



Bottle preparation and storage Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

Staff at Mark Oliphant College Children's Centre aim to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of each child at all times in relation to the preparation, storage and heating of bottles. To minimise the risk of illness, educators follow the recommendations outlined in 'Staying Healthy in Childcare 6th Edition' (National Research and Medical Council 2024).

Supporting Evidence

"A very important part of looking after babies younger than 1 year old is to ensure their food is safe and healthy. Food safety is particularly important for the early months of a baby's life. Food poisoning can be especially severe for babies because their digestive and immune systems are immature." ([SA Health](#))

Implementation

Preparing Bottles

When preparing formula, always wash your hands first, and ensure that food contact surfaces (benchtops), bottles and other equipment are clean. Always follow the label instructions closely that come with each infant formula product and use only the enclosed scoop to ensure that the formula is made up correctly. Whenever possible, make a fresh batch of infant formula before each feed.

Storing Bottles

Breast milk can be stored in several ways. It can be:

- refrigerated for 72 hours at 5°C or lower (5°C is the typical temperature of a standard fridge); always store breast milk at the back of the refrigerator, not in the door.
- frozen in a separate freezer section of a refrigerator for up to 3 months; if your freezer is a compartment inside the refrigerator, rather than a separate section with its own door, then only store the breast milk for 2 weeks.
- frozen in a deep freeze (-18 °C or lower) for 6–12 months. When thawing frozen breast milk, always use the oldest milk first.

Frozen breast milk can be thawed:

- in the refrigerator and used within 24 hours.
- by standing the bottle in a container of lukewarm water and used straight away.
- Never refreeze thawed breastmilk.

Formula It is best to make up fresh formula for each feed and give it to the child as soon as it is ready. If this is not possible, the freshly made formula should be stored in the back of the refrigerator (where it is coldest). Discard any made-up formula at the end of the day.

If a baby has drunk from a bottle but not finished it, do not store the remainder for later. Throw away any formula that is left over. Do not freeze or rewarm leftover made-up formula.

Warming Bottles

To heat bottles:





Warm bottles once only. Do not allow a bottle to cool and then reheat it – this can allow harmful germs to grow.

Do not warm bottles of breastmilk or formula in the microwave. Microwave ovens distribute heat unevenly. Water in the milk can turn to steam that collects at the top of the bottle, and there is a danger that the baby could be scalded.

To warm bottles:

- Stand the bottle in a container of warm water for no more than 15 minutes.
- Before feeding the baby, check the temperature of the milk by letting a little drop onto the inside of your wrist – it should feel comfortably warm or even a little bit cool.
- Discard any warmed milk that has not been used.
- Rinse all children's bottles thoroughly after use. Bottles will be air dried and returned to the child's bag.
- Communicate with families regarding the amount of milk taken by the child or any changes in feeding patterns.

Working with families, health services & industry

Our Centre:

- Child enrolment records must include details of any special considerations for the child, such as: health, cultural or religious dietary requirements.
- Upon enrolment families will discuss their child's nutritional needs and frequency of bottles.
- Families will provide clearly labelled sterilised bottles filled with cooled boiled water and dry formula and or breast milk.
- Educators will regularly consult with families regarding their child's specific needs and ensure that food safe practices are implemented.
- Will display relevant information in the food preparation area where bottles are stored and prepared.

Related Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Regulation
 - Regulation 77 – Health, hygiene and safe food practices
 - Regulation 78 – Food and beverages
 - Regulation 162 – Health information to be kept in enrolment record
 - Regulation 168 – Education and care service must have policies and procedures
 - Regulation 170 – Policies and procedures must be followed
 - Regulation 171 – Policies and procedures to be kept available
 - Regulation 172 – Notification of change to policies or procedures
- Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011, Schedule 1 Education and Care Services National Law (South Australia)

Sources

- National Quality Standards
 - Element 2.1.2
 - Element 2.1.3





- [*'Staying Healthy in Childcare 6th Edition' \(National Research and Medical Council 2024\)*](#)
- [Feeding Babies and Food Safety - SA Health](#)

Revision Register

Version Number	Details of Changes Made	Date Issued
1	Policy creation	April 2020
2	Sources - added	November 2021
3	Implementation steps added Legislation and sources added	May 2024
4	This policy has been updated in accordance with the latest departmental advice and resources.	May 2026

