

## **Hygiene Policy**

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Maintaining an effective level of hygiene is one of the most important and regularly implemented practices the centre. Effective hygiene strategies and practices assist our service to protect all persons from and minimise the potential risk of disease and illness.

Many of the hygiene habits developed during childhood will continue throughout life. Centre practices will demonstrate to children the hygiene practices which reduce the likelihood of cross infection and explain the reasons for them. Experiences that promote basic hygiene awareness assist children to become competent and independent, and develop valuable life skills.

**Linked to National Quality Standards-** Quality Area Two: Element 2.1.3

### **Policy statement**

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Tanah Merah Child Care Centre is very committed to ensuring the highest level of Workplace Health and Safety. To achieve a safe working environment it is our policy that the service promotes hygienic practices and prevents the spread of infections by implementing the following strategies:

- \* effective handwashing;
- \* hygienic cleaning techniques;
- \* handling, storage and disposal of body fluids;
- \* maintenance of a hygienic environment;
- \* knowledge of infectious diseases and exclusion guidelines;
- \* identifying and excluding sick children and employee's
- \* promoting and maintaining records of children's and employee immunisation.

Tanah Merah has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of protection during the hours of the service's operation.

Protection may include:

- \* notifying children, families, educators, local community or the relevant health authorities of a diagnosed infectious illness or disease;
- \* ensuring educators have adequate equipment or products, such as disposable gloves, detergents and soaps;
- \* maintaining procedures, such as correct handling of body fluids;
- \* maintaining educators awareness of hygienic human contact and physical interaction with others;
- \* increasing educators awareness and knowledge of cross infection; and
- \* maintaining a hygienic and healthy environment, such as cleaning the service daily and ensuring that the service is well ventilated.
- \* In meeting the service's duty of care, it is a requirement under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act* to ensure that the service's stakeholders are protected from harm.
- \* It is understood by educators, children and families that there is a shared responsibility between the service and other stakeholders to accept and implement the Hygiene and Infection Control Policy as a high priority.

### **Strategies and practices**

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#### **Standard precautions**

'Standard precautions' (or Universal Precautions) are used primarily in medical and health-related professions, but are also relevant to children's services. They are a set of practices that assist health care professionals in minimising the risk of cross infection and providing a basic level of infection control. The precautions support the assumption that all body fluids are potentially infectious,

therefore all persons are treated equitably when implementing hygiene practices to minimise cross infection and protect everyone.

Some of these practices, which are relevant to children's services, are:

- \* handwashing;
- \* hygienic cleaning techniques;
- \* using protective products and equipment, such as gloves;
- \* safe handling and disposal of body fluids;
- \* safe storage of materials that have come into contact with body fluids; and
- \* maintaining a hygienic environment.

School of Medicine, Flinders University, 2002

## **Hand washing**

Infections can be spread by a person who clearly shows no signs of the illness themselves. Hand washing is the most effective ways of preventing this. Hand washing is effective because it loosens, dilutes and flushes off germs, hand drying is also vitally important. The centre encourages hand washing by providing;

- \* Readily available hand basins for educators and children.
- \* Soap dispensers with foaming soap which generates a rich lather with little water.
- \* The centre will teach and encourage children to wash their hands using the following method:
- \* Wet hands
- \* Use foaming soap and spread over hands.
- \* Rub hands vigorously as they wash, paying attention to palms, backs of hands, in between fingers and under finger nails.
- \* Rinse hands thoroughly to remove all suds and germs.
- \* Pat dry hands with paper towel and turn the tap off with the paper towel.

Wash hands with soap (from a dispenser or pump pack) and water -

- before and after handling food
- before eating
- upon arrival and departure
- before and after nappy changes
- after toileting children and self
- after handling children's wet, soiled or dirty clothing
- after smoking
- after personal grooming (brushing hair)
- after blowing noses
- after working with chemicals
- before and after treating First Aid incidents

**N.B.** – Antiseptic Hand Gel may be used while outdoors as a method of cleaning hands.

- \* During vacation care or excursions with no hand washing facilities, antiseptic gels and wet-wipes will be used.
- \* Special needs children may need specific help washing hands in the bathroom, carers may need to place their hands under the tap or press the soap dispensers to assist them with this task.
- \* After school age children will immediately wash hands in their toilet area off the back veranda, as soon as they arrive from school.

