

## POLICY: 4.1 HYGIENE AND INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

### Procedure: 4.4 Handwashing and Personal Hygiene

The Service staff and Educators strive to implement practices to support each child's general health and wellbeing through maintaining a high standard of general hygiene.

Educators and staff understand infectious diseases can be spread by a person who has no symptoms of sickness. Washing and drying of hands thoroughly is one of the best ways of preventing the spread of infection and infectious diseases as it loosens, dilutes and flushes off germs and contaminated matter.

#### **4.4.1 Linking to Policy**

This procedural guidance should be read in conjunction with the service **4.1 Hygiene and Infection Control Policy** and will assist the Approved Provider, Management, Staff (Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators and Administrative Staff members) Educators, Educator Assistants and parents/guardians to implement the policy. The procedure covers:

#### [4.4.2 Personal Hygiene](#)

#### [4.4.3 Hand Washing – How to?](#)

#### [4.4.4 Other Consideration](#)

#### [4.4.5 Drying Hands](#)

#### [4.4.6 Using Alcohol Based Hand Washing](#)

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#### **4.4.2 Personal Hygiene**

It is essential that staff and Educators role-model positive health practices, and that children are appropriately supervised, assisted and encouraged in their daily health and hygiene routines.

The environment used by children must be hygienically maintained to reduce the possible spread of infection and illnesses – see 4.1 Maintaining a Clean and Hygienic Environment.

#### **The Educator will:**

- Avoid direct contact with any bodily fluids that spill by:

#### 4.4 Handwashing and Personal Hygiene Procedure

- using personal protective equipment (see below Gloves)
- covering any cuts, abrasions, dermatitis or open skin on hands with a water-resistant dressing
- Model dental health care
- Keep hair, tied back when preparing food
- Teach children to wash their hands as a part of the daily routine
- Carefully supervise children to ensure they develop good hand-washing habits
- **Wash hands before:**
  - children enter care
  - eating or handling food
  - giving medication
  - putting on gloves
  - in between applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children
- **Wash hands after:**
  - taking off gloves
  - changing a nappy
  - cleaning the nappy change area
  - using the toilet
  - helping children use the toilet
  - coming in from outside play
  - wiping a child's nose or your own nose
  - eating or handling food
  - handling garbage
  - cleaning up faeces, vomit or blood
  - applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children
  - touching animals

#### 4.4.3 Washing Hands

Proper hand washing practices are essential in limiting the spread of infection.

Aim: To ensure regular and appropriate hand washing by Educators and children.

Facilities: educators will have hand washing facilities which consist of:

- a wash basin
- running water
- liquid soap dispenser
- paper towels or individual hand towels.

The process of thoroughly washing, rinsing and drying your hands or a child's hands should take around 30 seconds.

There are five steps to washing hands:

1. **Wet hands** with running water (preferably warm water, for comfort).
2. **Apply soap** to hands.
3. **Lather soap and rub hands** thoroughly, including the wrists, the palms, between the fingers, around the thumbs and under the nails. Rub hands together for at least 15 seconds (for about as long as it takes to sing 'Happy birthday' once).
4. **Rinse** thoroughly under running water.
5. **Dry** thoroughly.

#### 4.4.4 Other considerations

Supervise children when washing their hands and help them get into the habit of hand hygiene.

If you wear rings or other jewellery on your hands, move the jewellery around your finger while you lather the soap to ensure that the area underneath the jewellery is clean.

#### 4.4.5 Drying Hands

Educators provide either paper towels or cloth towels.

If cloth towels are used:

- Each child will have their own: one person (i.e. not shared) and hung up to dry between use.
- They will be laundered daily to reduce the risk of re-contaminating or cross-contaminating hands.

#### 4.4.6 Using Alcohol Based Hand Gel

Alcohol based hand gels must be labelled and kept out of the reach of children and should only be used when soap and water is not available.

Educators will only use an alcohol-based hand rub if your or the child's hands are not visibly dirty and ensure the hand rub only contain 60–80% alcohol.

There are three steps to using alcohol-based hand rub:

1. Apply the amount of hand rub recommended by the manufacturer to palms of dry hands.
2. Rub hands together, making sure you cover in between fingers, around thumbs, and under nails.
3. Rub until hands are dry.

### 4.4.7 Children and Handwashing

Hand washing should take place in a separate location to food or drink preparation, rinsing of soiled clothing, or cleaning potty chairs, i.e. kitchen sinks should not be used for hand washing

Children should wash hands:

- Before eating
- After going to the toilet or having their nappy changed
- After touching nose secretions or sores
- After playing outside
- After handling pets or other animals
- After messy play experiences

### 4.4.8 Use of Gloves

Educators will use disposable gloves and never reuse or washed for reuse. They must be thrown away as soon as you have finished the activity that requires gloves.

Educators will always wash hands before and after wearing disposable gloves; and

- Wear gloves on both hands: when changing nappies—there are billions of germs in faeces and sometimes in urine;
- When cleaning, or otherwise having contact with, bodily fluids (e.g. blood, vomit, urine, faeces etc)

It is important to remember that the outside of the glove is dirty and the inside of the glove is clean. Avoid touching the inside of a glove with the outside of another glove, and avoid touching bare skin or clean surfaces while wearing contaminated gloves

#### **Educators will remove disposable gloves by:**

1. Pinch the outside of one glove near the wrist and peel the glove off so it ends up inside out.
2. Keep hold of the peeled-off glove in your gloved hand while you take off the other glove—put one or two fingers of your ungloved hand inside the wrist of the other glove.
3. Peel off the second glove from the inside, and over the first glove, so you end up with the two gloves inside out, one inside the other.
4. Put the gloves in a plastic-lined, lidded bin and wash your hands.
5. If a hands-free lidded rubbish bin is not available, put the gloves in a bucket or container lined with a plastic bag, then tie up the bag and take it to the outside garbage bin.

## Review

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
Revision 00	07/2015	Original Policy Issued
Revision 01	12/2016	Reviewed
Revision 02	08/2017	Reviewed
Revision 03	10/2020	Reviewed and separated from Policy

## Related Documents

### Policies

4.1 Hygiene and Infection Control Policy

### Reference

Refer to 4.1 Hygiene and Infection Control Policy

Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council (2013). Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5th Edition), retrieved from <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/ch55>