

Telford Buddhist Priory

Food Safety Guidelines

Introduction

Telford Buddhist Priory (the Priory) is committed to providing a safe environment for all who visit. From time to time, people bring food to share with others. This document provides guidelines on home preparation of food before it is brought to the Priory, intended to minimise the risk of food poisoning. It is based on information from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) website. For further detail, and the latest information, please see:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/providing-food-at-community-and-charity-events>

Allergens

The FSA recommend that the more information you can provide about allergens to people who will eat the food, the better it is, so that people with food hypersensitivities (allergies, intolerances and coeliac disease) can make safe choices.

General Advice

Here is some general practical advice when making food for people to eat at the Priory:

- It's alright to prepare food in advance and freeze it, but ensure the food is properly defrosted before you use it
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water
- Always wash fresh fruit and vegetables
- Keep raw and ready-to-eat foods apart
- Do not use food past its 'use by' or 'best before' date
- Always read any cooking instructions and make sure food is properly cooked before you serve it
- Ensure that food preparation areas are suitably cleaned and sanitised after use and wash any equipment you are using in hot soapy water
- Keep chilled food out of the fridge for the shortest time possible – no more than four hours.

Some foods are more likely to cause food poisoning than others. These include:

- Eggs. Do not use eggs after the 'best before' date. Cook eggs and food containing eggs thoroughly, until they are steaming hot. In any food containing raw or lightly cooked egg, consider using pasteurised egg
- Raw (unpasteurised) milk, and soft cheeses made with unpasteurised milk. Keep them refrigerated; never use them after the 'best before' or 'use by' date
- Rice can contain bacterial spores that are not killed by cooking. If not eating cooked rice immediately, cool it as quickly as possible then keep it in a fridge
- Pulses can contain natural toxins that can make people ill if not destroyed by cooking. If using dried pulses, always soak and cook them according to the instructions on the packet.

Preparing Food at Home

Cleaning

Cleaning removes harmful bacteria, viruses and parasites which may be present on you, on food or in food preparation areas. By cleaning with warm, soapy water or by using anti-bacterial cleaning products you lower the chances of making people ill. You should regularly clean your:

- Hands. Wash your hands with soap and warm water before preparing or cooking food
- Fresh fruit and vegetables. Always wash them under a running tap, or in a bowl of fresh water, making sure to rub their skin under the water. Start with the least soiled items first and give each of them a final rinse. Peeling vegetables can also remove more bacteria, so this is an additional step you can take before eating root vegetables raw
- Work surfaces and chopping boards. Make sure any surfaces you are using for food preparation are clean and clear. Thoroughly wash chopping boards soon after preparing raw foods. Also wash your hands after cleaning chopping boards. Where possible use a separate chopping board for raw and cooked food
- Bacteria from meat, poultry and fish can contaminate other food, causing a health hazard. If meat, poultry or fish is prepared or cooked in the same kitchen as food for the Priory, try to use different chopping boards and utensils for them. If that is not possible, wash chopping boards and utensils used for meat/poultry/fish in hot soapy water before using them for other food
- Dish cloths, sponges, and tea towels. The FSA advises that you wash or change dish cloths, tea towels, sponges and oven gloves regularly. It's important to wash and dry them before you use them again
- Utensils, dishes, and containers. Take care to keep all utensils and dishes clean before preparing food; if re-using a container to store food, wash it thoroughly between uses. This is to avoid cross-contamination. Also, remember to wash items thoroughly between tasks to avoid the spread of harmful bacteria.

Cooking

Cooking food at the right temperature and for the correct length of time will kill any harmful bacteria that may be present.

- Always carefully follow cooking temperature guidelines according to the recipe or packet instructions
- Check that food is cooked completely before serving - use visual cues, such as making sure the food is steaming hot both outside and in the middle
- Consider using a food thermometer to verify the correct temperature
- Some frozen vegetables, such as sweetcorn, peas, and carrots, can contain bacteria. Frozen vegetables should be thoroughly cooked before you eat them. If you intend to use frozen vegetables as part of a cold salad or smoothies, check the instructions on the packaging first. If the advice on the packaging states that the frozen vegetables should be cooked, you must ensure that this is done before they are eaten cold.

Chilling and Freezing

Your fridge should be set between 0 and 5°C. You should always store any food with a 'use by' date, as well as cooked dishes, salads and dairy products, in your fridge. Keep raw food away from cooked food. During preparation, keep chilled food out of the fridge for the shortest time possible (a maximum of four hours).

Don't place hot or warm food in your fridge or freezer. Instead, cool cooked food at room temperature then place in the fridge or freezer within two hours. To cool food quickly, divide food into smaller portions in containers or freezer bags before putting in the fridge or freezer.

Your freezer should be around -18°C . Place food in an air-tight container. If defrosted food is not to be eaten immediately, you should defrost it in the fridge so that it doesn't get too warm.

Adoption and Review

Version 1.0 of these Guidelines was adopted by the trustees of the Priory on 16 February 2025. It is reviewed by the trustees annually and updated as required.

File: TBP Food Safety Guidelines v1.0.pdf