

HYGIENE POLICY

Best Practice – Quality Area 2

Uniting Victoria and Tasmania Limited is the Approved Provider of children's services known in these policies as Uniting Early Learning.

Overarching Policy Statement:

The *Keeping Children Safe Policy* of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (refer to *Sources*) is the overarching whole of church policy to be implemented by individuals and entities involved with or connected to the Uniting Church. All children who are involved in any of the Church's activities, events or programs have a right to feel and be safe. The Church is committed to provide safe environments where children are cared for, respected, nurtured and sustained.

Policy statement

Uniting Early Learning is committed to protecting all persons from disease and illness by minimising the potential for infection through:

- implementing and following effective hygiene practices;
- implementing infection control procedures to minimise the likelihood of cross-infection and the spread of infectious diseases and illnesses to children, staff and any other persons in attendance at the service;
- ensuring that children at the service are protected from harm and hazard (National Law: Section 167)
- informing educators, staff, volunteers, children and families of the importance of adhering to the *Hygiene Policy* to maintain a safe environment for all users, and communicating the shared responsibility between all involved in the operation of the service.

Purpose

This policy provides guidelines for procedures to be implemented at Uniting Early Learning to ensure:

- effective and up-to-date control of the spread of infection;
- the provision of an environment that is safe, clean and hygienic.

Summary of Procedures Relating to this Policy

Infections are common in children and often lead to illness. A person with an infection may or may not show signs of illness and, in many instances, the infectious phase of the illness may be in the period before symptoms become apparent, or during the recovery phase. While it is not possible to prevent all infections in education and care environments, services can prevent or control the spread of many infectious diseases by adopting simple hygiene practices, including in relation to nappy changing, toileting, cleaning toys, clothing and the indoor and outdoor environment, children's contact with one another, handling body fluids hygienically and carefully.

Attachment 3: Nappy change procedure and Attachment 4: Handwashing guidelines can be downloaded from the website of the National Health and Medical Research Council (refer to *Sources*). Attachment 5 contains Toileting procedures. The *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy* includes Procedures for infection control relating to blood-borne viruses.

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Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents, children and others attending the programs and activities of the service, including during offsite excursions and activities.

The responsibilities of each party listed in the previous paragraph are noted at Attachment 1.

Background and Legislation

The implementation of appropriate hygiene and infection control procedures aims to break the cycle and prevent the spread of infections at every stage. The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) suggest that to reduce illness in education and care services, the three most effective methods of infection control are:

- effective hand washing
- exclusion of sick children, staff and visitors
- immunisation.

Other strategies to prevent infection include:

- cough etiquette
- appropriate use of gloves
- effective cleaning of the service environment.

The NHMRC suggests that if these strategies are not implemented, all other procedures described in the service's *Hygiene Policy* will have reduced effectiveness in preventing the spread of infection and illness.

Attachment 2 contains a list of the legislation and sources relevant to this policy, including Acts and Regulations.

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the goals and purposes of this policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness;
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy and ensure satisfactory resolutions have been achieved;
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice;
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required;
- notify parents at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

Cleaning: A process that removes visible contamination such as food waste, dirt and grease from a surface. This process is usually achieved by the use of water and detergent. During this process, micro-organisms will be removed but not destroyed.

Communicable disease: A disease capable of being transmitted from an infected person or species to a susceptible host, either directly or indirectly.

Cough etiquette: The correct way to prevent the spread of infectious organisms that are carried in droplets of saliva is to cough or sneeze into the inner elbow or to use a tissue to cover the mouth and nose. Place all tissues in the rubbish bin immediately and clean hands with either soap and water or a disinfectant hand rub.

Hygiene: The principle of maintaining health and the practices put in place to achieve this.

Infectious disease: A disease that can be spread, for example, by air, water or interpersonal contact. An infectious disease is designated under Victorian Law or by a health authority (however described) as a disease that would require the infected person to be excluded from an education and care service (refer to *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*).

Neutral detergent: A cleaning agent available commercially and labelled as 'neutral' or 'neutral pH'.

Sanitising: A process that destroys micro-organisms. Sanitising a surface can reduce the number of micro-organisms present. The process of sanitisation usually involves ensuring a surface is thoroughly cleaned with both heat and water, followed by the use of chemicals.

