Hygiene Policy

1. Policy statement

Values

This centre is committed to the provision of:

- A clean and hygienic environment.
- An environment which provides infection control methods to minimise the spread and risks of infectious diseases and illnesses in children, staff, and any other persons in attendance at the centre.

Purpose

This policy will set out the practices and procedures to be followed in order to ensure up-to-date infection control procedures and the provision of an environment which is clean and hygienic.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, students, committee and any other person involved in the centre.

3. Background and legislation

- Children's Services Act 1996
- Children's Services Regulations 1998
  - Regulation 35(1) requires that the personal hygiene needs of enrolled children are to be attended to as soon as practicable.
  - Regulation 48 requires that facilities are provided for changing nappies in a safe and hygienic matter if children under three years of age are cared for educated by the centre.
- Food Act 1990

4. Definitions

DHS: Department of Human Services

Hygiene: Principles of maintaining health and the practices put in place to achieve this

Neutral detergent: Available commercially and labelled as “neutral” or “neutral pH”

NHMRC: National Health and Medical Research Council

5. Procedures

The committee are responsible for:

- Ensuring new staff are provided a copy of this policy
- Arranging for the centre to be cleaned regularly including floors and other surfaces
- Contacting the local council environmental health officer for information about obtaining a disposal unit and instructions for its use, if syringes are found at the centre
- Ensuring the sand, tanbark, paths and grassed areas, are monitored regularly to ensure these are maintained in a safe manner.
The staff are responsible for:

**General**
- Using colour coded sponges/cloths in each area, for example blue in the bathroom and yellow in the kitchen. Ensuring sponges are stored separately.
- Informing the committee of any issues which impact on the implementation of this policy.
- Encouraging parents/guardians to keep children who are unwell at home to prevent the spread of infection to other children.
- Contacting the parents/guardians of a child, to collect their child if he/she becomes ill at the centre. (Regulation 38(1)(2)).
- Notifying parents/guardians, as soon as practicable, of the occurrence of an infectious disease at the centre through a notice on the board at the centre, or the internal communication system. (Regulation 39).

**Nappy changing:**
- Attending to individual children’s personal hygiene needs as soon as practicable.
- Changing nappies and attending to individual toileting needs of each child according to the recommended procedures for Nappy Changing and Toileting Guidelines (Appendix 1).

**Toileting of children:**
- Ensuring soap and drying facilities are available at all times when children are in attendance. This includes ensuring paper towels are available if hand-dryers are not working
- Ensuring children do not make common use of items related to personal care, for example, hand towels for drying hands, hairbrushes. (Regulation 35(2))
- Encouraging children to flush the toilet after use
- Encouraging and assisting (where required) children to wash their hands according to Hand Washing Guidelines (Appendix 2) after toileting
- Encouraging children to tell a staff member if they have had a toileting accident
- Ensuring toileting facilities are maintained in a safe, clean and hygienic manner whilst children are in attendance. This requires periodic checking of the bathroom area
- Respecting diverse styles of toileting children due to cultural or religious practice
- Respecting the possible need to maintain privacy of toileting and dressing
- Encouraging children not to touch the tap after they have washed and dried their hands

**Cleaning toys, clothing and the centre**
- Preferably purchasing toys which are easy to maintain and clean
- Wearing gloves when cleaning. (General purpose gloves are sufficient, wash and hang outside to dry when finished)
- Ensuring washable toys/equipment are cleaned term by term or annually 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 each other where they are cut or bleeding
• Disposing of used tissues promptly and appropriately, and not lending them to other children

**Indoor and outdoor environment**
• Keeping the indoor and outdoor environments as clean and hygienic as possible at all times.
• Promptly removing blood, urine and faeces, either indoors or outdoors, using the appropriate cleaning procedures.
• Covering the sandpit when not in use, to prevent contamination by animals.
• Removing any animal faeces promptly and disposing of in an appropriate manner.
• Disposing of any dead creatures found on the premises in an appropriate manner.

**Dealing with spills of blood and other body fluids/safe disposal of discarded needles/syringes - Refer to centre’s HIV/Aids and Hepatitis policy**

**The parents/guardians are responsible for:**
• Ensuring immunisation details on their child/ren are up-to-date on their child/ren’s enrolment form.
• Keeping their child/ren home if they are unwell or have an excludable infectious disease.
• Informing the centre if their child has an infectious disease.
• Participating in the maintenance program of the centre.

**Immunisation**
Refer to centre’s Illness Policy

6. **Related documents**
• DHS, Food Safety Unit, www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/index.htm, telephone 03 9096 5080, or toll free 1300 364 352, email foodsafety@dhs.vic.gov.au
• NHMRC (2005), Staying Healthy in Child Care, 4th edition available at www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications or email nhmrc.publications@nhmrc.gov.au or telephone 1800 020 103 to request a free copy.

**Centre policies**
• HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis, Appendix 1, Step-by-Step Procedure for Infection Control Relating to Blood Borne Viruses.
• Illness
• Infectious diseases
7. **Authorisation**

This policy was adopted by the Greensborough Preschool Inc. committee, at the committee meeting on 13th March, 2007.

