

Hygiene and Infection control Policy

Policy Statement

It is important that Educators role model positive health practices and that children are appropriately supervised, assisted and encouraged in their daily health and hygiene routines. Education and care environments must be hygienically maintained to reduce the possible spread of infection

Links to the Education and Care Centres National Regulations 2018, National Quality Standards 2018

Regs	S. 174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
	12	Meaning of serious incident
Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
	85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
	88	Infectious diseases
	89	First aid kits
	90	Medical conditions policy
	93	Administration of medication
	106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
	109	Toilet and Hygiene facilities
	168	Education and care must have policies
	170	Policies and procedures are to be followed
	176	Time to notify certain circumstances to regulatory authority
NQS	2.1.	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
	2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation.
	2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
	2.2	Each child is protected.
	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

IMPLEMENTATION

Infection can be spread through direct physical contact between people, airborne droplets from coughing and sneezing or from contact with surfaces and objects. Children come into contact with a large number of other children and adults, play equipment, eating utensils and other resources whilst being cared for in OSHC Services. This high degree of physical contact with people and the environment creates a higher risk of children being exposed to and spreading infectious illnesses. Whilst it may not be possible for services to prevent the spread of all infections, we aim to create a hygienic environment to minimise the spread of diseases and infections.

Effective hand washing is a vital strategy in the prevention of spreading many infectious diseases. Research emphasises effective and frequent handwashing as the single most important way to reduce the spread of bacteria, germs, viruses, and parasites that may infect educators, staff and children in school aged care services and in our general population.

Micro-organisms such as bacteria, germs, viruses, and parasites are present on the hands at all times and live in the oil that is naturally produced on your hands. The use of soap or detergent and water remove most of these organisms and decreases the risk of cross infection.

Our OSHC Service will adhere to National Regulation requirements, standards, and guidelines to support the effectiveness of our hand washing policy. We aim to educate and encourage children to wash their hands frequently and effectively which will help to reduce the incidence of infectious diseases, adhering to guidelines provided in *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious*

diseases in early childhood education and care services and recommendations from the Department of Health- Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) to guide best practice.

MINIMIZING THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS, INFECTIONS AND DISEASES

We aim to minimise cross contamination and the spread of infectious illnesses by implementing best practice and high standards of personal hygiene within our Service. Recommendations by the Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council publication, [Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services \(6th Edition\)](#) and Safe Work Australia, guide our policies and protocols.

Staff are provided with information about the recommended vaccinations for early childhood educators including- influenza, MMR, pertussis and hepatitis A and regularly check the [National Immunisation Program Schedule](#) and state/territory health department's website for any changes available for adults.

Staff are required to provide an *Immunisation History Statement* from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) and/or records from their general practitioner to management for their staff record.

Exclusion periods and notification of infectious diseases are guided by the *Australian Government- Department of Health* and local public health units in our jurisdiction as per the Public Health Act. These apply to children and staff at the OSHC Service.

In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease at our Service, staff who are not vaccinated will be notified and should be excluded from the workplace. [see: [Minimum periods for exclusion from childcare services](#)]

To help minimise the spread of illness and infectious diseases within our OSHC Service, rigorous hygiene and infection control procedures are implemented including:

- effective and frequent hand washing hygiene
- cough and sneeze etiquette
- use of gloves by staff when administering medication, administration of first aid, assisting children with maintaining personal hygiene, cleaning etc.
- effective cleaning of the environment, toys and resources
- requesting parents and visitors to wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer upon arrival and departure at the Service
- exclusion of children, educators or staff when they are unwell or displaying symptoms of an infectious disease or virus.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- staff members are informed about sick leave entitlements during the induction process
- staff members provide an Immunisation History Statement at time of employment and update this record whenever they receive a seasonal vaccination [see: *Employee Immunisation Record*]
- all staff are aware of the required procedure of informing management when they are sick and unable to attend the workplace
- staff members are encouraged to disclose any health problems that may be life threatening or may affect their work [risk of anaphylaxis, diabetes, asthma, epilepsy]
- staff members who are pregnant are made aware of health risks including:

