

Best Practice – Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines for procedures to be implemented at Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc to ensure:

- effective and up-to-date control of the spread of infection
- the provision of an environment that is safe, clean and hygienic.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc is committed to protecting all persons from disease and illness by minimising the potential for infection through:

- implementing and following effective hygiene practices
- implementing infection control procedures to minimise the likelihood of cross-infection and the spread of infectious diseases and illnesses to children, staff and any other persons in attendance at the centre.
- fulfilling the centre's duty of care requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* to ensure that those involved with the centre are protected from harm.
- informing educators, staff, volunteers, children and families on the importance of adhering to the *Hygiene Policy* to maintain a safe environment for all users and communicating the shared responsibility between all involved in the operation of the centre.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisors, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc, including during offsite excursions and activities.

3. PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring that all staff and volunteers have access to this policy and have a clear understanding of the procedures and practices outlined within
- ensuring the Nominated Supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers at the centre implement adequate health and hygiene practices, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food (Regulation 77(1))
- establishing robust induction procedures that include the provision of information regarding the implementation of the practices outlined in this policy.
- arranging for the centre to be cleaned and sanitised regularly, including floors and other surfaces, as per the cleaning contract and schedule as required.

- reviewing the cleaner’s contract and schedule as required.
- reviewing staff training needs in relation to understanding and implementing effective hygiene practices in early childhood settings
- providing access to a copy of the NHMRC guidelines via Dropbox for the prevention of infectious diseases in childcare for the centre
- providing hand washing guidelines for display at each hand washing location

All Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:

- have a sharps kit available for use at the centre.
- developing an appropriate cleaning and sanitising schedule.
- implementing and ensuring that all staff members and volunteers at the centre follow adequate health and hygiene practices, and safe practices for preparing, handling and storing food to minimise risks to children (Regulation 77(2))
- ensuring the centre has laundry facilities or access to laundry facilities, or other arrangements for dealing with soiled clothing, nappies and linen, including hygienic facilities for storage prior to their disposal or laundering (Regulation 106(1))
- ensuring that the laundry and hygiene facilities are located and maintained in a way that does not pose a risk to children (Regulation 106(2))
- ensuring that there are adequate and appropriate hygiene facilities provided for nappy changing which are designed, located and maintained in such a way that prevents unsupervised access by children (Regulations 112(2) & (4))
- ensuring that adequate, developmental and age-appropriate toilet, washing and drying facilities are provided for use by children, and that these are safe and accessible (Regulation 109)
- developing effective hygienic systems for cleaning.
- ensuring that an inspection of the outdoor areas, in particular the sand and soft-fall areas, are conducted regularly to ensure they are maintained in a safe and hygienic manner.
- informing the Approved Provider of any issues that impact on the implementation of this policy.
- actively encouraging parents/guardians to keep children who are unwell at home to prevent the spread of infection to other children and educators.
- storing or presenting items, such as beds, bedding and sunhats, in such a way as to prevent cross-contamination.
- ensuring there is an adequate supply of non-toxic cleaning and hygiene products, including gloves, at all times.
- ensuring that there is a regular and thorough cleaning and disinfecting schedule for all equipment and toys.
- ensuring any chemicals and cleaning agents are non-toxic and stored out of reach of children.
- ensuring that all educators/staff wear disposable gloves when changing nappies or dealing with open wounds or other body fluids and dispose of those gloves and soiled materials in a sealed container or plastic bag.
- actively encouraging educators and staff who have or are suspected of having an infectious disease to not attend the centre in order to prevent the spread of infection to others attending the centre.
- implementing and promoting correct hand washing and hygiene practices, as outlined in this policy.

In terms of changing nappies for children, all Educators are responsible for:

- attending to the individual personal hygiene needs of each child as soon as is practicable.
- changing nappies and attending to individual personal hygiene and toileting needs of each child according to recommended procedures (refer to Attachment 1 –Nappy-changing and toileting guidelines)
- disposing of soiled nappies in a safe and hygienic manner in line with this policy.

