GEMS TINEY HOME NURSERY

HOME FROM HOME CHILDCARE

Food Safety Policy

Purpose

We prepare and serve food safely at Gems tiney Home Nursery, taking account of children's age, allergies, development and individual care needs. This policy covers storage, hygiene, preparation, safer eating and action if something goes wrong, including food brought from home and on outings.

Responsibilities and food safety management

Gemma ensures anyone handling or preparing food has suitable knowledge, training and supervision for the task. Relevant food hygiene training is maintained and refreshed as needed; a certificate alone does not establish competence. We follow Food Standards Agency guidance and maintain food safety procedures using Safer food, better business for childminders or an equivalent suitable system.

We meet food business registration and local environmental health requirements and cooperate with inspections. Food safety checks, faults and corrective action are recorded as appropriate. Pets are kept away from food preparation areas and food-contact surfaces and equipment.

Personal hygiene and cleaning

Adults and children wash hands with soap and water before food handling or eating and after toileting, nappy changing, touching animals or other contaminating tasks. Adults use clean clothing, secure long hair, cover cuts with suitable waterproof dressings and avoid jewellery or nail products that could contaminate food.

Work surfaces and equipment are cleaned effectively before and after use. We use appropriate food-safe cleaning and disinfection products according to instructions,

including contact time. Cloths and towels are changed and washed regularly; cleaning chemicals remain secure and separate from food.

Adults with vomiting or diarrhoea must not prepare or handle food for others until at least 48 hours after symptoms stop, and longer where specific medical or public health advice requires. Childcare sickness and exclusion procedures also apply.

Storage and preventing contamination

We check packaging, use-by dates and storage instructions and refrigerate chilled food promptly, including food supplied by families. Raw meat and fish are kept covered below ready-to-eat food. We use separate or thoroughly cleaned equipment and preparation areas to prevent cross-contamination and do not wash raw poultry.

The fridge is set at 5°C or below and checked daily; the freezer operates around minus 18°C. We investigate unsafe temperatures promptly and discard food where its safety cannot be established. Food is covered, dated where needed and stored away from chemicals, pests and contamination.

Food taken on outings is kept at safe temperatures, using cool bags and ice packs where needed. We follow the same allergy, hand hygiene and supervision arrangements away from home.

Cooking cooling and reheating

Food is cooked thoroughly, using a clean food thermometer where appropriate. A core temperature of 70°C for two minutes, or an equivalent safe combination such as 75°C for 30 seconds, is used for foods requiring thorough cooking. Follow product instructions and clean the probe between checks.

Serve promptly or keep hot food safely above 63°C until portioned. Cool food promptly for storage, ideally within one to two hours, and refrigerate or freeze. Refrigerated leftovers are used within 48 hours or frozen sooner, unless a shorter product-specific limit applies. Cooked rice is cooled as quickly as possible, ideally within one hour, refrigerated and used within 24 hours.

Defrost safely, usually in the fridge, following instructions. Reheat only once until steaming hot throughout, then cool to a safe eating temperature before serving. We do not save food left on a child’s plate for another meal.

Allergies and individual diets

Before attendance, parents provide information about allergies, intolerances, dietary requirements and health needs. We review this through ongoing discussion and keep clear written care and emergency plans where required. All relevant staff must know the child's needs, symptoms and emergency action.

We check ingredients and labels every time, including substitutions and food supplied by others. Information about the 14 regulated allergens is available for the food we provide. Separate storage, equipment and cleaning are used as necessary to prevent allergen cross-contact; children do not share food or utensils.

At each meal and snack an identified adult checks the right food reaches the right child and that preparation meets their dietary and choking needs. Required emergency medicines must be accessible to trained adults and secure from children. For suspected anaphylaxis, follow the child's emergency plan, give prescribed emergency treatment as trained and call 999.

Safer eating and choking prevention

Children eat seated safely and remain within sight and hearing of an adult throughout meals and snacks. An adult with a current full paediatric first aid certificate is in the room. Adults position themselves to observe closely, minimise distractions and help children manage mouthfuls without rushing or pressure.

We adapt texture and preparation to each child's development and discuss weaning regularly with parents. Small round foods such as grapes and cherry tomatoes are quartered lengthways; hard food is softened or prepared in suitable thin pieces and bones, stones and pips removed. Whole nuts are not offered to under-fives. Popcorn, marshmallows, hard sweets and raw jelly cubes are not offered to young children.

An adult responds immediately to choking using current first aid training, calls 999 when required and records any incident requiring intervention, such as back blows. Parents are informed and food preparation and supervision are reviewed.

Nutrition infant feeding and illness

We have regard to current EYFS nutrition guidance and provide balanced food, suitable drinking water and age-appropriate milk and feeds. No honey is given to under-ones. Breastmilk, formula and feeding equipment are labelled, stored and prepared safely according to current NHS guidance and individual arrangements; formula is not heated in a microwave.

Suspected foodborne illness is acted on promptly: provide appropriate care, contact parents, record affected children and foods and seek environmental health or public

health advice. We follow outbreak advice and review food safety procedures. Food poisoning affecting two or more children in our care is notified to tiney as soon as reasonably practicable and within 14 days; other serious incidents follow relevant reporting duties.

Review and references

Reviewed annually and after incidents or changes in needs or guidance. References: FSA Safer food, better business for childminders; FSA cooking and chilling guidance; Department for Education Food safety and current EYFS childminder framework and nutrition guidance; NHS infant feeding guidance. Related policies cover allergy and medication arrangements, infection control, accidents and healthy eating.

Policy owner: Gemma Bayley
Reviewed: November 2026
Next review due: November 2027