## **Nose Wiping**

To encourage independence skills and self help please encourage all children to wipe their own nose, discard the tissue in the bin and wash their hands.

- \* Use a clean tissue for every child.
- \* Use a plastic glove
- \* Dispose of tissue and glove into the bin.
- \* Wash hands or use Antiseptic Hand gel.

## **Care and Maintenance of Equipment**

- \* Cleaning is an important part of infection control. Cleaning in itself is a form of disinfectant because it removes all surface dirt. Thorough cleaning reduces contamination to such a degree that it significantly lowers the threat of contracting disease. It is therefore important to keep the centre clean at all times.
- \* All equipment must be cleaned regularly and maintained in a safe condition.
- \* If a piece of equipment is defective or not in a safe working order, notify the Director so that a repair or replacement can be made.

## **Cleaning**

- \* Each educator member is responsible for their own room, set of toilets and room equipment.
- \* The room area must be kept clean and tidy at all times.
- \* Use disinfectant or hot water and detergent to CLEAN an area.

*Educators are required to immediately clean;*

- \* Spills.
- \* Clean toilets throughout the day.
- \* Sweep and mop floors after meals and as necessary.
- \* Remove tripping/slipping hazards.
- \* Clean allocated areas of the building.
- \* Clean and disinfect toilets, washrooms (twice daily and where required) and nappy change areas after every nappy change nursery toys.

*At least weekly and when necessary educators should:*

- \* Wash and disinfect equipment
- \* Wipe children's chairs
- \* Clean/wipe down children's mattresses/beds
- \* Vacuum carpets/mats
- \* Eating utensils and dishes should be washed in the kitchen area of the centre.
- \* Sink area in rooms should be used for Art Prep and Art Cleaning ONLY.
- \* Containers should be securely covered with lids or plastic coverings to protect against contamination.
- \* Cooked and ready to eat foods should be stored above raw products and covered during storage.
- \* Foods that have been covered in plastic wrap should not have any item placed on top of them.
- \* Personal items are not to be kept in the kitchen.
- \* Regular hand washing should occur throughout the day, in particular between food groups, after engaging in cleaning and upon return to the kitchen when moving around the centre.
- \* The cook is responsible for checking and reporting to the Work Place Health and Safety Officer on the safety of all equipment in the kitchen. Periodically check the children's eating utensils to protect against injury and contamination.
- \* The kitchen must be kept dust free.
- \* Cupboards and drawers are to be cleaned out at least monthly, including inside and door areas.
- \* Open shelving is to be cleaned at least monthly. The fridge is to be cleaned out and checked for out of date products weekly.

- \* The stove is to be cleaned monthly or after any spills of food during cooking.
- \* **Benches, sinks, fridge doors, stove tops, children's serving area and the children's eating tables are to be disinfected daily prior to leaving. The floor is to be swept and free of grease, water or any food.**
- \* Chopping boards are to be disinfected daily to prevent cross contamination.
- \* Bins are to be cleared and re lined at least daily.
- \* The kitchen is to be kept vermin free.

### **Non Toxic Products**

The centre has a Cleantec system of dispensing chemicals which eliminates the handling and dispensing of cleaning chemical. The system is located in the laundry, and works by simply turning the dial to the desired chemical and pushing the main switch, this dispenses the exact chemical. If for any reason you need to handle hazardous substances, it is policy that you wear the appropriate protective equipment, including the following:

- Eye Goggles/ Gloves/ Mouth Mask -These are located in the laundry.

The centre ensures that with the correct dispensing of chemical the risk of poisoning to any member of the centre is unlikely. Once Cleantec chemicals are dispensed through the dispensing system the dilution rate ensures that they are non toxic. The centre actively chooses non toxic products over those that may cause harm.

Safer Solutions-Keeping your home Healthy and Green 2009

### **Dangerous Products and the Storage of Hazardous Chemicals**

Children will naturally want to explore the environment through their senses and by touching and tasting things that they can reach. Poisons and dangerous products such as our cleaning chemicals and medications are kept out of reach at all times.

