


# Policy

## Early Years Policy - Hygiene

<b>Date of Adoption</b>	13 July 2018		
<b>Adoption Method</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Council	<input type="checkbox"/> CEO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director Community
<b>Director Signature</b>	Signed by:  <small>A4566C08D5B4450...</small>		<b>Date</b> 20-11-2024
<b>Responsible Officer and Unit</b>	Samantha Waymouth, Coordinator Early Years Services		
<b>Nominated Review Period</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Every 4 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Other ( <i>please specify</i> )
<b>Last Endorsement Date</b>	October 2020		
<b>Next Endorsement Date</b>	November 2025		

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

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## Purpose/Objective

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines and procedures for Council's Early Years Services to ensure current and effective control of the spread of infection and the provision of a safe, clean and hygienic environment.

## Scope

This policy and procedure applies to staff, contractors, volunteers, students on placement at kindergartens, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Council's Early Years Services.

## Background/Reasons for Policy

Infections are common in children and can 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's not possible to prevent all infections in education and care environments, the prevention or minimisation of the spread of infectious diseases is achieved by adopting simple hygiene practices.

An infection can spread when an infected person attends the service premises and contamination occurs. 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 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.

## Gender Impact Assessment

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this policy.

## Definitions

Term	Definition
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.
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 Early Years Policy - Dealing with Infectious Diseases (Including Child Immunisation)).
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.

## References

- > Department of Health (Vic), Food Safety: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/>
- > Department of Health (Vic), Infectious diseases: guidelines and advice: <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases>
- > Department of Health (Vic), Diseases information and advice: <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/infectious-diseases/disease-information-and-advice>
- > National Health and Medical Research Council, Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (6th edition, 2024): <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf>

## Related Policies

- > Early Years Policy - Administration of First Aid
- > Early Years Policy - Administration of Medication
- > Early Years Policy - Dealing with Infectious Diseases (including Child Immunisation)
- > Early Years Policy - Dealing with Medical Conditions
- > Early Years Policy - Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- > Early Years Policy - Water Safety
- > Privacy Policy (Council)
- > Occupational Health and Safety Policy (Council)

## Related Legislation

- > *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*
  - *Standard 2.1: Each child's health is promoted*
  - *Element 2.1.3: Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented*
  - *Element 2.1.4: Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines*
- > *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- > *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*

## Responsibilities

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
<b>R</b> indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are provided with a copy of this policy and have a clear understanding of the procedures and practices outlined within	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring the nominated supervisor, early childhood teachers, educators, staff and volunteers at the service implement adequate health and hygiene practices,	R				

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food ( <i>Regulation 77(1)</i> )					
Establishing robust induction procedures that include the provision of information regarding the implementation of the practices outlined in this policy ( <i>National Law: Section 167, Regulation 77</i> )	R	✓			
Developing an appropriate cleaning and sanitising schedule that outlines daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual cleaning and sanitising requirements and responsibilities ( <i>National Law: Section 167, Regulation 77</i> )	R	✓	✓		
Arranging for the service to be cleaned and sanitised regularly, including floors and other surfaces, as per the cleaning contract and schedule ( <i>National Law: Section 167, Regulation 77</i> )	R	✓			
Contacting the local council's Environmental Health Officer for information about obtaining a needle/syringe/sharps disposal unit and instructions for its use (if required)	R	✓			
Ensuring the service 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 ( <i>Regulation 106(1)</i> )	R	✓			
Ensuring that the laundry and hygiene facilities are located and maintained in a	R	✓	✓		✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
way that does not pose a risk to children ( <i>Regulation 106(2)</i> )					
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 ( <i>Regulations 112(2)&amp;(4)</i> )	R	✓			
Ensuring that adequate, developmental and age-appropriate toilet, hand washing, and hand drying facilities are provided for use by children, and that these are safe and accessible ( <i>Regulation 109</i> )	R	✓			
Reviewing staff training needs in relation to understanding and implementing effective include hygiene practices in relation to hand washing, toileting, nappy changing and cleaning of equipment	✓	✓			
Providing a copy of the NHMRC guidelines for the prevention of infectious diseases in child care for the service (refer to References)	✓	✓	✓		
Providing hand washing guidelines for display at each hand washing location (refer to Procedures)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring there is an adequate supply of non-toxic cleaning and hygiene products, including gloves, at all times	✓	✓			



Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
Developing effective hygienic systems for cleaning, such as using colour-coded cloths in each area	✓	✓	✓		
Ensuring cloths 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	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Storing or presenting items, such as beds, bedding and sunhats, in such a way as to prevent cross-contamination	✓	✓	✓		✓
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	✓	✓	✓		✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
	gloves and soiled materials in a sealed container or plastic bag				
	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	✓	✓		✓
<b>In relation to changing nappies for children:</b>					
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 Procedures)		✓	✓		✓
Disposing of soiled nappies in a safe and hygienic manner, in line with this policy		✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that current nappy-changing procedures are displayed in toilet and nappy-changing areas (refer to Procedures)	✓	✓			
<b>In relation to the toileting of children:</b>					

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
Ensuring soap and drying facilities are available at all times when children are in attendance at the service, providing an alternative if hand-dryers are not working/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		✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that information about correct hand-washing procedures is displayed in relevant areas of the service, including food preparation areas (refer to Procedures), including visual aids for children	✓	✓			
Encouraging and assisting (where required) children to wash their hands according to hand washing guidelines (refer to Procedures) 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		✓	✓		✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
Respecting diverse styles of toileting children, due to cultural or religious practices		✓	✓		✓
Respecting the possible need to maintain privacy of toileting and dressing		✓	✓		✓

## Procedures

### Nappy change

Download and attach the NHMRC poster: Changing a nappy without spreading germs:

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/Changing-a-nappy-without-spreading-germs-poster-A4.pdf>

### Handwashing guidelines

Download and attach the World Health Organisation poster: How to wash hands

[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK144035/figure/partii\\_ranking.f2/?report=objectonly](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK144035/figure/partii_ranking.f2/?report=objectonly)

### In relation to cleaning toys, clothing and the service in general:

- Removing equipment/resources that a child has sneezed or coughed on (place in a 'equipment-to-be-cleaned' box)
- Wearing gloves when cleaning
- 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
- Washing and disinfecting mattress covers and linen, where applicable

**In relation to 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, hats, brushes and combs
- only touching food they are going to eat
- using their own drink bottles or cups.

**In relation to 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
- Covering the sandpit when not in use to prevent contamination
- Emptying water containers, such as water trays, each day (refer to Early Years Policy - Water Safety)
- Disposing of any dead animals/insects found on the premises in an appropriate manner.

**In relation to the safe handling of body fluids or materials in contact with body fluids:**

- Avoid direct contact with blood or other fluids

- Not be 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.

**In relation to effective environmental cleaning:**

- Clean with detergent and warm water followed by rinsing and drying to remove 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 using the red cloth
  - mouthed toys must be washed immediately or placed in a separate container for washing at a later time using the green cloth
  - all benchtops and floors must be washed regularly using the yellow cloth
  - children's cups/drink bottles used for water must be washed daily
- when washing at the child care premises, staff are to consider washing items separately to minimise cross-contamination, for example, tea towels washed separately from sheets, face washers washed separately to play mats/rugs
- nappy change areas/mats must be washed with detergent and warm water after each use

The following colour guide is to be applied for the use of cleaning cloths at services, using the same colours as specified for each area of cleaning for continuity of all staff:

- Blue – art and craft (paints, glues etc.)
- Red – toilets
- Green – toys and high touch areas
- Yellow – tables before/after meals

## Evaluation

To assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider or persons with management or control will:

- regularly seek feedback regarding policy effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- 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 all stakeholders, including parents/guardians, at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures (*Regulation 172(2)*) unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk.

## Attachments

Nil