

# GEFC Church Food Hygiene Policy

## 1. Purpose

To ensure all food prepared, served, and consumed at Emmanuel, St Francis and St Clare's Church, and at Church related groups or events, is safe, hygienic. All food prepared on site complies with UK Food Safety Law (Food Safety Act 1990, Food Hygiene Regulations 2006).

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Church staff and volunteers involved in food preparation and service.
- Church events hosted on church premises involving food.
- It is recommended that external groups using church premises for food related activities read and familiarise themselves with this policy. GEFC is not responsible for hirers' food activities.

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## 3. Responsibilities

- **PCC & Standing Committee:** Ensure awareness and implementation of this policy.
- **Food Coordinator / Catering Lead** (whichever is applicable): Oversees food safety compliance during event(s).
- **Volunteers:** Anyone involved with food preparation to follow hygiene practices outlined in this policy.

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## 4. Training

- Basic Food hygiene awareness is required for volunteers handling food or involved with basic food preparation (point 5). This must be overseen by a trained certificate holder.
- **Level 2 Food Safety & Hygiene** training (online or in-person) must be completed for those preparing or cooking food. Training records will be maintained by the church office.

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## 5. Personal Hygiene

All food handlers must:

- Wash hands thoroughly before and after handling food, and when moving from one task to another.
- Wear clean clothing and, where appropriate, an apron (available in the kitchen).
- Cover cuts or wounds with blue waterproof plasters (available in the first aid box in the kitchen).
- Tie back long hair and avoid touching face or hair while preparing food.
- Not handle food if they have symptoms of illness (e.g., diarrhoea, vomiting, fever) within 48hrs from last episode prior to event.

### 6. Food Handling and Preparation

- Check use-by and best-before dates before use.
- Store raw and cooked foods separately and appropriately to prevent cross contamination.
- Use colour-coded chopping boards (e.g., red for raw meat, blue for fish and seafood, yellow cooked meat, green for salads & fruits, white for dairy/bakery, brown for vegetables).
- Cook food to the correct internal temperature (e.g., 75°C for poultry).
- Keep hot food above 63°C and cold food below 8°C.
- Cool leftovers quickly and refrigerate within 90 minutes. Please discard fresh food beyond this point.

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### 7. Cleaning and Equipment

- Clean surfaces, utensils, and equipment before and after use.
- Use separate cloths for kitchen surfaces and floors.
- Ensure dishwasher is used or use hot water with detergent for washing up.
- Ensure bins including food waste are emptied and waste areas cleared after use.

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### 8. Allergens

- Ask all onsite or offsite event attendees prior to event if they have dietary needs and/or allergies.
- Have a named responsible person for each event including food.
- Clearly label any food containing the 14 main allergens (e.g., celery, cereals including gluten, crustaceans, eggs, fish, lupin, milk, molluscs, mustard, nuts, peanuts, sesame seeds, soya (soy), sulphur dioxide (sulphites)).
- Display allergy notices at events, encouraging people to ask about ingredients.
- Prevent cross-contact by using separate utensils and surfaces when handling ingredients containing allergens.
- Recommend retaining photos of ingredient lists for up to 24hrs after an event.

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### 9. Storage and Transport

- Store food in sealed containers.
- Use insulated boxes or cool bags with ice packs if transporting.
- Label items with preparation and use-by dates (labels and pens available in kitchen)

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- Clearly mark opened prepacked items with the date opened (labels and pens available in kitchen).

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### 10. Record Keeping

- The church & café team maintains a log of:
  - Fridge and freezer temperatures - weekly log.
  - Cleaning schedule - annually reviewed.
  - Volunteer food hygiene training – annually and ad hoc as needed.
  - Incident reports (e.g., suspected foodborne illness).

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### 11. \*Bringing Food prepared at home (exception with mitigations).

‘Bring and share’ events, while not strictly in line with the Food Safety Act, and involving higher risk, are a traditional and important part of church life that we want to continue to enable. The following are additional steps that GEFC will take to mitigate the increased risks where food is prepared in people’s homes and brought in.

- Where food is prepared at home, shared and consumed (e.g. Vicarage garden party puddings, worship team lunch, baptism service cakes etc), display signs must clearly notify attendees that food has been prepared by other attendees in their own homes and may include the presence of allergic ingredients.
- Anyone preparing food at home are provided with a copy of this food hygiene policy and asked to follow it and provide a summary of all ingredients used which are then available for anyone attending to check for allergens. Food cannot be included without the allergen information.
- Encourage those with specific allergen and dietary requirements if concerned, to bring their own food.
- Such events are restricted to church congregation, not for general public access.

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### 12. Church Events held at Emmanuel, St Francis and St Clare

- If food is being prepared (e.g. Alpha dinners, Student meal, Church@4 etc cooking prepacked pizzas, cutting up supermarket sandwiches\*, decanting crisps/prepared salad etc), the catering lead must hold a current Level 2 Food Safety certificate and either prepare the food themselves or oversee its preparation.
- Anyone on team supporting the catering lead must follow the guidelines set out in this policy.
- All guidelines set out above in this policy must be followed.

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- Ideally food packet ingredients are photographed including allergens and ingredient list retained for 24hrs should they be required for reference.  
*\*sandwiches containing protein and cakes/desserts including cream are high-risk foods. They should be kept under chilled conditions until ready for use.*

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### 13. Church Events held offsite (e.g. Way Camp, Student Pizza Night, Youth BBQ etc)

- The catering lead must hold an up-to-date Level 2 Food Safety Certificate and either cook or supervise the cooking.
- If the catering lead is unavailable for the preparation of a meal, another person with Level 2 Food Safety training must replace them.
- Ask all event attendees prior to event if they have dietary needs and/or allergies.
- \*Attendees must be informed that 'bring and share' items may contain allergens. Food cannot be included without the allergen information.
- Prepacked alternatives with allergen labels should be made available, or attendees with allergies requested to bring their own items.

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### 14. External Caterers or Group Use (not one-off party hire) Any

groups or party using the church kitchens must:

- Be briefed on this policy.
- Clean and tidy the kitchen after use.
- Remove food waste – especially if using the premises over the weekend.
- Only adults (those aged 16 years and upwards) are allowed in the kitchen.

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### 15. Risk Assessments

- Emmanuel, St Francis and St Clare's events with food involved, are to be incorporated within the required Activity Risk Assessment and a named catering lead included who has a Level 2 Food Safety Certificate.

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### 16. Review

This policy to be reviewed annually or following a food safety incident.

**Reviewed by:** Lynne Wright, Emmanuel Food Co-ordinator & Liz Deutsch, GEFC Operations Director

**Date:** October 2025

**Approved by:** GEFC PCC

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025