

Hygiene Policy

This policy was adopted by the Boroondara PreSchool Committee at its meeting on 1st September 2008 and to be reviewed in 2011.

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/board and any other person involved in the centre.

3. Background and legislation

- *Children's Services Act 1996*
- Children's Services Regulations 1998
 - o Regulation 35(1) requires that the personal hygiene needs of enrolled children are to be attended to as soon as practicable.
 - o Regulation 49(c) requires that all bedding and linen is kept clean and maintained in good repair.
 - o 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/board 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/board 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).

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, toothbrushes, 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
- Where applicable, washing mattress covers and linen.

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
- Using their own equipment for personal care, for example, toothbrushes, hats, brushes, combs.

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 (where applicable).

Immunisation

Refer to centre's Illness Policy

6. Related documents

- DHS Children's Services Guide. www.dhs.vic.gov.au/earlychildhood
- 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.

7. Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the Boroondara Preschool committee/board, at the committee/board meeting on 1st September 2008.

8. Review date

This policy shall be reviewed every 3 years.

The next review date is: 2011

9. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the committee/board 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.

Hand washing guidelines

- Use liquid soap (preferable) and running water
- Wash hands vigorously and count to 10
- Rinse hands well and count to 10
- Turn off the tap with a piece of paper towel
- Dry hands well with new paper towel (preferable), a dryer or your own cloth.

Suggested practice is to provide this information at each hand washing area

When to wash hands

- When you arrive at the centre
- Before handling food, including babies bottles
- Before eating
- 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 (parents can help with this)
- Before and after eating and handling food
- After going to the toilet
- After coming in from outside play
- After touching nose secretions
- After coming in contact with blood, faeces or vomit

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.

Centres are advised to consider 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). Centres are reminded 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.

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.