



## 2.07 Handwashing Policy

### POLICY STATEMENT

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Having and encouraging good hygiene practices in early childhood is essential for reducing the risk of cross infection. Helping children to develop appropriate personal hygiene habits will become embedded as they grow and develop. It is important to work with families to ensure children follow simple hygiene rules by incorporating good hygiene methods in both the early childhood service and home environment.

### AIM

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To ensure that all educators, staff, volunteers, families and children of the service perform specific hand washing hygiene practices required, to minimise the risks associated with cross infection.

### STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

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Infection can be spread through direct physical contact between people, airborne droplets from coughing and sneezing or from contact with surfaces and objects. Children come into contact with a number of other children and adults, toys, eating utensils and equipment. This high degree of physical contact with people and the environment creates a higher risk of children being exposed to and spread infectious illnesses. Whilst it may not be possible for services to prevent the spread of all infections, we aim to create a hygienic environment to minimise the spread of diseases and infections.

Hand washing is a vital strategy in the prevention of spreading many infectious diseases. Research emphasises good handwashing as the single most important task you can do to reduce the spread of bacteria, germs, viruses and parasites that infect yourself, other staff and children being cared for.

Micro-organisms such as bacteria, germs, viruses and parasites are present on the hands at all times and live in the oil that is naturally produced on your hands. The use of soap or detergent and water remove most of these organisms and decreases the risk of cross infection.

Our service will adhere to National Regulation requirements, standards and tools to support the effectiveness of our hand washing policy. We aim to educate and encourage children to wash their hands effectively which will help to reduce the incidence of infectious diseases.

To ensure the greatest level of personal hygiene, it is a requirement of the service to wash your hands;

- On arrival at the service
- Before and after toileting or changing nappies
- After going to the toilet
- After wiping a runny nose or blowing your own nose
- Before and after administering first aid
- Before and after administering medication
- After using chemicals
- Before eating, preparing and serving food
- Making bottles
- After cleaning up bodily fluids
- After removing protective gloves
- When feeding and collecting eggs from the chickens
- When cleaning the chicken coop
- When feeding, walking and touching Alby
- Before going home

Children will be encouraged to follow educators modelling and wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the day. Educators will ensure all required equipment is easily accessible and appropriate for use.

Strategies Educators will use to encourage effective hand hygiene practice include

- Talking about the importance of hygiene
- Singing a song or reciting a poem (singing happy birthday twice is a sufficient time frame)
- Using a clear visual poster with a step by step instructions
- Using positive language
- Encouraging and using positive reinforcement
- Ensuring equipment is accessible
- Provide clear simple routines
- Give children sufficient time to practice and develop their skills
- Ensure adequate supervision and assistance is available when required

We believe hygiene practices of children being cared for should be as rigorous as staff and educators. Our hygiene environment supports appropriate practice.

#### Hand Drying

Effective hand drying is just as important as comprehensive hand washing. Research states that wet hands can pick up and transfer up to 1000 times more bacteria than dry hands. Drying hands thoroughly also helps remove any germs that may not have been rinsed off. We provide children, staff and educators disposable paper towel to ensure effective hand hygiene.

#### EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

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Children (Education and Care Services) National Law NSW

- 77 - Health, Hygiene and safe food practices
- 106 - Laundry and hygiene facilities
- 109 - Toilet and hygiene facilities

#### SOURCE LIST

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This section contains websites, industry bodies, or Legislation that have been used to assist in sourcing the information for this policy. It also acts as a guide to sourcing further reading on each relevant policy.

- [Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority](#)
- [Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)
- [Revised National Quality Standard](#)
- [ECA Code of Ethics](#)
- [Staying Healthy in Child Care 5<sup>th</sup> Edition](#)

#### RELATED POLICIES

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- 2.04 Incident, Illness, Accident & Trauma Policy
- 2.05 Control of Infectious Diseases Policy
- 2.06 Sick Children Policy
- 6.06 Arrival and Departure Policy

#### POLICY REVIEW

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The review schedule has been developed using a risk assessment methodology with consideration given to sector, industry, and legislative changes.

Date reviewed	Policy changed	Modifications	Next Review Date
May 2018	Yes <b>No</b>	None	March 2019