

Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens

HAND HYGIENE AND INFECTION PREVENTION POLICY

CONSIDERATIONS:

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS	2.1, 2.2, 3.1
NATIONAL LAW ACT & NATIONAL REGULATIONS	Law Section: 167 Regulations: 77, 88, 109, 112

POLICY STATEMENT:

To promote the use of effective hand hygiene as the single most important strategy against the spread of infection within the Kindergarten Service.

To promote good personal hygiene practices and coughing and sneezing etiquette in managing the health of all at the Kindergarten Service.

RELEVANT FORMS/MATERIAL:

- Handwashing and Hand Hygiene Diagrams
- Poster Display of children washing hands
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Cleaning and Sanitisation (Including Pest and Weed Management) Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Toileting and Nappy Change Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Staff Immunisation Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Children's Immunisation Policy

SOURCES:

- National Health & Medical Research Council (2013) *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th Ed.) Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra.
- Hand Hygiene Australia (www.hha.org.au)
- Colgate Palmolive Pty Ltd (2014) *Handy Saves the Day in your Pre School: A Handwashing Education Program, Teachers Guide.*
- Queensland Government, Queensland Health. Hand washing for hygiene
- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. Hand hygiene factsheet for children and carers.
- Education and Care Services National Law Act (Queensland).
- Education and Care Services National Regulations.

(Accessed 2024)

Reviewed: June 2024

Date to be Reviewed: December 2025

HAND HYGIENE	
IMPLEMENTATION	
REMEMBER	Hand hygiene is one very effective way to control the spread of infection. This used to be known as hand washing, before the development of waterless hand cleaners. Hand hygiene means removing both dirt and germs from your hands (<i>Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services</i>). Note all of the below practices are implemented in conjunction with effective environmental cleaning.
EQUIPMENT	• Disposable paper towels. • Liquid/foam soap and dispenser (rather than cakes of soap as organisms may grow in wet soap). • Non-germicidal soap (rather than germicidal solutions which are very drying and often not tolerated by children or staff with sensitivities or allergies). • A waterless hand sanitising gel such as SIQURA/ Sanikleen or alternative product (for use up to three times outside, only where no water hand washing facility is available. If necessary, wipes can be used to remove visible dirt from hands before use of the hand sanitiser).
HOW TO WASH HANDS WHAT YOU SHOULD DO	• Use liquid/foam soap and running water. • Rub hands vigorously as you wash them - count to twenty. • Wash all surfaces: - (it is the combination of running water, rubbing your hands and the soap/detergent which effectively cleans them). ○ Backs of hands ○ Palm to palm ○ Palm over the back of hands ○ Palm and fingers joined ○ Back of fingers joined together ○ Rotate thumbs in palms ○ Rotate fingers in palms ○ Wrists ○ Between fingers ○ All fingers • Rinse well, count to ten, turn off tap. • Dry well on paper towel (important to assist children with this step). Please note: Effective hand drying is just as important as thorough hand washing. Damp hands pick up and transfer up to 1000 times more bacteria than dry hands.

	Drying your hands thoroughly also helps remove any germs that may not have been rinsed off. (<i>Staying Healthy Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services</i>). • Dispose of towel in an appropriately lined bin.
PROCEDURE FOR SERVICES WITH INDIVIDUAL CLOTH TOWELS	• It is recognised for philosophical and sustainable reasons some Services will choose to use individual cloth hand towels during the hand hygiene process, for Services in this situation the following must be met; ○ Individual towels must be displayed in a way which makes a child's individual towel easily identifiable to themselves (this may be through photograph or symbol near the towel hook). ○ Staff will support the children in understanding effective drying technique with their individual cloth towel. ○ Individual towels must be hung in such a way that no towel touches another towel. The collection of towels must also be displayed in a suitable area, such as not where a child who is redressing may access the area for support e.g., they will lean or hold onto the area whilst redressing. ○ The Service or family should provide a spare towel in the instance that a child does not have a towel for that day of attendance, or their towel is no longer suitable (such as being dropped on the floor / used by peer). ○ The Service will have a documented laundering process of the individual towels either by the Service, family washing roster or individual families being responsible for their child's towel. ○ It is recommended that access to disposable paper towel is also provided for use of visitors / quick access in immediate response to spills etc. while other resources are accessed. ○ During the outbreak of illness or an infectious disease or if directed by Public Health, the use of individual cloth hand towels will be suspended for the period of the outbreak. During this time children, families and staff will use single use paper towel when drying their hands.
HOT AIR DRYERS	The use of hot air hand dryers is not recommended for education and care service settings due to children possibly not using this effectively in drying their hands, due to noise, force of air or temperature of air.
CARE OF HANDS	• Children will be encouraged to wash their hands according to procedure above. • Teachers/educators need to supervise and support children in learning and developing these good hand washing habits • Teachers/educators also need to look for ways in which to offer this support and ways that promote good hand washing techniques, e.g. songs, rhymes, stories, discussions and photo boards.
HAND HYGIENE AND ECZEMA	<u>For staff well being</u> People with eczema have dry, itchy and sensitive skin that is easily inflamed and made worse by rubbing and scratching. These people may find that frequent use of soap and water irritates their skin.

