



HYGIENE POLICY

Best Practice – Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines for procedures to be implemented at Parkdale Preschool 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

Parkdale Preschool 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 service
- fulfilling the service'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 service 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 service.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Parkdale Preschool, including during offsite excursions and activities.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

Infections are common in children and often lead to illness. A person with an infection may or may not show signs of illness and, in many instances, the infectious phase of the illness may be in the period before symptoms become apparent, or during the recovery phase. While it is not possible to prevent all infections in education and care environments, services can prevent or control the spread of many infectious diseases by adopting simple hygiene practices.

An infection can be spread when an infected person attends the service premises and contamination occurs. A service can contribute to the spread of an infection through poor hygiene practices that allow infectious organisms to survive or thrive in the service environment.

The implementation of appropriate hygiene and infection control procedures aims to break the cycle and prevent the spread of infections at every stage. The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) suggest that to reduce illness in education and care services, the three most effective methods of infection control are:

- effective hand washing
- exclusion of sick children, staff and visitors

- immunisation.

Other strategies to prevent infection include:

- cough etiquette
- appropriate use of gloves
- effective cleaning of the service environment.

The NHMRC suggests that if these strategies are not implemented, all other procedures described in the service's *Hygiene Policy* will have reduced effectiveness in preventing the spread of infection and illness.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 77, 106, 109, 112, 168
- *Food Act 1990*
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>
- Commonwealth Legislation – ComLaw: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/>

4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

Cleaning: A process that removes visible contamination such as food waste, dirt and grease from a surface. This process is usually achieved by the use of water and detergent. During this process, micro-organisms will be removed but not destroyed.

Communicable disease: A disease capable of being transmitted from an infected person or species to a susceptible host, either directly or indirectly.

Cough etiquette: The correct way to prevent the spread of infectious organisms that are carried in droplets of saliva is to cough or sneeze into the inner elbow or to use a tissue to cover the mouth and nose. Place all tissues in the rubbish bin immediately and clean hands with either soap and water or a disinfectant hand rub.

Hygiene: The principle of maintaining health and the practices put in place to achieve this.

Infectious disease: A disease that can be spread, for example, by air, water or interpersonal contact. An infectious disease is designated under Victorian Law or by a health authority (however described) as a disease that would require the infected person to be excluded from an education and care service. (refer to *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*).

Neutral detergent: A cleaning agent available commercially and labelled as 'neutral' or 'neutral pH'.

Sanitising: A process that destroys micro-organisms. Sanitising a surface can reduce the number of micro-organisms present. The process of sanitisation usually involves ensuring a surface is thoroughly cleaned with both heat and water, followed by the use of chemicals.

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Department of Health, Victoria, Food Safety: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/>
- Communicable Diseases Section, Public Health Group, Victorian Department of Human Services (2005) *The Blue Book: Guidelines for the control of infectious diseases*. Available at: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/infection-control-guidelines/standard-additional-precautions>
- National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th edition): <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/health-advice/public-health/preventing-infection>

Service policies

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring that all staff and volunteers have access to a copy of this policy and have a clear understanding of the procedures and practices outlined within
- ensuring the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff and volunteers at the service 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
- developing an appropriate cleaning and sanitising schedule that outlines daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual cleaning and sanitising requirements and responsibilities
- arranging for the service to be cleaned and sanitised regularly, including floors and other surfaces, as per the cleaning contract and schedule
- reviewing the cleaner's contract and schedule on an annual basis
- ensuring the service has a needle/syringe/sharps disposal unit and staff are aware of procedures for its use
- ensuring the service has 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 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)
- reviewing staff training needs in relation to understanding and implementing effective hygiene practices in early childhood settings
- providing a copy of the NHMRC guidelines for the prevention of infectious diseases in child care for the service
- ensuring that the Nominated Supervisor, staff and everyone at the service adheres to the *Hygiene Policy* and the procedures for infection control relating to blood-borne viruses
- providing hand washing guidelines for display at each hand washing location

- ensuring there is an adequate supply of non-toxic cleaning and hygiene products, including gloves, at all times.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- implementing and ensuring that all staff members and volunteers at the service follow adequate health and hygiene practices, and safe practices for preparing, handling and storing food to minimise risks to children (Regulation 77(2))
- developing effective hygienic systems for cleaning, such as using colour-coded sponges/cloths in each area
- ensuring sponges are cleaned, rinsed and stored separately, and replaced regularly
- ensuring that an inspection of the outdoor areas, in particular the sand and soft-fall areas, are conducted daily 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
- 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 an appropriate way
- maintaining the service in a clean and hygienic manner throughout the day, such as wiping benches and tables before and after eating, and cleaning up spills
- actively encouraging educators and staff who have, or are suspected of having an infectious disease to not attend the service in order to prevent the spread of infection to others attending the service.

