

Public Protection (food & safety)

Food Premises Inspection Report

Name of business:	Kokoro Norwich
Address of food business:	4B Castle Street Norwich NR2 1PD
Date of inspection:	13/05/2025
Risk rating reference:	25/00413/FOOD
Premises reference:	25/00071/FD_HS
Type of premises:	Restaurant or cafe
Areas inspected:	Servery, Storeroom, Main Kitchen
Records examined:	None
Details of samples procured:	None
Summary of action taken:	Informal
General description of business:	Japanese restaurant/takeaway

Relevant Legislation

Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended)
 Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 applied by The General Food Regulations 2004 (as amended)
 Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 and No 853/2004 applied by Regulation 19 (1) of the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013
 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and related regulations
 Food Information Regulations 2014

What you must do to comply with the law

The report may include **Contraventions** - matters which do not comply with the law . You must address all of the contraventions identified; failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against you.

As a guide, contraventions relating to cleaning, temperature control and poor practice, should be dealt with straight away.

Contraventions relating to structural repairs, your food safety management system and staff training, should be completed within the next 2 months.

Health and safety contraventions should be dealt with within 3 months unless otherwise stated.

To assist you the report may also include **Observations** of current practice, useful **Information, Recommendations** of good practice and reminders of **Legal Requirements** .

My inspection was not intended to identify every contravention of the law and only covers those areas, practices and procedures examined at the time of the inspection. If the report fails to mention a particular matter this does not mean you have necessarily complied with the law.

Food Hygiene Rating Re-Scoring Visit

Date: 15 July 2025

Following the previous inspection a re-rating visit was requested. The revised score is indicated here. The results of the original inspection are listed below.

Your revised Food Hygiene Rating is 4 – a good standard



Observation I was pleased to see that most of the contraventions had been addressed. However the following contraventions need attention.

Food Hygiene and Safety

Contravention The following exposed food to the general risk of cross-contamination with bacteria or allergens or its physical contamination with dirt, foreign objects or chemicals.:

- cloths used to steady cutting boards
- food debris seen to wash hand basin
- high risk food i.e kitchen katsu was being left in the danger zone (8-63°C for long periods of time.
- cooked rice was being left in the danger zone (8-63°C) for long periods of time.
- food stored on the floor in the walk-in fridge.

Legal requirement Raw materials, ingredients, intermediate products and finished products likely to support the reproduction of pathogenic micro-organisms or the formation of toxins must not be kept at temperatures that might result in a risk to health.

Legal Requirement If you rely on selling hot food (displayed under 63 °C) within two hours you must be able to demonstrate your system for ensuring food is either sold, placed under refrigeration, or discarded, before the two hours have elapsed.

Recommendation Use silicone board mats to stabilise your cutting boards. These can be placed in the dishwasher and /or can be sterilised.

Recommendation Wash hand basins need to be kept clean and regularly descaled. Include the wash hand basin in your cleaning schedule and pay attention to sanitising the taps.

Recommendation Lift food off the floor in the walk-in fridge to ensure cooling air can freely circulate

Structure and Cleaning

Contravention The following items were dirty and require more frequent and thorough cleaning:

- floor/wall junctions

- flooring behind and underneath equipment
- skirting boards
- foot stool
- cling film dispenser
- food storage containers
- interior bottom to upright freezer

Confidence in Management

Observation I was pleased to see that you now have a food safety management system that was up to date. However there was no cleaning schedule available. Ensure you implement a cleaning schedule that staff can follow

Observation I was pleased to see that you now have a pH meter for Sushi rice which you are monitoring and recording

Contravention You have not identified these food hazards or the methods of control at critical points in your operation:

- bacteria growing on food

Contravention The following are examples of where your documented procedures said one thing but you were doing another. Follow your plan or change it - but ensure hazards are adequately controlled if you do:

- it states in your food safety management system that hats must be worn

FOOD SAFETY

How we calculate your Food Hygiene Rating:

The food safety section has been divided into the three areas which you are scored against for the hygiene rating: 1. food hygiene and safety procedures, 2. structural requirements and 3. confidence in management/control procedures. Each section begins with a summary of what was observed and the score you have been given. Details of how these scores combine to produce your overall food hygiene rating are shown in the table.

