Food Safety and Hygiene Policy

The Peter Toms Early Learning Centre aims to protect the safety and well being of all of our staff, children and families. Therefore, we aim to have adequate procedures and policies in place to ensure the safe handling of food and also maintain a hygiene level that meets Occupational Health & Safety standards. This aim will be followed by staff acting upon the below information:

The Peter Toms Early Learning Centre will have an area specifically designed for food preparation and storage which is safe and to Australia hygiene standards. We will also store all food and drink to standards indicated by current authorities and information.

Our Centre will provide workplace instructions for:

- Hand washing routines.
- Timing of hand washing routines.

The Peter Toms Early Learning Centre will also follow appropriate food preparation techniques to meet **Food Standards Australia New Zealand** such as:

- Wash hands before food preparation
- Cleaning food preparation area before, during and after use.
- Using colour-coded chopping boards in order to prevent cross contamination of raw food.
- Ensuring that staff preparing food know, follow and adhere to the appropriate hygiene procedures including:
  - Washing their hands
  - Keeping their personal hygiene at a high level. For example, tying their hair back.
  - Not wearing jewellery (wedding band excluded)
  - Covering cuts with a blue bandaid and gloves
  - Not changing nappies or toilet assistance before preparing food.
- Avoiding the contamination of one work area to another by having specific cleaning implements for a specific area.
- Clean children’s tables with detergent and warm water and dry before serving food.
- Ensuring food is always served in a hygienic way for example, washing hands prior to serving food, using tongs and serving utensils.
- Clean children’s tables with detergent and warm water and dry after meal times.
- Showing and discussing with children the need for food hygiene in both planned and spontaneous experiences.
Food Safety and Temperature Control
The bacteria that commonly causes food poisoning grows rapidly between 5°C and 60°C. This is commonly referred to as the “temperature danger zone”. To keep food safe:

- Don’t leave perishable foods in the temperature danger zone for longer than 2 hours
- Keep cold food in a fridge, freezer, below 5°C until you are ready to cook or serve, eg if you are serving salads keep them in the fridge until ready to serve
- Keep hot food in an oven or on a stove, above 60°C until you are ready to serve
- Never defrost hazardous foods on the bench top. Foods should be defrosted overnight in the fridge or in the microwave
- Use a thermometer to make sure your fridge is below 5°C. Don’t overload refrigerators, as this reduces cooling efficiency
- Store dry foods in sealed, air-tight containers.
- Any food removed from its original container must be stored in a container with the used by date of the food written on it.
- Ensure the food storage area is well cleaned, ventilated, dry, pest free and not in direct sunlight.
- Prevent pests by cleaning spills as quickly as possible and removing garbage/waste frequently.
- All foods are wrapped, covered, dated (used by date and open date) and labeled.
- Store foods on shelves, never on the floor.
- Store raw and cooked foods separately. NEVER store raw foods on top of cooked foods as juices may drip down and contaminate the cooked food.
- Store food once it has sufficiently cooled down. Foods cool quicker in smaller, shallow containers.
- Fridges and freezers need to be cleaned regularly and fridge door seals checked to be in good repair.
- The operating temperature of the fridge and freezer need to be checked regularly and a record kept of this.

We will also to the best of our ability educate and promote safe food handling and hygiene in the children and families by:

- Provide staff food handling safety information from Food standards Australia New Zealand.
- Encouraging staff to present themselves as role models. This means maintaining good personal nutrition and eating with the children at meal times when possible.
- Providing nutrition and/ or food safety training opportunities for staff.

Legislative Requirements

**Federal**
- Food Safety Standards for Australia 2001
- Food Standards Australia and New Zealand Act 1991
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994

**Sources**

**Victoria**
- Food Act 1984
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Review will be conducted by:
- The Peter Toms Early Learning Centre staff
- Families

Policy date created: 14th July 2011,