

Background

Maintaining a high level of cleanliness and hygiene is vital for health and wellbeing. This is especially so for young children's immune systems as they are still developing and thereby makes them susceptible to infections. In early childhood education and care services, children have frequent and close physical contact with other children. These facilities and equipment need to be cleaned and sanitised regularly.

Policy statement

The Service ensures the premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained. Cleaning tasks are scheduled and the procedures are those recommended by recognised authorities and according to regulations. Safe natural and effective cleaning products are used wherever possible. Educators model safe and healthy hygiene practices and routines to the children, and involve the children in maintaining a clean environment.

Strategies and practices

- The Service follows the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommendation that using hot soapy water is the most effective method of removing germs. Accordingly, hot soapy water is used for general cleaning (e.g. floors, table tops), and for cleaning areas contaminated by blood, faeces, urine, vomit and other body fluids.
- The Service reviews the range of green cleaning products available at least once per year when reviewing the Service's *Environmental Sustainability Policy*.
- Educators ensure the areas used by children are safe and clean throughout the day (e.g. clean spillages as they occur, sweep floors, wash tables before and after meals).
- Children are intentionally taught effective hygiene routines.
- Educators in each room follow a Room Task Schedule which lists cleaning tasks (e.g. washing dress ups, soft toys, cushion covers, soft toys, furniture) to ensure the building, furniture and resources used by children are regularly cleaned.
- Bathrooms are cleaned at scheduled intervals throughout the day, and at other times when necessary. Refer to the Hygiene Guidelines – General (2. Toilets).
- Rubbish bins are emptied at regular intervals throughout the day, or at any other time the bins are full or unpleasant, and plastic liners replaced. Refer to the Hygiene Guidelines – General (3. Rubbish Bins).
- Containers are placed on the tables at mealtimes for uneaten food, and these food scraps cleared away promptly. Refer to the Service's *Environmental Sustainability Policy*.

Cleaning

- Wherever possible, the Service purchases materials, equipment, toys and other products which are washable and easy to maintain.
- Gloves are worn when cleaning. When general purpose or ordinary kitchen (non-latex) gloves are used, the gloves are washed and pegged outside to dry.
- To prevent cross-contamination between work areas, educators use the [Cleaning Cloth Colour Chart](#) to select the appropriate cloth. In addition, cleaning implements such as gloves and scourers are confined to specific areas. The coloured wash cloths are washed or replaced frequently.
- Each room has its own cleaning equipment and supplies (e.g. buckets, mops, cleaning cloths). Cleaning items are air dried and stored in places inaccessible to children. Any item used to clear away blood or body fluids is cleaned immediately and air dried. Refer to the Service's [Hygiene Guidelines – General \(5. Mops\)](#).
- Rest mats/beds are sprayed and wiped at the end of each group. Parents take their children's linen home to launder each week, or as required. Refer to the [Hygiene Guidelines – General \(1. Beds and Cots\)](#).
- Soiled items of clothing and linen to be sent home for washing are placed in sealed containers inaccessible to children. Those items to be laundered at the Service are placed in sealed containers in the laundry, and washed daily. Refer to the [Hygiene Guidelines – General \(8. Laundry\)](#).
- Toys are washed regularly. Mouthed toys are placed in a labeled container with a lid, and cleaned according the [Hygiene Guidelines – General \(11. Soft Toys and Cushion Covers\)](#).
- The sandpit is covered when not in use and raked over each morning to remove any dangerous or foreign matter. In the event of sand being soiled by urine, faeces, food or other materials during the day, children are removed from the sand pit and the contaminated sand addressed. Refer to [Hygiene Guidelines – General \(7. Sandpit\)](#).

Responsibilities of parents

- To take home their child's soiled clothing and linen for washing.

Procedure and forms

- Cleaning Cloth Colour Chart
- Hygiene Guidelines – General
- Room Task Schedule

Links to other policies

- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Food Preparation, Storage and Handling Policy
- Managing Infectious Diseases Policy
- Toileting Policy

Cleaning

- Sleep and Rest Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	88	Infectious diseases
	103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
	106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
	109	Toilet and hygiene facilities

QA	2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
	2.2.2	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented
	3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained
	3.2.3	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2012). *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services. 5th edition* http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55_staying_healthy_chilcare_5th_edition_0.pdf accessed 20 December 2017

Further reading and useful websites

- Queensland Health – <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/> accessed 22 December 2017
- The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) – <http://www.rch.org.au> accessed 22 December 2017
- Health Victoria - <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/> accessed 22 December 2017
- WorkCover (Queensland) – <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/> accessed 22 December 2017
- WorkSafe Victoria - <http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/> accessed 22 December 2017

Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Version Control

Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	8 January 2018	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018. Service to modify policies to its specific needs.	