- \* All chemicals are to be stored in locked cupboards or storage areas.
- \* Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) on all chemicals are to be used to inform educators about the substance they are working with. Educators are to familiarise themselves with these sheets and their location.
- \* All chemical bottles are supplied by Cleantec and have dispensing and safety data printed on each bottle. This chemical should not be mixed with other chemicals and fresh solutions should be prepared every day. No other bottles are to be used.
- \* Should a cleaning chemical bottle need to be discarded, it shall be placed in the laundry bin or directly in the Wanless Waste removal bin.
- \* Pest control chemicals are not kept on premises and the building is sprayed by a professional pest company every 6 months as per the Queensland Childcare Regulations 2003
- \* Smoking is not permitted in any area of the centre or on centre property.
- \* Signage is to be placed on doors or areas indicating poisons are stored here.
- \* The centre conducts and records audits of chemicals and medications to ensure that they are stored correctly and are in date.
- \* Medication is stored in a locked container in the centre fridge and is kept at adult height. This medication is labelled "Medication"
- \* POISONS NUMBER – 13 11 26

### **Safe handling of body fluids or materials in contact with body fluids**

Educators are required to take precautionary measures when handling body fluids, this will ensure we maintain a high standard of hygiene and minimize the spread of infections. Educators will:

- \* Use latex gloves for First aid treatment, blood and body substance spillages.
- \* Gloves should be worn for cleaning and nappy changes.
- \* Treatment of Broken Skin – clean with water or antiseptic. Be aware that the mouth is the

most unclean part of the body, and bites that break the skin can potentially carry the highest risk of infection.

#### Management of Blood and Body Substance Spillages

- wear latex gloves
- remove child from contaminated area
- mop up blood or spill with paper towel or chux
- clean area with detergent or disinfectant
- wipe dry with paper towel
- apply bleach and leave for 10 mins
- wipe dry with paper towel
- place all used paper towels, chux in a bag
- remove gloves (turning them inside out) and place in bag
- seal bag and dispose in a bin
- wash hands thoroughly

If contact is made with blood or body spills by a child, educators or others wash the area thoroughly with soap and water. Irrigate eyes contaminated with water or saline solution.

#### **Safe storage of materials in contact with body fluids**

Clothing or materials that have body fluids will be placed in a plastic bag then in the soiled clothing bucket found in each bathroom in the centre. This bucket is specifically for soiled clothes and remains out of reach of children and is fitted with a lid. Once an educator is available this bucket is to be taken to the sluice found in the laundry and rinsed. This is then placed in a plastic bag and returned to parents in the afternoon.

#### **Safe washing of all materials**

The centre has facilities for washing items in the centre machine, this washing is completed every morning, then taken to the outdoor clothes line for drying. The following items are washed daily:

- cleaning cloths;
- cloths used during nappy changes;
- face cloths;
- kitchen tea towels;
- linen used during rest or sleep; and

Weekly or Fortnightly

- cushion covers
- dress-up clothes
- soft toys

#### **Safe disposal of body fluids or materials in contact with body fluids**

Linen

- \* Carry soiled linen in the designated bucket to the laundry, rinse to remove the majority of the contamination.
- \* Wash separately in hot water,
- \* Hang outside on the line.

Nappies, gloves; wipes; paper towels; tissues; and toilet paper.

- \* Each group have specific bins which are emptied regularly throughout the day. The industrial bin is emptied by Wanless Wastecorp on a weekly basis.
- \* Tampons/sanitary napkins and disposed of into the Sanitary bin in the adult toilet area and is emptied by Pink Health services on a fortnightly basis.

## **Maintaining clean and hygienic environments**

### **Food Preparation and Handling**

- \* Educators are advised to be aware of the Food Hygiene Regulations
- \* Hands should be washed with soap before preparing or serving food
- \* Children's hands are to be washed before they eat or drink
- \* Educators should ensure children do not share food, plates or eating utensils.
- \* Do not allow children to share food from a common bowl with their hands
- \* Educators should use tongs where appropriate
- \* Keep raw and cooked foods separate and use different utensils for both to prevent cross-contamination
- \* Hot food should be kept over 60 degrees Celsius and cold food under 4 degrees Celsius
- \* Do not reheat leftovers – throw them out
- \* Use the Food Preparation area for this purpose only
- \* Educators are encouraged to participate in a food handler's course where possible
- \* Sterilize all drinking cups/bottles every week. Babies' bottles should be rinsed very well under cold running water as soon as possible after completion of bottle, then clean thoroughly with hot water and detergent. Rinse to remove all detergent.