Compliance Area	You Score					
Food Hygiene and Safety	0	5	10	15	20	25
Structure and Cleaning	0	5	10	15	20	25
Confidence in management & control systems	0	5	10	15	20	30
Your Total score	0 - 15	20	25 - 30	35 - 40	45 - 50	> 50
Your Worst score	5	10	10	15	20	-

Your Rating is	5	4	3	2	1	0
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Your Food Hygiene Rating is 2 - improvement is necessary



1. Food Hygiene and Safety

Food hygiene standards are less than satisfactory and you are failing to comply with the law in many respects. Contraventions require your immediate attention as some are critical to food safety. We may revisit your business and if standards have not improved take formal enforcement action. There are significant lapses in safe food handling practices and procedures. Contraventions require your immediate attention as some are critical to food safety. We may revisit your business and if standards have not improved take formal enforcement action. **(Score 15)**

Contamination risks

Contravention The following exposed food to the general risk of cross-contamination with bacteria or allergens or its physical contamination with dirt, foreign objects or chemicals.:

- raw meat was being stored next to ready-to-eat foods in the walk-in fridge
- chopping/cutting boards were being stored directly touching.
- chopping/cutting boards were held stable with tea towels/cloths and could contaminate the board
- scoops/jugs stored in dried ingredients

Contravention You could not demonstrate effective heat disinfection of the food equipment and utensils you use for handling both raw and ready-to-eat foods.

- storage containers
- utensils used for raw foods and ready-to-eat foods were being stored together

Legal requirement At all stages of production, processing and distribution, food must be protected from any contamination likely to render it unfit for human consumption, injurious to health or contaminated in such a way that it would be unreasonable to expect it to be consumed in that state.

Recommendation Provide separate equipment and utensils for raw and ready to eat foods, which can be easily identified (colour coded) and stored and washed separately.

Information The FSA has issued guidance on controlling *E.coli* 0157 through:

- the complete separation of raw and ready-to-eat food
- the correct use of wash-hand basins and thorough handwashing
- having dedicated equipment (including complex equipment) for raw and ready-to-eat foods
- thorough 2-stage cleaning and the correct use of sanitisers
- and by controlling the risks posed by soil contaminated vegetables.

Visit: www.food.gov.uk for more information

Guidance If equipment and utensils (for example chopping boards, containers and tongs) are to be used for raw and RTE foods, they should be disinfected by heat or an adequate dishwasher cycle (able to reach 82°C for 15 seconds) between uses.

Guidance If adequate heat disinfection (such as a dishwasher or plunge sink) is not possible, separate equipment and utensils should be used for handling raw and RTE foods. Such equipment should be easily identifiable (colour coded) and must be stored and washed separately.

Hand-washing

Contravention The following indicated that hand-washing was not suitably managed:

- equipment was seen draining in the wash hand basin
- staff were not seen washing their hands when I visited
- the drainage to the wash hand basin was inadequate
- it takes a very long time for hot water to be produced at the wash hand basin tap
- using gloves without suitable procedures to ensure they remain hygienic

Information If not used properly gloves are likely to give rise to a risk of cross contamination. Ensure that hands are always washed thoroughly before putting gloves on and after taking them off. Gloves should be disposable and should always be changed between the handling of raw and ready-to-eat foods. Gloves should also be changed before handling ready-to-eat food if they have come in contact with any surface or objects not designated as clean (e.g. money), and also at every break.