In terms of the toileting of children, all Early Childhood Educators are responsible for:

- ensuring soap and drying facilities are available at all times when children attend the centre.
- ensuring children do not share the use of items related to personal care, such as hand towels for drying hands.
- encouraging children to flush the toilet after use.
- encouraging and assisting (where required) children to wash their hands according to hand washing guidelines (refer to Attachment 2) after toileting.
- encouraging children to tell a staff member if they have had a toileting accident.
- monitoring and maintaining toileting facilities in a safe, clean and hygienic manner while children are in attendance; this requires periodic checking of the bathroom area.
- respecting diverse styles of toileting children due to cultural or religious practices
- respecting the possible need to maintain privacy of toileting and dressing.

For cleaning toys, clothing and the centre in general, all Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:

- removing toys that a child has sneezed or coughed on (place in a ‘toys-to-be-cleaned’ box)
- wearing gloves when cleaning (general purpose gloves are sufficient; wash and hang outside to dry when finished)
- washing mouthed toys daily using warm water and detergent and, if possible, drying in the sun
- wiping over books with a moist cloth treated with detergent.
- ensuring washable toys and equipment are cleaned term by term or annually, as required.
- where applicable, washing and disinfecting mattress covers and linen.

In regard to children’s contact with one another, all Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:

- educating and encouraging children in good personal hygiene practices, such as:
 - washing their hands after blowing and wiping their nose
 - not touching one another when they are cut or bleeding.
 - disposing of used tissues promptly and appropriately, and not lending them to other children
 - using their own equipment for personal care, such as toothbrushes, hats.
 - only touching the food, they are going to eat.
 - using their own drink bottles or cups.

For the indoor and outdoor environments, all Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:

- keeping the indoor and outdoor environments as clean and hygienic as possible at all times, including the safe disposal of discarded needles/syringes/sharps
- promptly removing blood, urine and faeces (including animal) either indoors or outdoors, using the appropriate cleaning procedures
- covering the sandpit when not in use to prevent contamination.
- emptying water containers, such as water trays, each day (refer to *Water Safety Policy*)

- disposing of any dead animals/insects found on the premises in an appropriate manner.

Safe handling of body fluids or materials in contact with body fluids:

Accidental spills and secretions of body fluid are a fact of life in a childcare setting. In managing these spills, all early childhood educators must ensure that they:

- avoid direct contact with blood or other fluids.
- are not at eye level when cleaning/treating a child's face that has blood on it, as a child's blood can enter the mouth/nose of a staff member when a child cry or coughs.
- wear gloves wherever possible
- cover any cuts/abrasions on their own hands with a waterproof dressing.

Effective environmental cleaning:

Cleaning is an important part of infection control as germs are unable to multiply on clean, dry surfaces. Effective cleaning removes the bulk of infectious organisms from a surface.

Particular attention should be paid to the following:

- toilets/sinks must be cleaned daily, and separate cleaning cloths/sponges must be used for each task.
- mouthed toys must be washed immediately or placed in a separate container for washing at a later time.
- all bench tops and floors must be washed regularly.
- children's cups/drink bottles used for water must be washed daily.
- nappy change areas/mats must be cleaned after each use.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- keeping their child/ren home if they are unwell or have an infectious disease that requires their exclusion from the education and care centre.
- informing the centre if their child has an infectious disease.
- supporting this policy by complying with the hygiene practices when attending the centre or when assisting with a centre program or activity

Volunteers and students, while at the centre, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness.
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy and ensure satisfactory resolutions have been achieved.
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice.
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the GRPSA policy review cycle, or as required.
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Nappy-changing and toileting guidelines
- Attachment 2: Hand washing guidelines

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc on 12th November 2012.

Review and Approved: 18th September 2020.

Reviewed and Approved: 28th April 2020.

REVIEW DATE: APRIL 2023

ATTACHMENT 1

Nappy-changing and toileting guidelines

Suggested practices

- Ensure that the nappy change area is separate from food preparation and serving areas.
- Ensure that hand washing, and drying facilities are adjacent to the nappy change area.
- Ensure that staff wear disposable gloves when changing nappies.
- Display a waterproofed poster of the nappy-changing procedure in all nappy change areas (provide multi-lingual translations as relevant for the centre).
- Provide a nappy change mat or bench with an impervious, washable surface.
- Ensure that a walking child walks to the nappy change area and provide steps for the child if a bench is used (refer to *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*).

Procedures to consider if providing care for children under three years of age.

