



## Policy Document

### **ratemyplace - Food Safety Star Rating Scheme**

The ratemyplace –Food Safety Star Rating Scheme will apply to all registered premises in Staffordshire Partner Councils involved in the scheme who prepare, cook, serve or sell food.

If no inspection information is available on ratemyplace about a business, then it may be because the business has not received its latest primary inspection or that details have not been uploaded yet.

During the start up of the scheme some Council's in the ratemyplace Partnership will be uploading all the food premises information at once and then rating premises from 2 April 2007, whilst others will gradually upload food premises information but will still rate premises from the 2 April 2007. Which ever is the case, it is envisaged that within 3 years all premises will be rated and information e.g. inspection reports held will be available to view.

Council's in the ratemyplace Partnership will endeavour to update the information held on the website on month by month basis.

Some premises may not be inspected due to the low level of risk of the food sold or prepared on there. In accordance with the [Food Law Code of Practice](#) these premises may be subject to alternative enforcement arrangements e.g. may not be visited or just given advice through the post and will therefore not receive a star rating.

Council's in the ratemyplace Partnership reserve the right not publish information held about a premises in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 e.g. if legal action is being taken against the premises. The Council also have the right to determine whether in exceptional circumstances the star rating of a particular premise should not be applicable.

### **How the ratemyplace is scored**

Food Authorities operate a system for prioritising the food hygiene inspections they carry out (Annex 5 [Food Law Code of Practice](#)). At the end of each inspection by qualified and competent Environmental Health staff, the business is given a score called a food hazard rating. This reflects (amongst other things) how well the business complies with food law and how much confidence we have in the food operators ability to manage the business safely. The higher hazard rating, the higher the risk and the more often inspections are carried out.

The following criteria are the only ones that are directly controllable by food business operators (known as compliance scores) and are the ones that the ratemyplace - Food Safety Star Rating Scheme use: -

- standards of food hygiene,
- standards of structure and cleaning of food areas and
- degree of confidence in management at food premises.



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When the Service becomes aware of a change in the Food Business Operator, the ratemyplace - Food Safety Star Rating will be removed and will be re-instated after the first primary inspection of the business under the new ownership.

New food businesses will not have their details uploaded to the site until they have received a primary inspection.

### **Appeal Process**

Where a food business operator believes that an inspection has resulted in an unfair rating, then an appeal can be made in writing either through the comments link on the ratemyplace web site or in writing to the appropriate Local Authority within 2 weeks of the inspection. This would then trigger a paper review of the inspection by a Senior Officer to confirm the accuracy of the risk rating. This will not necessarily result in a change of score.

### **Comments**

Food business operators can comment to their Local Authority through a link on the ratemyplace web site. They may wish to record any actions or improvements they have made since the award of the star rating. This may or may not be displayed on the web site.

### **Trading Standards Compliance**

On the ratemyplace site you may see a 'green tick' by the words Trading Standards Compliance. Businesses are offered a Trading Standards Compliance Certificate when they are found to be complying with relevant Trading Standards law during an inspection. During an inspection checks are made to ensure that menu descriptions of food are not misleading, prices are appropriately displayed and that equipment used for serving beer wine and spirits is accurate, along with other checks for legal compliance.

### **Accessibility**

This scheme is accessible through the ratemyplace web site or Links from individual Council's websites. Some businesses may wish to display a ratemyplace Star Rating Certificate although there is no formal requirement to do so. This Certificate however, remains the property of the issuing Council.

The Ratemyplace will include a facility for business owners to send a photograph of the business (inside or out) and/or website address link which will be added to the site once verified as a true representation. The image needs to be sent to the appropriate Local Authority in JPEG format within 2 weeks from the date of the inspection to be included on the website.

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### **The Future of ratemyplace**

At present the Food Standards Agency is undertaking research into the viability of a national food hygiene premises rating scheme. Depending on the outcome of this research this scheme may alter in the future and therefore premises star ratings may change if the scoring system is different from above. Businesses and the public will be informed if there are changes to the scheme.

### **Other Food Safety Related Schemes in Staffordshire**

Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Moorlands operate similar food hygiene rating schemes with information on food premises. Links to their sites are available on the Ratemyplace website.

### **Disclaimer**

The score and star rating published through the ratemyplace scheme, represents the circumstances found by an officer of the inspecting local authority on the date of that inspection. This 'moment in time' score may not represent the overall, long-term food hygiene standards of the business or its food quality.