

## CHURCH@THEPEAK FOOD HANDLING POLICY

### 1. PREAMBLE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity around the procedures and principles adopted by the Parish of the Church at the Peak when preparing, handling and serving food as part of parish events.

Our parish has a duty of care for all its people and under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 is required to ensure the health and safety of all workers (including volunteers) while working for the parish and to not put the health and safety of other persons at risk from work carried out at the workplace<sup>1</sup>.

Poor food handling procedures can result in many illnesses and for those who experience anaphylaxis when exposed to certain foods the consequences can be life threatening. So we must ensure we take reasonable steps to provide food in a safe manner as a parish.

This policy applies in addition to any requirements Peakhurst South Public School (PSPS) has when we use the school property (e.g. **no nuts on the school property**). The risk of illness/injury caused by poor food handling practises can be significantly reduced by following the preventative measures outlined below.

The procedures outlined in this document aim to strike a reasonable balance between mitigating our risk and having practical measures that are easy to follow. For more detail on food safety see *Risk Management Module 4 – Food Safety* provided by Sydney Diocesan Services (SDS).

### 2. PERSONAL HYGIENE

Basic Personal Hygiene is essential to providing food in a safe manner.

#### ***Guidelines***

The following guidelines should be adhered to when handling food:

- Food should not be handled by anyone displaying any of the following symptoms:
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhoea
  - Fever

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<sup>1</sup> SDS Risk Management Module 4 – Food Safety – July 2018

- Sore Throat
- Exposed skin injuries or sores
- Hands should be washed on a regular basis, especially
  - Prior to handling any food
  - After using the toilet
  - After handling garbage
  - After coughing/sneezing/eating/drinking
  - After touching hair/scalp/face
  - After using a handkerchief or tissue
  - After handling raw meat

Consider using disposable gloves when handling food (and change between handling different types of food, e.g. raw vs cooked). Hands should still be washed before donning gloves.

Other guidelines to follow where practicable include:

- Clean as you go – keep all equipment and surfaces clean and sanitised.
- Avoid excessive jewellery.
- Minimise the direct handling of food.
- Prefer individual portions where possible (e.g. single serving sized packets of chips instead of one large bowl of chips for many people)
- Avoid serving foods where multiple “touches” are required to serve it (e.g. avoid serving a large bowl of popcorn/chips)

### ***Hand Washing***

The most common form of contact between food handlers and food is by the hands, so washing hands effectively is important for ensuring a hygienic environment. The ideal way to wash hands is:

- In a dedicated hand washing basin.
- Using hot running water.
- After massaging anti-bacterial liquid soap into your hands for 20 seconds.
- Rinsing well.
- Turning off taps with paper towel to avoid recontamination.
- Drying hands thoroughly with paper towel or air dryer.

### **3. Cleaning and Sanitising**

The purpose of cleaning is to remove visible items such as dust, dirt, food spillage, food particles, grease etc. in order to prevent the spread and transfer of food poisoning organisms.

The purpose of sanitising is to kill food poisoning bacteria and reduce the total number of bacteria to levels which will not cause cross contamination.

## ***Guidelines***

- Clean as you go
- Clean all spillages as they happen
- Clean equipment and utensils after each use

## **4. Contamination, Bacteria & Temperature Control**

Bacteria are everywhere (on humans, in dust, soil, water, air) but some foods are more likely to have harmful bacteria than others.

### ***Potentially hazardous foods to be aware of***

- Raw and cooked meat
- Dairy products
- Seafood
- Cooked rice and pasta
- Processed fruits and vegetables (e.g. salads)
- Protein rich foods such as eggs, beans, nuts

The risk of illness caused by bacteria can be mitigated by keeping food out of conditions that are favourable to bacteria growth, helping keep bacteria numbers below that which causes food poisoning. Specifically, bacteria thrive when they are:

- In temperatures between 5°C and 60°C, especially in the range 20°C to 45°C.
- In moist environments.
- Given enough time to grow.

### ***Ways to prevent contamination and cross contamination***

- Always maintain the highest level of personal hygiene.
- Ensure work surfaces and equipment are washed and sanitised before and after use.
- Always use a clean cutting board, knives and utensils to prevent cross contamination.
- Store and prepare raw and cooked foods separately.
- Minimise the handling of food.

### ***Ways to manage temperature of foods***

- Never refreeze thawed food as thawed foods are likely to have higher levels of bacteria, increasing the risk of food poisoning when served after it was thawed a second time.
- Cook food to a minimum core temperature of 75°C for at least 2 minutes. Where practical, use a clean thermometer to check the core temperature of the food.

- Minimise the time between when the food is cooked and when it is consumed.

### **5. Serving food**

In order to prevent cross contamination, food that is not packaged should be served with clean utensils (tongs, ladles, etc.), never with hands. Packaged food (e.g. individually wrapped biscuits) can be served/taken with hands, ensuring rubbish is disposed of promptly.

Some instances (e.g. morning tea after a Sunday service) may warrant the appointment of a server to distribute the food to parishioners in a hygienic manner (e.g. with tongs) rather than allowing parishioners to serve themselves. This can be particularly helpful when a “kids table” is being used, where young children may not yet fully appreciate the importance of hygienic practices in the serving of food.

### **6. Facility Maintenance**

All equipment used at the PSPS site (e.g. oven, fridge etc.) should be in working order. Any equipment found to be defective should not be used and should be reported to a member of staff / parish council so that PSPS can be made aware.

### **7. Waste Management**

Garbage bins should be clearly labelled and easily accessible. They should make use of bin liners, tight fitting lids be emptied regularly (e.g. at the end of the Sunday service) to minimise the buildup of bacteria, vermin and insects.

### **8. Pest Control**

The presence of pests such as flies, cockroaches and rodents makes for an unhygienic and unsafe environment in which to handle food. To help prevent pests:

- Follow good waste disposal procedures.
- Keep the working environment clean.
- Keep food covered at all times.

### **9. Managing Anaphylaxis**

Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction and is potentially life threatening. It must be treated as a medical emergency, requiring immediate treatment and urgent medical attention. A severe

allergic reaction usually occurs within 20 minutes of exposure and can rapidly become life threatening.

### **No nut policy**

It is the policy of Church@thePeak that no foods containing nuts should be served at any time as part of a parish event. In addition to this, PSPS requires that no nuts are brought onto the school premises.

### ***Other mitigations***

- Volunteers on rosters for morning/afternoon tea/suppers/dinners to be made aware of the risk of anaphylaxis
- Parish to be reminded annually of PSPS position on not bringing nuts to school
- Food should not be provided as part of kids church activities (i.e. by leaders). Families feeding their own children their own food is not prohibited (as long as it doesn't contain nuts)
- For off-site activities where food will be provided ensure sign-up forms contain a section for parents to declare food allergies/anaphylaxis.
- Volunteers reminded annually of food handling guidelines.

### **10. CHURCH LUNCHES**

Church lunches are wonderful part of church life. To reduce that chance of a food handling incident the following items are requirements for running a church lunch:

- No "pot luck" style lunches
- All food is to be prepared/served with controlled cooking (e.g. slow cookers/rice cookers that maintain their own temperature)
- The team involved is made aware of the food handling policy.
- An event coordinator is appointed to ensure proper food handling policies are applied.

### **11. POLICY REVIEW**

The Food Handling Policy will be reviewed and revised by Parish Council as often as needed, with a thorough review every three years.

Parish Council must approve all reviews, amendments and changes to this policy.

**Approved by a resolution of the Parish Council of \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2023.**