- Nappy changes should be recorded daily for staff and family information.
- Have an adequate number of clean nappies stored within reach of the nappy change area.
- Keep all nappy change solutions, wipes, soiled nappies and clothes in a place that is not accessible to children.
- If using cloth nappies, use nappy covers where practicable. Ensure nappy covers are replaced at each nappy change. Wrap-around nappy covers are preferable as they avoid the spread of germs that can occur when nappy covers are pulled down over a child's legs and feet.
- During outbreaks of diarrhoea, use disposable nappies rather than cloth nappies.
- Where possible, staff who change nappies should not be involved in food preparation on the same day.

Nappy changing for older children.

All children's personal hygiene needs must be attended to as soon as is practicable; therefore, if a child is not toilet trained or soils their underclothing, the centre will need to ensure that appropriate facilities and supplies are provided for changing nappies/clothing in a safe and hygienic matter. It is not appropriate to leave a child in a wet or soiled nappy/clothing until the parent/guardian is available to attend to their child's personal hygiene. How and where these facilities are provided in a childcare environment will depend on the space and layout of the bathroom area (refer to *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*).

Centres are advised to consider implementing procedures that ensure that the requirements of the regulations are met while recognising an individual child's need for respect and privacy, hygiene, supervision and occupational health and safety requirements. Centres are reminded that it is not acceptable to change a child's clothing or nappy in areas that are not licensed for such activities, such as the office, foyer, kitchen and adult/disabled toilets.

Changing nappies

- Wear disposable gloves.
- Ensure that the nappy changing area has been cleaned prior to changing the nappy.
- Ensure that all adults at the centre who change children's nappies use their hands to hold the child away from their body as they carry them to the changing area. Wherever possible, children should be encouraged to walk to the change area.
- Children should not be left alone during the entire time their nappy is being changed.
- All soiled items of clothing should be removed from the child's body along with the nappy.
- Extremely soiled nappies/clothing may need to have the contents tipped into the toilet.

- Nappies must be placed into plastic bags or a lined rubbish bin (a hands-free lidded bin that is inaccessible to children is recommended).
- Children should be cleaned, and soiled wipes placed into a lined rubbish bin. The change sheet/paper should also be discarded immediately after the nappy change.
- The adult must remove their gloves before touching the child's clean clothes or putting on a clean nappy, taking care not to let their skin touch the outer contaminated surface of the glove. Used gloves must be discarded in the bin along with other soiled items.
- Dress the child and wash the child's hands.
- The nappy change area must be cleaned immediately after each use.
- If necessary, the cloth nappy/clothing should be rinsed before being placed into a plastic bag for collection by the parent/guardian.
- Adults involved in the nappy change process must ensure that their hands are washed and dried thoroughly after each change.

ATTACHMENT 2

Hand washing guidelines

These guidelines are based on information provided in *Staying Healthy in Child Care: Preventing infectious diseases in childcare* (4th Edition), National Health and Medical Research Council (2005).

(Note: this publication is currently being revised and will have significant changes. It is important that centres refer to the most up-to-date version of this resource.)

Hand washing techniques

Hands are the body parts most responsible for transferring infectious organisms, which can then lead to the spread of illness and disease.

It is essential that hands are properly washed upon arrival and at intervals throughout the day. Correct hand washing techniques are a vital part of good hygiene practices, and all staff should be trained in a set hand washing procedure.

The process of thoroughly washing, rinsing and drying your hands or a child's hands should take around 30 seconds. This is the approximate amount of time it takes to sing *Happy Birthday* twice, or the *Alphabet Song* once. Alternately, you could count to 10 while you wash and then count to 10 again while you rinse.

There are five steps to washing hands:

- Wet hands with running water (warm water is most comfortable).
- Apply soap to hands.
- Lather soap and rub hands thoroughly, including the wrists, palms, between fingers, around the thumbs and under the nails. Rub hands together for 20 seconds.
- Rinse under running water.
- Dry thoroughly.

When to wash hands:

Before	After
Educators and other staff <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eating or handling food/drinks• Starting work• Giving medication• Putting on gloves	Educators and other staff <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking off gloves• Changing a nappy• Coming in from outside play• Using the toilet• Cleaning the nappy change area• Helping children use the toilet• Wiping a child's nose or your own nose• Handling garbage• Cleaning up faeces, vomit, or blood
Children <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eating or handling food	Children <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eating or handling food• Touching nose secretions• Using the toilet• Having their nappy changed• Touching animals