## POLICY AIM

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We aim to ensure that all Sweetpeas services:

- maintain high quality food storage practices and minimise the risk of food borne illnesses
- minimise cross infection
- maintain hygiene and safety in food preparation areas, and when handling and serving food
- prevent the spread of bacteria on food through careful handling, storage and serving of all food.

## RATIONALE

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Food can easily become contaminated, therefore causing harm to anyone eating it through allergic reactions or food poisoning. In the interest of the safety and wellbeing of the children, educators, staff and families at Sweetpeas, it is essential to have adequate procedures and policies in place to ensure safe food handling and hygiene practices that meet Work Health and Safety Standards and current Food Safety Standards. As part of our commitment to children's health, safety and wellbeing, we role-model food safety and hygiene practices.

## SCOPE - WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY?

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- Children
- Educators/Staff
- Families
- Management
- Students/Visitors

## NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD

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### QUALITY AREA 2 (CHILDREN'S HEALTH SAFETY)

- Standard 2.1 (Health) - *Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.*
- Element 2.1.1 (Wellbeing and comfort) - *Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.*
- Element 2.1.2 (Health practices and procedures) - *Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.*
- Element 2.1.3 (Healthy lifestyle) - *Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.*
- Standard 2.2 (Safety) - *Each child is protected.*

### QUALITY AREA 4 (STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS)

- Element 4.2.2 (Professional Standards) - *Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.*

## RELATED POLICIES & LEGISLATION

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### RELATED SWEETPEAS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Bottle Preparation Procedure
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Food Safety and Hygiene Procedure
- Handwashing Policy
- Handwashing Procedure
- Infectious Diseases Policy
- Kitchen Dishwashing Sanitisation Procedure
- Medical Conditions Policy

### RELATED EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS:

- Regulation 77 - Health, hygiene and safe food practices
- Regulation 78 - Food and beverages
- Regulation 79 - Service providing food and beverages
- Regulation 80 - Weekly menu

# Food Preparation, Safety and Storage Policy

- Regulation 162 - Health information to be kept in enrolment record
- Regulation 168 - Education and care service must have policies and procedures
- Regulation 170 Policies and procedures to be followed
- Regulation 171 Policies and procedures to be kept available

## RELATED LEGISLATION:

- Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994
- Food Standards Code
- NSW Food Act 2003
- NSW Food Regulation 2015

## TERMINOLOGY

- **Dietary requirements** - Food and beverages provided by a service must have regard to individual children's dietary requirements, meaning:
  - each child's growth and development needs
  - any specific cultural, religious or health requirements.
- **Food safety** - Safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children.
- **Risk Minimisation ID tags** - the ID tags utilised by Sweetpeas to identify children with dietary needs, including anaphylaxis, allergies, intolerances, and family preferences (see *Medical Conditions Policy* for more information)
- **Risk minimisation** - as per our *Medical Conditions Policy*, each child enrolled with a medical condition has a risk minimisation plan, outlining the procedures in place to ensure that the risks of the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition are assessed and minimised.

## GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

- **FSANZ** - Food Standards Australia New Zealand - a statutory authority operating under the *Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991*.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES

### FOOD PREPARATION

Educators and staff must follow the procedures outlined below:

- Utilising *Risk Minimisation ID tags* to correctly identify any food that is specific to individual children.
- Having an area specifically designated for food preparation in which they:
  - Adequately clean the food preparation area before, during and after use.
  - Follow procedures by using colour coded chopping boards for appropriate foods to avoid cross contamination between foods.
- Ensuring that food preparation staff follow appropriate hygiene procedures in regards to:
  - Hand washing.
  - Personal hygiene: of clothing, keeping hair tied back, under a hat or in a hair net (provided), not changing nappies prior to food preparation etc.
  - Appropriate cleaning and maintenance of cooking utensils and work areas. E.g. wash and air-drying utensils, wash, and air-drying cleaning cloths.
- Avoiding the contamination of one work area to another by using the colour coded cloth system and restricting the movement of contaminated items (such as gloves and cleaning implements) from one area to another.
- Ensuring that food is always served in a hygienic manner by the use of a barrier, such as tongs and gloves.
- Provide current information to families about best practices for food preparation and hygiene.
- Model and discuss with the children best practices for food preparation and hygiene as well as the reasons for these. This will be implemented through planned and spontaneous experiences.

# Food Preparation, Safety and Storage Policy

- Provide all educators/staff that are preparing or serving food with training on food hygiene, preparation and handling.
- Ensure all individual dietary requirements are catered for in meal preparation by checking the list of requirements displayed on *Risk Minimisation ID tags* in the kitchen.
  - Ensure that there is no cross contamination of allergens by preparing an individual's food prior to adding any ingredients that are known intolerances or allergens.
- Students and volunteers should not be involved in the preparation of food, unless it is a requirement of their training, and they are directly supervised by a trained member of staff.

