



## Food knives

School \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick in the appropriate column to confirm your knowledge and understanding of the hazards and the risk control measures that should be applied when using food knives.

### Activity

#### USE OF FOOD KNIVES

**NB: PUPILS SHOULD ONLY USE FOOD KNIVES UNDER DIRECT ADULT SUPERVISION**

### Hazards

- Cuts – fingers and hands may be cut while using knives.
- Stabbing – stabbing injuries may occur while knives are being carried from the place of storage to the work place or to a sink after use.
- Juice in the eye – juice may spurt into an eye from fruit while cutting it with a knife.
- Infection – clean food may become contaminated via the knife or chopping board if it is also used for food that is carrying pathogenic microorganisms and/or their toxic products.

### Additional Hazards Identified

### Risk Control Measures

- Instructions should be given on the correct use of food knives.
- Cuts – the risk is increased when the knife is blunt as greater pressure has to be used to effect the cut and the knife is then more difficult to control. Novices are more likely to cut their fingers than those who have learned appropriate techniques. Risks are greatest in busy areas with pupils working close together.
- Knives should be kept sharp and users must be trained in appropriate techniques. With primary aged pupils the bridge and claw methods of holding and chopping are recommended. A chopping board must be used for cutting fruit and vegetables. If each workplace has a rack for storage and a sink or bowl for washing up, there will be little need to carry knives around the room.
- Stabbing – good discipline is essential and overcrowding should be avoided if the risk of stabbing is to be controlled. Round ended kitchen knives are recommended. The layout of the workplace can have a major impact on the risks of stabbing. Where knives are carried around the room, the risks are high. Again, risks are greatest in busy areas with pupils working close together but, with some pupils, there is also a risk of deliberate attacks on each other.
- Juice in the eye – the risk is greatest when cutting fruit such as lemons. The use of a sawing action to cut fruit is less likely to make the juice spurt than cutting the fruit with a knife point. Pointed knives are not recommended in the primary school.
- Infection – the risk of cross-infection is high, particularly if the chopping board is used to prepare food that is to be eaten raw after it has been used for cutting meat. Plastic (e.g. polypropylene) boards are preferred for chopping foods because these are easier to sterilise or clean thoroughly and do not harbour bacteria. Separate boards and different knives for meat, fish, vegetables and fruit are a distinct advantage and colour-coded boards are available.

### Additional Control Measures Identified

(If you have identified additional hazards you **must** describe what additional control measures need to be put in place)

**All relevant staff have been made fully aware of the contents of this risk assessment**

Date of Risk Assessment: .....

Date of Review:.....

Name(s) of Assessor(s): .....

Signature of Subject Leader/Coordinator: .....

Signature of Headteacher: .....