Food Safety Practices Standard 3.2.2

### **Playdough**

- \* Playdough can carry germs as it is played with by lots of children; we make our playdough with a high salt content which discourages germs from multiplying.
- \* Playdough will be stored in air tight containers and refrigerated between uses.
- \* Playdough will be discarded on a weekly basis.
- \* If there is a vomiting or diarrhoea outbreak the dough will be discarded on that day and a new batch made when the outbreak is over.

### **Nappy change tables**

- \* Nappy change tables will be cleaned after every nappy change and at the end of the day. They will be disinfected with K-San disinfectant. At lunch they will be washed and left in the sun for drying.
- \* Mattresses and covers will be kept in good repair to avoid germs living in cracks, holes, creases, pleats, folds or seams.

### **Dummies and Toothbrushes**

- \* Will never be shared with other children.
- \* Dummies will be stored in individual plastic containers, each container will have the child's name on it.
- \* Toothbrushes will be labelled with each child's name. They will be stored out of reach of each child and exposed to air until dry to prevent them from going mouldy.

### **Bathrooms and classrooms**

- \* Will be cleaned routinely 2 times per day and as required. They will be sprayed with K-san disinfectant on taps, toilet seats, toilet bowls and buttons, tiles and basins.
- \* Surfaces within the classrooms that are in frequent contact with children will be wiped regularly.
- \* Bedding will be wiped down daily
- \* Floors will be mopped at midday and again at the end of the day. Additional spills will be cleaned up immediately.
- \* Shelving will be cleaned weekly along with windowsills and walls.

## **Meeting children's individual needs through common daily procedures**

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Common daily procedures, such as toileting, nappy changing and nose wiping need to meet recommended hygiene and infection control practices. However, these procedures also require positive interactions between children and educators, and an understanding of individual needs.

### **Nappy Changing Procedures**

To ensure that nappy changing and toileting times are completed hygienically and that these times are a relaxed and positive experience for all children the centre recommends the following procedure as outlined in **Staying Healthy in Childcare 4<sup>th</sup> Ed**

Be Prepared - have the following items in the appropriate place before you collect the child that requires changing. These items would be:

- a. Nappy
  - b. Gloves
  - c. Nappy wipes
  - d. Any necessary powders and creams.
  - e. Paper that will cover the change mat
- \* Wash hands.
  - \* Cover - half the mat in protective paper.
  - \* Protect - yourself from bodily waste, always wear gloves.
  - \* Encourage - the child to climb the ladder while standing behind them and guiding them up.
  - \* Remove - appropriate clothing and soiled nappy and place in a "hands free" lidded bin.
  - \* Clean - the child thoroughly with wipes and discard in the nappy bin. Throw the soiled paper from underneath the child in the Nappy bin.
  - \* Remove - soiled gloves from the wrist, turning inside out and use the inside of this glove to remove the other. Throw in the "hands free" nappy bin provided.
  - \* Reapply a clean nappy and child's clothing. Take the child off the mat
  - \* Wash Hands - encourage the child to wash their hands.
  - \* Disinfect - the entire nappy change mat with disinfectant and warm soapy water.
  - \* After - all children have been changed the mat should be disinfected.

### **Toileting Procedure**

- \* If the child is still in nappies, remove it using the nappy change routine. Ask the child to sit/stand on the toilet.
- \* After using the toilet, encourage the child to wipe themselves using toilet paper and assist them to pull up their pants.
- \* Role model correct hand washing procedures.
- \* Praise children for their efforts

## **Communication with different stakeholders**

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### **Children**

In each group educators shall explain to the children the importance of maintaining clean and healthy environments. This teaching will be age appropriate and built into the daily program in fun and engaging ways. Signage will also cue children into how and when we can help with these tasks.