## FOOD STORAGE

Food storage standards are determined by FSANZ and the relevant Authority. These state that:

- Food must be stored in areas designed for food storage.
- Refrigerators and freezers are to have thermometers.
- Raw food should be stored separately/below ready to eat food in the refrigerator.
- Foods should never be stored with chemicals and cleaning equipment, clothing or the personal belongings of educators/staff.
- Food containers should be in good condition and should be washed and sanitised before use.
- Canned food should be stored in a sealed container once opened and used.

Safe Food Storage will be facilitated by:

- Educators/staff & management accessing and providing current information about food storage practices.
- Cleaning fridge and freezer regularly (weekly).

Educators/staff implement the following procedures when storing food in the centre:

- Inspecting food items when they are purchased to ensure they are in appropriate condition (i.e. not in damaged packaging), are within their use by date and of the correct temperature.
- Ensuring that food is then stored appropriately on the following key points:
  - All foods (dry, cold or frozen) are stored in the FIFO rule (First In, First Out) by rotating stock to make sure older stock is used first to prevent spoilage.
  - Store dry foods in sealed containers.
  - Store foods on shelving.
  - Placing food that has been removed from its original packaging in a container that has its use by date recorded.
  - Ensure the storage area is dry, clean, well ventilated, not in direct sunlight and free from vermin/pests.
  - Prevent vermin/pests by cleaning of any spills and removal of garbage.
  - Store raw and cooked foods separately in the fridge - never store raw food above cooked food as juices may drip and contaminate it.
  - All foods are covered, wrapped, dated and labelled.

Follow the *Food Safety Standards* for temperature control and storage of potentially hazardous foods:

- Foods are stored at the correct temperature;
  - cold foods: less than 5°C
  - frozen foods: less than -18°C.
  - hot foods: 60°C or hotter.
- Keep processing or preparation time as short as possible
- Store food once it has sufficiently cooled - foods will cool more quickly in smaller shallow containers. Cooked foods need to cool to 5°C or colder as quickly as possible; faster cooling times limit the time bacteria is able to grow or form toxins
  - Standards require food to be cooled from 60°C to 21°C in a maximum of two hours and from 21°C to 5°C within a further maximum period of four hours.
- If you reheat cooked and cooled food, you must reheat it rapidly to 60°C or above. You should aim to reheat food to 60°C within a maximum of two hours to minimise the amount of time that the food is at temperatures that favour bacteria growth of toxin formation.
- Temperature of fridge and freezer will be recorded daily to ensure the food is being stored at appropriate temperature.

## FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE

To ensure a hygienic and food-safe environment, all Sweetpeas services:

- Have a specific designated area for food preparation and storage (see above)
- Store food and drink appropriately as communicated by the Food Safety Standards (see above)

### *Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) Requirement*

One staff member must hold Food Safety Supervisor certificate. Food service, caterer and related retail businesses in NSW need to meet new food safety requirements in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code).

Food Standard 3.2.2A aims to improve food safety by introducing 3 tools:

- Food Safety Supervisor (FSS)
- food handler training
- showing food is safe.

FSS staff must pass on food safety procedures and information to all educators planning, preparing or storing food.

### *All staff should follow appropriate food handling and hygiene procedures, including:*

- Handwashing Procedure (including observing when handwashing should be undertaken)
- Food Safety and Hygiene Procedure
- Bottle Preparation Procedure
- Kitchen Dishwashing Sanitisation Procedure

Appropriate food preparation procedures include:

- Using colour coded chopping boards
- Using colour coded cleaning cloths
- Using blue gloves when handling and preparing food
- Cleaning and maintenance of food preparation areas
- Following dietary requirements as stated on *Risk Minimisation ID tags*, displayed in kitchen

### *The delivery of food to Sweetpeas services:*

The following are examples of some of the practical steps Sweetpeas takes to make sure that potentially hazardous food is safe when it is delivered to each service:

- If food should be frozen, check it when it is delivered to make sure that it is frozen and has not begun to thaw.
- If food should be chilled or hot, you check the temperature of the food when it is delivered and make sure that it is at or below 5°C or at or above 60°C.
- If food should be delivered within safe time limits, check the records of delivery departure and arrival times to ensure that the delivery took place within the agreed time limit.
- Staff need not check every food item or relevant delivery record but they should check some items to make sure that the suppliers are doing the right thing.