Guidance Proper hand-washing is essential to prevent cross-contamination of E.coli 0157 and other harmful bacteria onto food and food contact surfaces. Handwashing should include the following steps:

- * wet hands before applying soap
- * good hand rubbing technique
- * rinsing of hands
- * hygienic drying

Guidance Regular hand washing is important for personal cleanliness. Remind all food handlers of the need to wash their hands before starting or returning to work, and specifically:

- * After using the toilet;
- * After handling rubbish;
- * After smoking;
- * After taking a break;
- * After handling raw food

Temperature Control

Contravention The following evidence indicated there was a risk of bacteria growing on food:

- hot foods, for service i.e noodles, were kept below 63°C for over 2 hours
- cold noodles were being put in the bain marie to heat up, ensure that food stored in the bain marie is heated thoroughly to 75°C before storing in the bain marie
- high risk food was not being defrosted in the fridge

Contravention The following evidence indicated there was a risk of harmful bacteria remaining in cooked food or reheated food:

- food is not hot held at a high enough temperature
- cooking temperatures were not being checked

Legal Requirement Raw materials, ingredients, intermediate products and finished products likely to support the reproduction of pathogenic micro-organisms or the formation of toxins must not be kept at temperatures that might result in a risk to health.

Legal Requirement Food which has been cooked or reheated and is intended to be kept hot until it is sold, must either be held at or above 63°C or it can be kept for service or on display for sale for a single period of less than 2 hours; at the end of the 2 hour period the food should be cooled as quickly as possible and kept at or below 8°C until it is sold or it should be discarded.

Information Frozen foods were being defrosted at room temperature. There is a risk that bacteria will begin to grow in the food once it has defrosted. I recommend that frozen foods are placed in a fridge to defrost. You must ensure that any run-off liquid does not present a risk. I recommend that you defrost the food in a container

Guidance It is essential to know that your probe thermometer is working properly. If the reading is outside these ranges you should replace your probe or return it to the manufacturer to be calibrated. A simple way to check a digital probe is to put it in iced water and boiling water:

- The readings in iced water should be between -1°C and 1°C.
- The readings in boiling water should be between 99°C and 101°C.

Guidance Where unsatisfactory temperatures are observed checks then should be made with a probe thermometer to see the actual temperature of the interior of the food.

Guidance You cannot rely on taking chilled food temperatures by reading the temperature display on the refrigeration unit. You need an independent method that is clearly related to the actual food temperature.

Recommendation The core temperature of cooked and reheated foods should reach 75°C for 30 seconds or an equivalent time and temperature combination.

Recommendation In addition to the visual checks you undertake, use a probe thermometer to check the core temperature of cooked and reheated foods. The temperature should reach 75°C for 30 seconds or an equivalent time/temperature combination, for example 80°C for 10 seconds.

Sushi rice

Measuring pH correctly is important to ensure that the critical control of acidifying rice to pH 4.6 or below has been achieved. In order to check the rice has achieved a pH of 4.6 or below, a food business operator must:

- use a calibrated pH meter to check the pH of the rice
- keep records of the calibration of the pH meter
- keep records of staff training on calibration of the pH meter
- pH meters should be calibrated according to the manufacturer's instructions
- typically, pH meters are calibrated using 2 pH solutions at opposite ends of the pH scale, i.e. using one acid and one base solution
- make sure staff are trained and can show that they know how to use the pH meter in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- keep records of staff training
- ensure the pH meter is clean of any debris, has been sanitised is calibrated with pH solutions according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- to take a pH reading, take a small sample of rice from the mixed bowl, press the probe into the sample and wait until the pH reading remains stable for at least 5 seconds.
- ensure pH measurements are not taken from any pools of vinegar as this will give a false reading. Sushi rice should be mixed thoroughly so that no 'pools' of vinegar remain.
- to ensure uniform acidification to pH 4.6 throughout all of the rice, take several pH measurements from separate areas of the rice.
- Do not 'mix' the samples before taking the pH reading. Take each reading as a separate standalone reading

Do not:

- use pH strips or uncalibrated probes to check pH
- use a dirty probe to check pH
- use an uncalibrated pH meter
- take a pH reading directly from a 'pool' of vinegar solution

Poor Practices

Contravention The following matters represented poor practice and if allowed to continue may cause food to become contaminated or lead to its deterioration:

- no labels of when prepared on prepared foods in walk-in fridge

Recommendation You should have a system to identify when open or prepared foods need to be used by or discarded, to ensure the food is fit for consumption. I recommend you apply labels which give a day or date that is 2 days after the day of production e.g. if food is opened on Monday it should be used by the end of Wednesday. (An exception is cooked rice which should not be kept longer than 24 hours)

