

## Food Handling Procedures

### Purpose:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children and teachers to prevent the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Instructing the employees in healthy and proper practices regarding handling children's meals while they are at school
- Parental awareness about the importance of proper nutrition for children during a coronavirus outbreak

### Hygienic handling of food

The Nursery to:

- Follow a strict protocol of all sanitary procedures regarding the handling of food containers and items in order to avoid cross-contamination and the potential spread of COVID-19.
- Sanitary procedures include, but are not limited to: staff washing their hands before and after handling each child's belongings; effective storage of child's food items to minimize cross contamination; encouraging increased independence of children aged 2-4 to ensure they handle their own food containers and items; cleaning all surfaces that are in contact with food containers; and sanitary procedures for bottle preparation.
- Instruct nursery staff to encourage children to be independent at mealtime as per their developmental stage and follow sanitary processes at the start of mealtimes such as washing hands, not sharing food and using own utensils. Children aged 2-4 years are encouraged to remove their own food items from their bag and feed themselves. If children need support, nursery staff must wash their own hands thoroughly and wear gloves before touching any child's food items and/ or containers or cutlery and in between each child.
- Ensure that nursery staff store children's lunch boxes in a place in the classroom that is specific to their bubbles. The lunch box is wiped down on arrival and kept in the bubble specific location.
- Ensure that nursery staff follow sterilization protocols for infants and children who are bottle-fed.
- Clean and disinfect tables, chairs and highchairs before and after children eat. Hard surfaces must first be cleaned with warm soapy water and then disinfected with cleaning products.

**Nursery to consider:**

- Including hygienic education in lesson plans for children aged 2-4 years old.
- Instructing teaching staff to plan and initiate nursery wide hygiene education initiatives and/ or programs.
- Instructing teaching staff to refrain from sending home children's work. Other methods of sharing children's achievements should be implemented (i.e. apps, emails).
- Encouraging a paperless strategy and use technology to communicate with staff and parents.
- Encouraging parents to give their child/ children opportunities to become increasingly independent with hygiene procedures such as handwashing, using the bathroom and feeding themselves as developmentally appropriate.
- Encouraging parents to remain connected with the nursery through a range of communication channels to ensure that they are aware of information pertaining to hygiene and how it can be further reinforced and supported at home.
- Encouraging parents to send food items for snack and meals that children can manage independently as appropriate to their developmental stage.