

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.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
77	Health, Hygiene and safe food practices
88	Infectious diseases
93	Administration of medication
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

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 implement specific hand washing hygiene practices regularly to minimise the risks associated with cross infection of viral and bacterial borne diseases.

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 whilst being cared for in both early education and care and Primary school settings. 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 5th 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

- all employees, parents, children and visitors wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds upon arrival to the Campuses or, use the alcohol-based sanitiser under adult supervision
- signage is provided to prompt visitors and children to wash their hands regularly and effectively when visiting our Campuses.
- 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.

A NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/ RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL ENSURE:

- all staff wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds regularly throughout the day
- all staff wash their hands
 - before and after eating and handling food
 - before and after applying sunscreen or other lotions to children
 - after using the toilet

- after wiping a child's nose
- after blowing their own nose
- after helping children use the toilet
- after touching animals
- after cleaning high touch surfaces- (tables, light switches, door handles, computers, iPads)
- after cleaning or mopping floors
- after changing learning environments – rooms, indoor/outdoor
- whenever their hands are visibly dirty (after gardening, mud play, painting)
- before leaving the Campuses at the end of the day
- educators and staff adhere to effective food preparation and food handling procedures
- educators and staff wash hands before and after wearing disposable gloves when:
 - nappy changing
 - preparing food
 - administering medication
 - administering first aid
 - cleaning spills- faeces, vomit or blood
 - cleaning with disinfectant or chemicals
 - after handling garbage and/or contaminated materials (nappies and other waste products)

EDUCATORS WILL ENSURE:

- children are explicitly taught the correct process of hand washing
- children are carefully supervised when handwashing
- children are reminded to wash their hands frequently throughout the day
- they model effective handwashing procedures
- the required equipment and resources are easily accessible and appropriate to use- liquid soap, running water, paper towel
- information about routines and songs for hand washing are shared with families to encourage routines at home

We believe the hygiene practices of children being cared for should be as rigorous as those of staff and educators. Our environment supports the creation of appropriate healthy hygiene habits during early childhood to ensure lifelong healthy decisions and actions.

STRATEGIES EDUCATORS WILL USE TO ENCOURAGE EFFECTIVE HAND HYGIENE PRACTICE INCLUDE:

- Talking about the importance of hygiene
- Talking about when hand washing is appropriate and why (in an age appropriate manner)
- 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 Appendix 1- 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
- Use STEM opportunities to teach about germs and prevention (ie pepper and soap experiment)

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. Bins are provide with foot control lids to dispose of used paper towel. Where possible, at our campuses.

HAND WASHING PROCEDURE

1. **Wet** hands with clean, running water, turn off the tap.
2. **Rub** soap all over your hands
3. **Rub** hands together for as long as it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice or "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star"
Don't forget the backs of your hands, your wrists, between your fingers and under your fingernails
4. **Rinse** the soap off your hands under running water
5. **Dry** your hands using paper towel or under a hand dryer.

See Appendix 2

ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITISER

Where possible, staff will use soap and water to clean their hands however, if this is not possible and hands are not greasy or visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitiser may be used.

Hand sanitiser must be kept out of reach of children at all times as it can be very dangerous if swallowed.

Directions should be followed on how to use the sanitiser correctly. The effectiveness of an alcohol-based hand sanitiser to kill microorganisms or prevent their growth should be at least 60% alcohol.

As per National Regulations, a safety data sheet will be kept on file for any alcohol-based hand sanitiser used in the School. These can be located in the PA office.

HAND SANITISER PROCEDURE

Apply liquid to the palm of one hand

Rub it all over both hands until the sanitiser dries

This takes about 20 seconds

Be careful not to wipe the sanitizer off before it is dry.

NOTE:

Please also refer to the Control of Infectious Diseases Policy for more information.

SOURCE

- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority.
- Childcare desktop
- 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 5th Edition
- Revised National Quality Standard

Review

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
Sept 2018	New Format and New Logo	Sept 2019
March 2020	Note: added to Policy in red	2022
May 2021	NQS & Regulations tables updated Nominated Supervisor section added Educators will ensure section added Hand drying section updated -Bins Hand washing Procedure added Alcohol based hand sanitizer & Procedure added Add appendix 2	2024

Hand washing steps on the next page:

Appendix 1

How to Wash Your Hands!



Wet your hands with running water



Cover your hands with soap and rub your hands vigorously



Wash your hands all over, being sure to clean in between fingers, under fingernails, around wrists and both the palms and backs of hands



Rinse your hands thoroughly to remove all soap and germs



Use a paper towel to dry hands & turn off the tap



Place paper towel into the bin

APPENDIX 2

With soap for at least 20 seconds or the time it takes to sing **Twinkle Twinkle Little Star**



HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS CORRECTLY

Get your hands wet in clean water. Put soap on your hands and make suds. Rub, rub, rub your soapy hands together. Clean your palms, the back of your hands, and between your fingers. Don't forget to clean under your nails. Nails can trap dirt and germs. Rinse. Hold your hands under clean, running water. Rub them to rinse them fully.