

## FOOD SAFETY RULES – Childminders

### ***Purchase***

- Always buy food from reputable suppliers. In warm weather carry high-risk foods (ones that need refrigeration) in cool boxes or bags. Always separate raw foods from ready-to-eat foods.
- Check that prepacked foods are in date.

### ***Storage***

- Regularly check your fridge to make sure it is working properly using a simple thermometer (air temperature should be 5° C or less).
- Avoid over-loading your fridge as this will make it less effective. Regular defrosting will allow your fridge to be more efficient.
- Raw meat should be stored at the bottom of the fridge; other foods should be stored above.
- Store all dry goods in air-tight containers as open packets can attract pests.
- Check foods remain in date and rotate your stock.

### ***Preparation***

- Always wash your hands before preparing food, after using the toilet and after handling pets. Never dry your hands on tea towels —instead use separate hand towels or kitchen towels.
- Clean and disinfect the preparation area, including the sink, before and after preparing raw vegetables and meat as these can carry harmful bacteria, which can then be easily spread around the kitchen.
- Regularly disinfect work areas with a sanitizer that is safe for use on a food preparation area.
- Always wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly before use.

### ***Cooking***

- Follow recipes and label information regarding cooking times and temperatures.
- Check food is piping hot before serving. Double check that burgers, sausages, pork and poultry are cooked right through. They should not be 'rare' or pink in the middle and when pierced with a knife any juices that run out of the meat should be clear, not bloody.
- Avoid cooking foods too far in advance. Once cooked keep foods covered and piping hot (above 63°C) until its time to eat them.

If using a microwave to heat foods, stir them and leave to stand for a minute to avoid cold spots.

### ***Allergens***

Some allergic reactions can be fatal. It is important that you have regard to this hazard when preparing food and prevent cross contamination. You should never guess that a particular food is safe for someone with an allergy.

You should ask parents/guardians about a child's allergy before they start.

Allergic reactions can be caused by a variety of foods. The most common allergens include: -

- Cereals containing gluten.
- Peanuts and other nuts such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, Brazil nuts, cashew nuts, pecans, pistachios, macadamia, chestnuts and pine nuts.
- Certain fish and shellfish.
- Sesame seeds and products made from them.
- Eggs.
- Milk.
- Soybeans.
- Celery and celeriac.
- Mustard.

## ***Smoking***

From 1st July 2007 virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England are now smoke free.

This means areas of your private dwelling will become a workplace for the benefit of this legislation and you will no longer be able to smoke inside whilst you are at work.

If you choose to smoke outside whilst at work then you must take into consideration the effect that particulates and toxins that may cling to your clothes have on the people around you.

If you allow smoking to occur on your premises whilst you are not working, then you must ensure that the area is ventilated well before it is used as a workplace again.

For more information please visit [www.smokefreeengland.co.uk](http://www.smokefreeengland.co.uk) or call 0800 169 1697.

## ***Infection Control***

In some cases food-borne illness can be fatal. Children are more at risk of developing food-borne illness as their immune systems may be less developed. It is important that you are aware of what action you need to take if you, or any of the children you are responsible for, develop food poisoning-like symptoms. Food poisoning symptoms include diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach cramps, fever, nausea and headaches.

If you are ill:-

- Seek medical advice.
- Do not try to look after children if you have any food poisoning-like symptoms.
- Do not prepare food or drinks until at least 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped.

If children are ill: -

- Seek medical advice.
- Sick children should be kept at home until they have been symptom free for at least 48 hours.
- Soiled items and soiling on floors should be cleaned and disinfected as soon as possible.
- Wash hands thoroughly after taking children to the toilet and after changing nappies.
- Toilets and potties should be disinfected after use.
- Toys should be regularly cleaned to avoid a route for contamination.
- In any case children should be encouraged to wash their hands regularly, especially after going to the toilet, before eating and after touching pets.

**If you are in any doubt you should seek medical advice immediately or contact your local Environmental Health Department.**

## ***Health and Safety***

You must consider the risks to the health and safety of the children you look after and put in place control measures to reduce or eliminate them. It is best to write these assessments down.

For example you should consider access to stairs, access to external doors, presence of ponds, access to electrical equipment or sockets, access to chemicals, access to the kitchen and/or kitchen equipment.