8. **Review date**

This policy shall be reviewed every three years.

The next review date is due in 2010.

9. **Evaluation**

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the committee will:

- Monitor compliance with the procedures set out in the policy.
- Assess whether a satisfactory resolution has been achieved, in relation to hygiene issues raised in relation to the centre.
- If appropriate, conduct a survey in relation to this policy or incorporate relevant questions within the general parents/guardians survey.
- Take into account reports from staff and others regarding the policy.
- Monitor complaints and incidents regarding hygiene in the centre.
Nappy changing facilities for over three-year-old children

Regulation 48 of the Children’s Services Regulations 1998 specifies the requirements for nappy change facilities for children under three years of age, but does not specify the requirements for children aged over three years. However regulation 35(1) requires children’s personal hygiene needs to be attended to as soon as practicable, therefore, if a child aged over three is not toilet trained or soils their underclothing, the centre will ensure facilities are provided for changing nappies/clothing in a safe and hygienic manner.

The centre understands the need to provide procedures, which ensure that the requirements of the regulations are met whilst respecting the individual child’s need for respect and privacy (for example, if they have soiled their underclothes). Centre staff are aware that it is not acceptable to change a child’s clothing or nappy in areas which are not licensed, for example, the office, foyer, kitchen, adult/disabled toilets.

**Nappy Changing and Toileting Guidelines**

**Location of facilities**

- The nappy changing area is provided in the children’s toilet area
- Hand washing and drying facilities are provided in this area for use by staff and children
- Staff with cuts, abrasions, dermatitis or open wounds on their hands will wear disposable gloves when changing a child’s nappy
- An information sheet on nappy changing procedures will be provided in the toilet area. If required, these will be translated
- The nappy change kit will contain: a nappy change mat with an impervious washable surface; disposable gloves, wet ones, plastic bags for disposing of nappy, spray bottle, paper towel, a minimum of four disposable nappies, two for girls and two for boys, change of clothes for a boy and girl.
- The nappy change kit will be inaccessible to children

**Changing nappies**

- The nappy change items will be stored at all times in the children’s bathroom area.
- Place paper towel on the mat (if used). Any clean paper is suitable, for example, paper towel, computer paper, greaseproof paper
- Wear disposable gloves
- Remove the child’s nappy and any soiled clothes and place into plastic bags
- Clean the child’s bottom, wiping front to back
- Remove the paper and place it into the plastic bag. (Hands-free lidded bin recommended)
- Remove the gloves before touching the child’s clean clothes or putting on a clean nappy. Do not let your skin touch the outer contaminated surface of the glove. Put the gloves in the plastic bag
- Assist the child to dress themselves and wash their hands
- Put on another pair of gloves and wash the nappy change mat (if used) with neutral detergent and water (in labelled spray bottle), use a paper towel or a clean cloth to wipe. Put the paper in the plastic bag.
• Remove gloves as above and wash your hands. Dispose of the plastic bag in a bin inaccessible to the children.

This guideline was prepared based on information provided in *Staying Healthy in Child Care (2005), Fourth Edition, and Health and Safety in Children’s Centre, Model Policies and Practices, Second Edition Revised, 2003*
Hand washing guidelines

- Use soap and running water
- Wash hands vigorously and count to 10
- Rinse hands well and count to 10
- Turn off the tap
- Dry hands well with the dryer.

This information will be displayed at each hand washing area

When to wash hands

- Before handling food
- Before eating
- After changing a nappy
- After removing gloves
- After going to the toilet
- After cleaning up blood, faeces or vomit
- After wiping a nose, a child’s or your own
- Before giving medication
- After handling garbage
- After coming in from outside play
- Before going home.

When to wash the children’s hands

- On arrival at the centre (suggested practice for parents to implement)
- Before and after eating and handling food
- After having their nappy changed
- After going to the toilet
- After touching nose secretions
- After coming in contact with blood, faeces or vomit
- Before going home. (Suggested practice for parents to implement)

This guideline was prepared based on information provided in Staying Healthy in Child Care (2005), Fourth Edition, www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications
Explanatory notes

Preventing illness

The spread of infections and illnesses within centres cannot be prevented, however, some illness from infectious disease can be prevented. The NHMRC suggest that the implementation of infection control procedures can reduce illness in centres. The three most effective practices are:

- Effective hand washing
- Exclusion of sick children and staff
- Immunisation

The NHMRC suggests that if these are not done properly, the procedures in place will not work well.

Infections spread by:

- Person with the infection spreads the germ into their environment
- The germ must survive in the environment
- The germ is then passed to another person
- The next person becomes infected.

The implementation of procedures aims to prevent the spread of infections at every step.

The Children’s Services Act 1996

Section 29 requires a proprietor to ensure that the buildings, the grounds and all equipment and furnishings used in operating the service are maintained in a safe, clean and hygienic condition and in good repair.