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- exposure to specific infectious diseases or conditions that can have an adverse impact on pregnancy, including [Cytomegalovirus \(CMV\)](#)
- to consult with employees who are pregnant to maintain a safe workplace by eliminating or minimising any identified risk
- that staff are aware evidence may be requested for any sick leave where a staff member is unable to work due to illness or injury
 - in the case of carer's leave, staff may be asked to provide evidence if they are required to care for family member
 - evidence may include a medical certificate, which must state the staff member was genuinely entitled to the sick or carers leave and be provided by a registered medical practitioner
 - a statutory declaration is considered an acceptable form of evidence
 - if a staff member does not provide evidence when asked they may not be entitled to paid sick or carers leave
- in the case of carer's leave, staff may be asked to provide a medical certificate or statutory declaration if they are required to care for family member
- staff are aware of their accrued leave balance each year
- management monitors and review staff absences regularly
- staff are provided with information about available vaccinations to help protect them from serious illnesses such as whooping cough and COVID-19
- staff are encouraged to have yearly influenza vaccinations
- staff adhere to our *Work Health and Safety Policy*
- incidents and accidents are reported in accordance with Education and Care Services National

Regulations and Work Health and Safety guidelines

- return to work programs are facilitated to assist employees return to work following an injury or incident as per workers compensation obligations
- the regulatory authority is notified of any serious incident for which emergency services attend the Service within 24 hours

Procedures:

TO ENSURE THE GREATEST LEVEL OF PERSONAL HYGIENE OUR OSHC SERVICE WILL ENSURE:

- all employees, parents, children and visitors wash their hands upon arrival to the Service or, use the alcohol-based sanitiser under adult supervision
- hands are thoroughly dried using hand towel and disposed of in the bin provided
- disposable tissues are used to wipe noses, eyes or mouths and disposed of in the bin provided immediately after use
- hands are washed following the use of tissues
- hands are washed thoroughly using soap and water after using the toilet
- signage is provided to prompt visitors and children to wash their hands regularly and effectively when visiting our Service.

Our Centre Ensures:

- Due to the Covid- 19 Pandemic the service has introduced the application of sanitiser to the handwashing routine. All children, staff and visitors hands on arrival to the service will be directed to sanitiser. Sanitiser will be made readily available at all times.
- Ensure children, staff, volunteers and visitors are all encouraged to use the sanitiser on arrival and when leaving the centre, after toileting, before handling food and after wiping a nose.
- Ensure staff and visitors also use additional barriers such as disposable gloves where appropriate.

- Regularly clean the indoor environment of the centre. Clean daily the toilet, food preparation areas, taps etc. Use neutral detergent and water. It is not recommended that bleach be used in an after school care setting whilst children are in attendance.
- Regularly wash and clean toys and play equipment. Items contaminated with faeces or urine need to be washed with detergent before sterilised.
- Ensure children and staff; do not share brushes, combs, towels and facecloths.
- Ensure staff, always wear gloves where they are likely to be exposed to blood, faeces, urine or other body fluids, including any activity where there might be contact with a child's mucous membranes such as the nose, mouth or when handling any items or materials that have come into contact with blood or body fluids.
- Encourage staff to be fully immunised and encourage families to maintain the Immunisation of their children. Maintain a record of both staff and children's immunisations and in particular staff and children who are not fully immunised in order to take appropriate action during out-breaks of vaccine-preventable disease.
- Separate acutely ill children from well children and keep under supervision until they can be picked up by their parent/guardian
- In an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease, exclude children who are not immunised on advice from the local Public Health Unit.
- Exclude children and staff, who have a respiratory infection, diarrhoea, any vaccine preventable disease, a transmissible skin infection not yet being treated, or any other infectious disease.
- Exclude and advise the parent or family to take to their doctor any child the staff considers acutely unwell. To have a potential serious disease or a potential infectious disease, or will be unable to participate in normal activities to the detriment of their safety or other children's safety.
- Medical equipment used for individual staff or children must not be used for any other person and must be cleaned, disinfected or sterilized after each use and in accordance with manufacturers' instructions.
- If thermometers are used, such as a digital thermometer, will need to be cleaned according to the manufacturer's instructions, or in the case of the ear thermometer, please use the disposable plastic covers provided.
- Clean blood and body fluid spills according to standard infection control precautions.
- Guidelines outlined in the Department of Human Services and Health manual "Staying Healthy in Child Care" will be adhered.
- The centre adheres to the NHMRC guidelines on childhood infectious diseases and exclusion period.
- Fun 4 U management and Staff will ensure children attending excursions will use sanitiser when departing and re-entering the centre