Educators are responsible for:

- implementing and promoting correct hand washing and hygiene practices, as outlined in this policy
- maintaining the service in a clean and hygienic manner throughout the day, such as wiping benches and tables before and after eating, and cleaning up spills
- conducting a daily inspection of the outdoor areas, in particular the sand and soft-fall areas, 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
- being conscious of their responsibility to not attend the service when they have or suspect they have an infectious disease.

Changing nappies for children:

- 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 –Toileting guidelines)disposing of soiled nappies in a safe and hygienic manner in line with this policy

Toileting of children:

- ensuring soap and drying facilities are available at all times when children are in attendance at the service, including ensuring paper towels are available
- ensuring children do not share the use of items related to personal care, such as hand towels for drying hands, toothbrushes and hairbrushes
- 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.

Cleaning toys, clothing and the service in general:

- removing toys that a child has sneezed or coughed on and clean as soon as possible
- wearing gloves when cleaning, as needed (general purpose gloves are sufficient)
- washing mouthed toys using warm water and detergent and, if possible, drying in the sun
- ensuring washable toys and equipment are cleaned before being returned to storage and as required

Children's contact with one another:

- 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, brushes and combs
 - only touching the food they are going to eat
 - using their own drink bottles or cups
 - following cough and sneeze etiquette.

For the indoor and outdoor environments,:

- 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
- emptying water containers, such as water trays, regularly (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 an early childhood setting. In managing these spills, staff/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 cries 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 with detergent and warm water followed by rinsing and drying removes the bulk of infectious organisms from a surface. Particular attention should be paid to the following:

- toilets/sinks must be cleaned daily (and between groups of children) and separate cleaning cloths/sponges must be used for each task
- mouthed toys must be washed immediately or placed in the classroom sink 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

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 service
- informing the service if their child has an infectious disease
- supporting this policy by complying with the hygiene practices when attending the service or when assisting with a service program or activity
- encouraging their child/ren to develop and follow effective hygiene practices at all times, including handwashing on arrival at the service.
- supplying a clean, named water bottle for their child each day
- regularly laundering their child's hand towel
- assisting with laundering of the service's linen, towels and dressup clothes etc once per year on a rostered basis

Volunteers and students, while at the service, 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 service's 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: Toileting guidelines
- Attachment 2: Handwashing guidelines

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Parkdale Preschool JULY 2019

REVIEW DATE: JULY 2022

ATTACHMENT 1

Toileting guidelines

Procedure for nappy changing and toileting accidents

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 service will need to ensure that appropriate facilities and supplies are provided for changing nappies/clothing in a safe and hygienic manner. 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.

We 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. 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.

- Wear disposable gloves.
- Ensure that the nappy changing mat has been cleaned with detergent and water, and that paper towel has been placed on the changing mat prior to changing the nappy.
- Children should not be left alone during the entire time their nappy/clothes are being changed.
- All soiled items of clothing should be removed from the child's body along with the nappy.
- Extremely soiled clothing may need to have the contents tipped into the toilet. In extreme cases, items such as underwear may need to be disposed of. In these cases, the item will be placed into two plastic bags and put in the outside rubbish bin. The parent must be informed of the item's disposal.
- Nappies must be placed into a sealed plastic bag and put in the outside rubbish bin as soon as practicable.
- Place soiled clothes in a sealed plastic bag, and keep these bags in a designated place until parents can take them home.
- Children should be cleaned, and soiled wipes placed into a lined rubbish bin. The change 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.
- Assist the child to dress themselves and request that they wash their hands.
- The nappy change area must be cleaned immediately after each use with disinfectant spray and paper towel.
- Adults involved in the nappy change process must ensure that their hands are washed and dried thoroughly after each change.
- All parents are asked to supply a clean change of clothing for their child.

Additional considerations for toileting

- Children, especially girls, should be encouraged to wipe front to back, to reduce the chance of introducing bowel bacteria to the urinary tract.
- After toileting, help the child wash their hands. Ask older children if they washed their hands. Explain to the child that washing their hands and drying them properly will stop germs that might make them ill.
- Adults who help children use the toilet, must always wash their own hands afterwards.

ATTACHMENT 2

Hand Hygiene guidelines

Handwashing 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 handwashing techniques are a vital part of good hygiene practices, and all staff should be trained in a set handwashing 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 • 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"> • Starting the day at the service • Eating or handling food • Going home 	Children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating or handling food • Touching nose secretions • Using the toilet • Coming in from outside play • Having their nappy changed