2. Structure and Cleaning

The structure facilities and standard of cleaning and maintenance are of a generally satisfactory standard but there are some repairs and/or improvements which are required in order for you to comply with the law. Pest control and waste disposal provisions are adequate. The contraventions require your attention; although not critical to food safety they may become so if not addressed. **(Score 10)**

Cleaning of Structure

Contravention The following items were dirty and require more frequent and thorough cleaning:

- flooring behind and under equipment
- floor/wall junctions
- walls behind equipment
- electric sockets

Cleaning of Equipment and Food Contact Surfaces

Contravention The following items are dirty and must be cleaned:

- cling film dispenser
- food storage containers
- fridge and freezer seals
- fridge and freezer handles
- interior to fridges
- top to fridge door
- handles to under counter freezer

Cleaning Chemicals / Materials / Equipment and Methods

Guidance Even when using a surface sanitiser you should be following the TWO STAGE cleaning method. Apply the sanitiser once to remove visible dirt and food debris and then a second time to ensure effective disinfection. Make sure you follow the correct contact time for the product.

Maintenance

Observation You are maintaining the premises in good condition.

Facilities and Structural provision

Observation I was pleased to see the premises had been well maintained and that adequate facilities had been provided.

3. Confidence in Management

There are generally satisfactory food safety controls in place although there is evidence of some non-compliance with the law. The contraventions require your attention; although not critical to food safety they may become so if not addressed. **(Score 10)**

Food Hazard Identification and Control

Contravention The following pre-requisites have not been met and this means that your food safety management system will be ineffective:

- staff hygiene is inadequate
- staff training is inadequate

Contravention You have not identified these food hazards or the methods of control at critical points in your operation:

- bacteria growing on food
- cross-contamination

Contravention The documented food safety management system you operate is inadequate as:

- the critical limits at the critical control points had not been established
- there is no detail of the monitoring and verification you carry out at each critical control point
- you do not detail the frequency of monitoring checks
- there is no detail about how the instruments you use to monitor the critical control points and how you verify that they are measuring accurately
- you do not detail the corrective actions to take when a critical limit is exceeded

Proving Your Arrangements are Working Well

Contravention The following are needed in order to demonstrate your food safety management system is working:

- cleaning schedule
- daily records
- dealing with customer complaints
- maintenance recording

- microbial food sampling records
- pest control records
- probe calibration records
- staff training records
- suppliers lists
- temperature records
- opening and closing checks
- food safety issues not adequately recorded
- four-weekly reviews

HACCP Plan for Sushi

There are specific legal requirements that concern the “control of parasites in fish where the fish is to be consumed raw” All these controls must be clearly described in your food safety documents.

Food hygiene controls include buying ingredients from trustworthy suppliers and utilising a colour-coded system to avoid cross-contamination, among others. For instance, you should use a separate colour-coded chopping board to prepare sushi or sashimi.

It is a legal requirement for raw fish to be frozen so that “it reaches at least -20°C for not less than 24 hours or -35°C for not less than 15 hours” . This is to kill any tapeworm larvae that may be present in raw fish. For more information on how to freeze fish or fishery products, check out the Food Standard’s Agency advice page <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/freezing-fish-and-fishery-products>

Did you know? Different types of raw fish used in sushi can pose different risks. For instance, raw tuna presents a high risk of Scombrototoxic fish poisoning. This is due to excessive histamines caused by temperature abuse.

Your HACCP plan must be specifically tailored to the needs of your business. If you sell sushi or sashimi, you’ll need a customised HACCP plan for your sushi restaurant.

Your plan should cover safety points and procedures such as:

- Delivery
- Storage
- Cooking
- Temperature monitoring
- Chilling
- Preparation
- Cross-contamination
- Food allergies
- Etc

Traceability

Observation Your records were such that food could easily be traced back to its supplier.

Training

Observation I was pleased to see that food handlers had been trained to an appropriate level and evidence of their training was made available.

Allergens

Observation You had identified the presence of allergens in your non-prepacked food and had brought this to the attention of your customers.