

# Hand Washing Policy



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 School and home environment. We continue this on both campuses.

## Education and Care Schools National Regulations

| Children (Education and Care Schools) National Law NSW |   |
|--|---|
| 77   | Health, Hygiene and safe food practices |
| 106  | Laundry and hygiene facilities          |
| 109  | Toilet and hygiene facilities           |

## PURPOSE

Our School is committed to assuring the health and safety of all educators, staff, volunteers, families and children, providing a safe and healthy environment. The importance to reducing the risk of infection is through effective hand hygiene. We aim to perform specific hand washing hygiene practices to minimise the risks associated with cross infection.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the School.

## IMPLEMENTATION

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 Schools 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 School 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 with reference to the Staying Healthy in Child Care 5<sup>th</sup> Edition to guide best practice.

**To ensure the greatest level of personal hygiene, it is a requirement of the Farmhouse Montessori School to wash your hands**

- On arrival at the School
- 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
- After cleaning up bodily fluids
- After removing protective gloves
- 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:-
  - See below one should be placed in all bathroom areas of the school. These should be discussed with the students.
- 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/warm air dryers to ensure effective hand hygiene.

**Source**

- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority.
- Guide to the Education and Care Schools National Law and the Education and Care Schools National Regulations
- ECA Code of Ethics
- Guide to the National Quality Standard
- Staying Healthy in Child Care 5<sup>th</sup> Edition
- Revised National Quality Standard

**Review**

| <b>Policy Reviewed</b> | <b>Modifications</b>    | <b>Next Review Date</b> |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Sept 2018</b>       | New Format and New Logo | Sept 2019               |

Hand washing steps on the next page:

# How to Wash Your Hands!

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Wet your hands with running water</p>                        | <p>Cover your hands with soap and rub your hands vigorously</p> | <p>Wash your hands all over, being sure to clean in between fingers, under fingernails, around wrists and both the palms and backs of hands</p> |
| <p>Rinse your hands thoroughly to remove all soap and germs</p> | <p>Use a paper towel to dry hands &amp; turn off the tap</p>    | <p>Place paper towel into the bin</p>   |