	One solution is to use sorbolene cream instead of soap – put the cream on and gently rub it off under running water. People with eczema should pat their hands dry rather than rub them and apply more sorbolene cream if needed. (<i>Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services</i>).
WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS	
WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS	• When entering the Service and again just prior to commencing your shift will assist with the reduction of new germs being introduced into the Service. • When moving between rooms at the Service after engaging with the children and working within the room. • Before preparing, handling or serving food. • Before and after eating • After supporting a child with toileting inclusive of nappy changing when applicable. • Before and after breaks that involve meal and bathroom breaks for staff. • After cleaning up blood, faeces or vomit. • After wiping a nose (either a child's or your own), coughing or sneezing. • Before leaving the Service. (This prevents taking germs home). • Before and after giving medication (after is important if fingers touch the receiver's face, mouth, hands, etc.). • Before and after giving first aid. • After using any cleaning products or undertaking any cleaning jobs such as sweeping, raking etc. • Immediately after smoking/vaping. • After handling garbage. • After handling animals • After coming inside from outdoor play.
WHAT YOU SHOULD DO OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT	• Please note that when in the outside environment supervision is paramount so staff after removing gloves, you are able to sanitise hands using sanitising gel provided by the Service. If needed, a wipe can be used to remove visible dirt from hands before the sanitiser is used. • When teachers/educators move inside or are able to safely access sinks please ensure that hands are washed thoroughly. Use of sanitising gels is to be limited to three times consecutive use and then after that, hands must be washed to ensure the continuation of hygienic practices.

	It is noted that teachers/educators will undertake high level practices in regards to their own personal hygiene. Personal hygiene practices are addressed during the induction process.
WHAT YOU SHOULD DO WIPING A CHILD'S NOSE	Washing your hands every time you wipe a child's nose will reduce the spread of infection. When wiping the child's nose please follow the procedure listed below: - Use disposable gloves. - Pick up a tissue/s and wipe the child's nose. - Pull the glove inside out and trap the tissue and cold germs inside the glove, dispose of glove. - Wash hands.
WHEN CHILDREN SHOULD WASH THEIR HANDS	
WHEN CHILDREN SHOULD WASH THEIR HANDS	- When children arrive at the Service – ask parents to help with this (this reduces the introduction of germs). - Before eating and after eating. - After having their nappy changed (their hands will become contaminated with germs while they are on the change mat). - After going to the toilet or being supported to be changed as applicable. - After playing outside (if this does not occur immediately prior to a group session and transitioning to washing hands for a meal time at the conclusion of this group session). - After blowing their nose or touching nose secretions. - After any contact with blood, vomit or faeces. - After handling animals. - Before going home – ask parents to help with this (this prevents taking germs home).
COUGHING AND SNEEZING ETIQUETTE	
WHAT YOU SHOULD DO	- Previously people were encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with their hands when coughing or sneezing. This practice required the immediate cleaning of hands to reduce the transference of germs to other surfaces. - The recommended way to prevent the spread of germs that are carried in droplets, is by: - Coughing or sneezing into your inner elbow, or - Using a tissue to cover your mouth and nose. - Place all tissues in the rubbish bin and clean your hands with either soap and water or a hand sanitiser. (<i>Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services</i>). - Educators/teachers will discuss and model coughing and sneezing etiquette with children.