Children are encouraged to wash their hands in the following instances:

- On arrival at the centre
- Before eating
- After going to the toilet
- After wiping their noses
- After handling animals
- After being outdoors
- After participating in and art experience.

## **Families**

The service will communicate its policies and procedures through the parent handbook, whiteboards, parent library, newsletters and information evenings. In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease the centre will follow the procedures outlined by the relevant public Health Unit and if deemed necessary will contact every individual family.

## **Educators**

- \* Educators will be provided with a complete copy of all centre policies and procedures.
- \* Are expected to willingly cooperate to maintain a safe and healthy working environment and encourage other employees to follow safe work practices
- \* Will immediately notify the director of any accident or incident or any other matter which may affect the health and safety of any person within the centre.

## **Visitors and Contractors:**

- \* Are expected to comply with the safety standards of the centre.
- \* Need to sign in the Visitors sign –in book to comply with WH&S legislation

## **Management**

- \* The Director will maintain up to date information from recognised health authorities. Add any additional information to policy and review the policy with parents and employee's.
- \* Shall ensure that adequate job training and all necessary WHS and rehabilitation information is provided to enable employee to perform their tasks in a safe and healthy manner.
- \* Shall ensure that all accidents, near misses and work related illness are reported, examined for trends and patterns of frequency and type.
- \* Are expected to undertake regular workplace health, safety and rehabilitation program reviews.
- \* Shall facilitate a supportive work environment for injured employees.

## **Policy review**

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- \* The service will review the Hygiene and Infection Control Policy and procedures, and related documents, including behaviours and practices every 18 months
- \* Families are encouraged to collaborate with the service to review the policy and procedures.
- \* Employee's are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged to be actively involved.

## **Procedures**

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**The following are examples of procedures that our centre will employ as part of its daily practices.**

Examples:

- \* Documenting and monitoring immunisation records.
- \* Employee induction procedure.
- \* Policy development and review procedure.
- \* Procedure for non-compliance of the Hygiene and Infection Control Policy and procedures by a:
  - o child;
  - o educators;
  - o family member;
  - o student/volunteer; or
  - o visitor.
- \* Student and volunteer induction procedure.

## Measuring tools

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The centre utilises a variety of methods to ensure that hygiene practices and infection controls guidelines are understood, endorsed and implemented by all employee's. For example: Management will measure the knowledge and practices of employee's by:

- \* Establishing educator, student and volunteer induction procedures whereby a 'buddy' is assigned to demonstrate the service's practices and procedures; or
- \* Implementing an informal training session by placing an agenda item at meetings to discuss a routine or procedure, such as nappy change. Educators can demonstrate a nappy change routine and discuss: the hygiene practices; the safety of children being changed; any difficulties; and the importance of interactions. Educators can then initial and date the minutes of the meeting to establish that they observed and are aware of the service's nappy change procedure.
- \* Establish a work plan to measure educator compliance of policies.

The service will measure the knowledge of families by:

- o placing a survey or quiz in the newsletter about the service's hygiene practices;
- o encouraging participation in policy review; or
- o indicating on the enrolment form during orientation that the family has been informed about the policy and practices.

The service will measure the knowledge and practices of children by:

- \* incorporating hygiene strategies and practices in play and learning experiences and plans; or
- \* creating a quiz for school age children to complete.

## Links to other policies

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The following are a list of examples:

- \* Child protection
- \* Employment of child care professionals
- \* Enrolment of new children and families to the service
- \* First aid
- \* Illness
- \* Immunisation and health related exclusion
- \* Maintenance of buildings and equipment
- \* Medication
- \* Occupational health and safety
- \* Privacy and confidentiality
- \* Records management
- \* Educators as role models
- \* Supporting children's individual needs

## Sources and further reading

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- Childcare and Children's Health. (2005). Infection control and some common infections in young children. *Childcare and Children's Health*, 8 (3), 1-4.
- Matthews, C. (2004). *Healthy children: A guide for child care* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). NSW: Elsevier.
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2005). *Staying healthy in child care: Preventing infectious disease in child care* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Canberra: Author.
- Safer Solutions: (2009) Keeping your home Healthy and Green [www.safersolutions.org.au](http://www.safersolutions.org.au)

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