### *Sweetpeas educates and promotes safe food handling and hygiene to educators, children, and families by:*

- Sourcing and providing current information from recognised authorities to families
- Undertake relevant training in food handling and hygiene and sharing this information between all staff at each service
- Encourage and promote discussion and awareness of food hygiene and safety practices with the children through spontaneous and planned experiences
- Model appropriate practices with food handling and hygiene
- Being aware of any medical conditions or allergies in relation to food and adjusting the menu or food preparation procedures accordingly
- Being aware of and respecting any cultural or religious practices in relation to food preparation and handling of food and drinks.

## OOSH SERVICES

- Children are encouraged to plan, prepare and serve their own food, where possible;
- Children are encouraged to use tongs, gloves and are supervised at all times while preparing and or cooking food;
- Children are educated on hygiene and cross contamination at an age appropriate level;
- Children are assisted by educators dependent on their age, stage and skill level.

## BREASTMILK AND FORMULA

### Thawing frozen breast milk

- Breast milk can be thawed in the fridge or at room temperature in a warm water bath.
- Breast milk that has been thawed in the fridge but not warmed should be used within 24 hours, and should not be refrozen.
- Breast milk that has been thawed outside the fridge in warm water can be used immediately, or stored in the fridge for up to 4 hours.

### Warming Breast Milk

- Breast milk should NEVER be microwaved. It destroys the immunological properties in the breast milk.
- Breast milk should be warmed by standing the bottle in warm water.
- Bottle warmers can be used, but they must have a thermostat control. Bottles should only be warmed in this way for less than 10 minutes.
- Before giving the child a drink from the bottle: - put the teat/bottle top back on, and invert the bottle at least 10 times - make sure the breast milk is cool to touch - test by placing several drops on the back of the hand

### Storing Infant Formula

- Infant formula should be named, dated, labelled and stored immediately in the centre at the back part of the fridge where it is coldest (not in the fridge door where it is warmer).
- Discard the contents of partially used bottles after 1 hour. Reusing half empty bottles is risky once they have been heated and sucked on.

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*Tips for parents: the safest way to transport formula is to take the cooled, boiled water and the powdered formula in separate containers and mix them when needed. When it is necessary to transport prepared formula (or expressed breast milk) it must be icy cold when leaving home and be carried in an insulated pack to keep it cold.*

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### Warming Formula

- Microwaving infant formula is not recommended by the NHMRC for safety reasons; they do not heat the milk evenly and may create hot spots in the milk which could burn the baby's mouth.
- Formula and breast milk should be warmed in the bottle warmer.
- Before giving the child a drink from the bottle:
  - put the teat/bottle top back on, and invert the bottle at least 10 times
  - make sure formula is cool to touch
  - test by placing several drops on the back of the hand.

## RELATED SWEETPEAS DOCUMENTS

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- Kitchen Checklist Fortnightly
- Kitchen Checklist Weekly
- Medical Conditions Risk ID forms

- Risk Minimisation ID tags
- Risk Minimisation Plans

## REFERENCES

- Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0 (EYLF)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Food Safety Standards: [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2018
- My Time, Our Place: Framework For School Age Care in Australia V2.0 (MTOF)
- National Health and Medical Research Council (2024) - Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (6th Ed.)
- NSW Food Authority: [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)
- Sweetpeas Philosophy
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017
- WorkCover NSW [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au)

## REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

This policy will be updated regularly to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with *Regulation 172* of the National Regulations, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.

Version	Amendment(s)	Review Date	Updated By
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy implemented</li> <li>• Merged 3x previous Sweetpeas policies (Food Storage Policy, Food Safety and Hygiene Policy, Food Preparation Policy)</li> <li>• Added link to Medical Conditions Policy</li> <li>• Added breast milk and formula information for Sweetpeas St Marys</li> </ul>	September 2022	Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager)  Janine Evans (Managing Director)
1.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added Risk Minimisation ID tags to Terminology section for clearer understanding.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Checked all references to the tags used the same terminology.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Minor cosmetic changes for ease of reading.</li> <li>• Read through to identify what might need updating to comply with the changes to the FSANZ Food Standards Code.</li> <li>• Further changes to occur by December to ensure compliance.</li> </ul>	July 2023	Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager)
1.2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checked hotlinks</li> <li>• changes to Food Standards delayed to Dec 2024</li> <li>• Small format fixes</li> </ul>	July 2024	Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager)
1.3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added food safety supervisor section - Standard 3.2.2A</li> <li>• Added OOSH services</li> <li>• Updated references</li> </ul>	January 2025	Janine Evans (Managing Director)  Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager)