



FOOD SAFETY POLICY

Introduction – Equal Opportunities and Scope

Food safety means all measures necessary to ensure the safety and wholesomeness of food during preparation, storing, transportation, distribution, handling and offering for sale or supply to our customers. Where Norfolk County Council (NCC) is providing or assisting to provide food for those using our services or to members of the public, it has a duty to ensure it provides food which has been hygienically prepared.

Good food hygiene is essential in ensuring that the food people eat is safe. Poor food hygiene can put people at risk, and the harmful bacteria that result in food poisoning can spread very easily causing serious illness. This is especially dangerous for people who are very young or old or who are physically ill or vulnerable.

This Policy and Guidance identifies good practices to be followed by all those involved with food related activities.

NCC expects staff to adhere to this policy in line with NCC's obligations under equality legislation. Managers must ensure that all reasonable adjustments or supportive measures are considered to allow equality of access and opportunity regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, faith or religion, gender identity, pregnancy or marital status.

Enforcing Authorities

The Enforcing Authority for food hygiene regulations is the Local Authority Environmental Health Department for the area in which the premises or service activities are based. Under Food Safety Law provisions, Environmental Health Officers have the right to inspect all premises classed as 'Food Businesses'. They have the power to issue Improvement notices, and Emergency Prohibition Notices on food businesses that fail to meet proper standards of food safety. Any requirements by Environmental Health Officers must be actioned appropriately and within any time limits if specified by the Enforcing Officer.

Registration of Premises

Premises classed as 'Food Businesses' must be registered with their Local Authority Environmental Health Department. Registration allows the Local Authority to keep an up to date list of all premises operating in their area, and these premises will be subject to inspection by an Environmental Health Officer. Many premises within NCC will be subject to registration.

Including educational establishments such as our Federation schools.

General Requirements and Safe Practice Guidance

The general requirements and safe practice guidance forms part of this Food Safety Policy. It has been produced to encourage responsibility for correct food hygiene and it will provide a framework around which any NCC service can build a system ensuring its proper hygienic operation. The safe practice elements have been sourced and summarised from 'Safer Food, Better Business' produced by the Food Standards Agency. This publication is widely endorsed by the Local Enforcing Authorities and compliance to it will meet statutory duties placed upon us. The full pack can be downloaded free from the Food Standards Agencies website.

Verification and record keeping are essential parts of any food hygiene management system, and the Full Pack will greatly assist managers in their responsibilities for this.



Training

Qualifications have been developed by The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, to cover key food safety issues for all levels of involvement with food related work activities.

CIEH Level 1 Award in Food Safety Awareness in Catering

This is suitable for staff induction training including:-

New staff with minimal or no food safety knowledge

Staff handling low-risk or wrapped foods only

Front of house staff such as waiting or check out staff

Back of house staff such as kitchen porters or warehouse staff

CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering

This is suitable for anyone who assists / prepares / cooks or handles food, whether care services, care homes, schools or restaurant / café type environments. This is the recommended level of training for all NCC staff who are food handlers (Food Handler – anyone involved in the preparation, storage or service of food).

CIEH Level 3 Award in Supervising Food Safety in Catering

This is suitable for Managers / supervisors who are responsible for implementing systems for controlling and monitoring those points critical for food safety.

CIEH Level 4 Award in Managing Food Safety in Catering

This award has been designed to provide an in-depth understanding of food safety with an emphasis on the importance of the management of systems and staff. This is a high level practical qualification with external accreditation.

Local providers of these courses can be found by contacting The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, either by accessing their website or contacting their customer Services on 020 7827 5800.

Fitness for Work

Staff should be fit for work at all times. This means that they must not be suffering from, or carrying, an illness or disease that could cause a problem with food safety. Any staff member who has diarrhoea and / or vomiting should report it to their manager immediately and either stay at home or go home straight away. Staff who have had diarrhoea and / or vomiting should not return to work until they have had no symptoms for 48 hours. People suffering from these symptoms often carry harmful bacteria on their hands and can spread them to the food they touch. Even if the diarrhoea and vomiting have stopped, they can still carry harmful bacteria for 48 hours afterwards.

Staff should tell their manager if they have any cuts or sores and these should be completely covered with a brightly coloured waterproof dressing. Cuts and sores can carry harmful bacteria. Covering them prevents bacteria spreading to food. Wearing a brightly coloured dressing (usually a blue plaster) will allow for this to be easily spotted if the dressing falls into the food.

If staff are not fit for work, move them out of the food handling areas or send them home. Throw away any unwrapped foods they have handled.

Managers Responsibilities

Managers – in our Federation Schools this is the Headteacher, where any food related activities are part of their work or service, are responsible for ensuring all foods are prepared in a safe and hygienic manner. This requires Managers to:-

- Identify the potential food hazards within their operations
- Implement effective control and monitoring procedures at those points critical to food safety (the nature and complexity of these will depend on the nature and complexity of the operations - the safe practice guidance will assist managers here)



- Co-operate fully with Local Authority Environmental Health Officers and any officer designated by NCC to carry out inspections of food premises / activities or any other investigations
- Ensure requirements following inspection from Environmental Health Officers and any officer designated by NCC to carry out inspections of food premises are dealt with and within any specified time limits
- Ensure all staff handling food receive the appropriate training commensurate with their duties
- Ensure where employing Norse or any other outside contactor to run / provide food facility on your behalf, they comply with the provisions of this policy and guidance.
- Ensure that where people using our services are involved in food preparation and handling, proper hygiene and safe practices are maintained. The responsible manager should assess the service users capabilities in relation to the tasks undertaken, in order to avoid any risk arising from poor hygiene (the guidance accompanying this policy should be followed as closely as reasonably possible as monitoring standards of hygiene is still required of Managers)

Staff Responsibilities

All staff who buy / prepare / assist someone else / handles food as part of their work activities must:-

- Follow the control measures which have been identified as critical to food safety
- Ensure standards are maintained by their own actions in accordance with the safe practice guidance
- Report any symptoms of ill health to their manager / immediate supervisor
- Undertake the relevant training as instructed by their manager
- Inform their manager of any concerns relating to the safety of food being prepared or served.