HAND WASHING PROCEDURE

Wet hands with clean, running water, turn off the tap.

Rub soap all over your hands

Rub hands together for as long as it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice

Don't forget the backs of your hands, your wrists, between your fingers and under your fingernails

Rinse the soap off your hands under running water

Dry your hands using paper towel or under a hand dryer.

ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITIZER

Where possible, staff will use soap and water to clean their hands however, if this is not possible and hands are not greasy or visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitiser may be used.

Hand sanitiser must be kept out of reach of children at all times as it can be very dangerous if swallowed.

Directions should be followed on how to use the sanitiser correctly. The effectiveness of an alcohol-based hand sanitiser to kill microorganisms or prevent their growth should be at least 60% alcohol.

As per National Regulations, a safety data sheet will be kept on file for any alcohol-based hand sanitiser used in the OSHC Service.

HAND SANITIZER PROCEDURE

Apply liquid to the palm of one hand

Rub it all over both hands until the sanitiser dries

This takes about 20 seconds

Be careful not to wipe the sanitizer off before it is dry.

REPORTING OUTBREAKS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT

The approved provider is required to notify their local [NSW Health Department](#) as soon as possible after they are made aware that a child enrolled at the Service or staff member is suffering from one of the following vaccine preventable diseases or highly infectious illnesses:

- Diphtheria
- Mumps
- Poliomyelitis
- Haemophilus influenzae Type b (Hib)
- Meningococcal disease
- Rubella ('German measles')
- Measles
- Pertussis ('whooping cough')
- Tetanus
- An outbreak of 2 or more people with gastrointestinal or respiratory illness

RELATED INFORMATION/RESOURCES

Be a Soapy Hero! <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/soapy-hero>

Child Care Centre Desktop- Handwashing posters (see below)

NSW Department of Health [Handwashing poster](#)

[Teaching washing your hands with pepper experiment](#)

Sources & Further Readings

- ASCIA Action Plans, Treatment Plans, & Checklists for Anaphylaxis and Allergic Reactions: <https://www.allergy.org.au/hp/ascia-plans-action-and-treatment>
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- Australian Government- Department of Health and Aged Care <https://www.health.gov.au/>
- Australian Government. Fair Work Ombudsman. Modern Award. [Children's Services Award 2010](#)
- Australian Government. Fair Work Ombudsman. Modern Award. [Educational Services \(Teachers\) Award 2020](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
- Fair Work Ombudsman <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/leave/sick-and-carers-leave>
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2024). [Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services \(6th Ed.\)](#). NHMRC. Canberra.
- *Public Health Act 2010*
- Pregnancy Birth and Baby. [Cytomegalovirus \(CMV\) during pregnancy](#).
- *Privacy Act 1988*
- Safe Work Australia – www.safework.nsw.gov.au
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth).
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017
- National Health and Medical Research Council *Staying Healthy in Childcare: Preventing infectious disease in Childcare, Australian Government(6th edition)*. Retrieved from website www.nhmrc.gov.au 23rd August, 2024
- Occupational Health & Safety Act 2000 and Regulations 2001 (NSW)
- Community childcare co-operative, accessed November, 2015
- Department of Community Services *Children Service Regulations Guide 2004*
- NSW Dept of Community Services Licensing Regulations

Comments:



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