

GUIDELINES FOR FOOD PREPARATION AT HOME OR AT SCHOOL

When you are preparing food for school events or class treats it is vital that you adhere to the following food preparation rules. This is because of the potential for illness being spread through improper preparation and the potential for severe allergic reactions.

ALLERGIES

As many people (children and adults) are severely allergic to various food items such as nuts through consumption and/or physical contact, you **MUST** ensure that your food does not contain nuts or any form of these. However, as we all know, manufacturers are adding 'may contain traces of nuts' to all their packaging to cover themselves. As a result, items labelled with ONLY 'may contain traces' are accepted for sharing for birthdays etc. Children with allergies would obviously not be given these items but the items would be allowed to be shared amongst others.

Your food must be labelled and a list of ingredients (or the packaging stating the ingredients) must be provided.

GUIDELINES

The following is a list of guidelines; most of them are common sense but are worth reviewing before you begin preparing your food:

- 1. IF YOU ARE ILL OR HAVE BEEN ILL IN THE PAST THREE DAYS, DO NOT PREPARE OR HANDLE FOOD**
Many illnesses can be inadvertently passed through food. If you have, or have had a cold, flu, vomiting or diarrhoea, you should wait until you have been well again for 3 days before you prepare or handle food.
- 2. ENSURE YOUR WORK AREA AND EQUIPMENT ARE CLEAN**
Work surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected with antibacterial kitchen spray.
The kitchen should be animal free.
Refrain from smoking tobacco products whilst preparing food.
- 3. PREPARING YOURSELF TO COOK**
If you have any skin conditions/cuts on your hands, secure plasters or disposable gloves should be worn.
Hair should be tied back.
Hands should be washed with soap and dried thoroughly.
- 4. PREPARING THE FOOD.**
Ensure all of your ingredients are fresh and within their shelf-life.
If you are thawing poultry or meat this should be done in advance (following instructions on the packaging). Speed thawing in the microwave is not safe as it can lead to incomplete thawing.
- 5. FOOD STORAGE.**
Once your food is prepared, ensure it is kept in an airtight container at the appropriate temperature. Hot food must be cooled quickly and thoroughly before storing in a refrigerator.
- 6. REHEATING AND SERVING.**
Food that needs to be reheated should be checked to ensure it is hot throughout.
Please ensure that a list of ingredients is available to be displayed with your food.

Please apply the above hygiene rules to any little helpers.

Thank you for your co-operation!