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Uniting Victoria and Tasmania Limited on: 1/7/2017

Review date: July 2017

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

Attachment 1: Responsibilities relating to the Hygiene Policy

Action	Approved Provider	Nom'ed S'visor	Certified S'visor; Educators	Parents
Ensure that all staff and volunteers are provided with a copy of this policy and have a clear understanding of the procedures and practices outlined within	x			
Ensure the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff and volunteers at the service implement adequate health and hygiene practices, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food (Regulation 77(1), refer to Food Safety Policy)	x			
Establish robust induction procedures that include the provision of information regarding the implementation of the practices outlined in this policy	x			
Develop an appropriate cleaning and sanitising schedule that outlines daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual cleaning and sanitising requirements and responsibilities	x			
Arrange for the service to be cleaned and sanitised regularly, including floors and other surfaces, as per the cleaning contract and schedule; review the cleaning contract annually	x			
Contacting the local council's Environmental Health Officer for information about obtaining a needle/syringe/sharps disposal unit and instructions for its use	x			
Ensure the service has laundry facilities or access to laundry facilities, or other arrangements for dealing with soiled clothing, nappies and linen, including hygienic facilities for storage prior to their disposal or laundering (Regulation 106(1))	x			
Ensure that the laundry and hygiene facilities are located and maintained in a way that does not pose a risk to children (Regulation 106(2))	x			
Ensure that there are adequate and appropriate hygiene facilities provided for nappy changing which are designed, located and maintained in such a way that prevents unsupervised access by children (Regulations 112(2)&(4))	x			
Ensure that adequate, developmental and age-appropriate toilet, washing and drying facilities are provided for use by children, and that these are safe and accessible (Regulation 109)	x			
Review staff training needs in relation to understanding and implementing effective hygiene practices in early	x			

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Action	Approved Provider	Nom'ed S'visor	Certified S'visor; Educators	Parents
childhood settings				
Provide a copy of the NHMRC publication <i>Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services</i> (refer to Sources)	x			
Provide hand washing guidelines for display at each hand washing location (refer to Attachment 4)	x			
Ensure there is an adequate supply of non-toxic cleaning and hygiene products, including gloves, at all times	x			
Implement and ensure that all staff members and volunteers at the service follow adequate health and hygiene practices, and safe practices for preparing, handling and storing food to minimise risks to children (Regulation 77(2))		x		
Develop effective hygienic systems for cleaning, such as using colour-coded sponges/cloths in each area		x		
Ensure sponges are cleaned, rinsed and stored separately, and replaced regularly		x		
Ensure that an inspection of the outdoor areas, in particular the sand and soft-fall areas, is conducted daily to ensure they are maintained in a safe and hygienic manner		x		
Inform the Approved Provider of any issues that impact on the implementation of this policy		x	x	
Actively encourage parents to keep children who are unwell at home to prevent the spread of infection to other children and educators		x	x	
Store or present items, such as beds, bedding and sunhats, in such a way as to prevent cross- contamination		x		
Ensure there is a regular and thorough cleaning and disinfecting schedule for all equipment and toys				
Ensure any chemicals and cleaning agents are non-toxic and stored out of reach of children		x		
Ensure that all educators/staff wear disposable gloves when changing nappies or dealing with open wounds or other body fluids, and dispose of those gloves and soiled materials in a sealed container or plastic bag		x		
Maintain the service in a clean and hygienic manner throughout the day, e.g. wiping benches and tables before and after eating, and cleaning up spills		x	x	
Actively encourage educators and staff who have, or are suspected of having, an infectious disease to not attend		x		

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Action	Approved Provider	Nom'ed S'visor	Certified S'visor; Educators	Parents
the service in order to prevent the spread of infection to others attending the service				
Implement and promote correct hand washing and hygiene practices, as outlined in this policy (refer to Attachment 4)			x	
Conduct a daily inspection of the outdoor areas, in particular the sand and soft-fall areas, to ensure they are maintained in a safe and hygienic manner			x	
Be conscious of your responsibility to not attend the service when you have or suspect you have an infectious disease			x	
<p><u><i>In relation to changing nappies for children:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attend to the individual personal hygiene needs of each child as soon as is practicable change nappies and attend to individual personal hygiene and toileting needs of each child according to recommended procedures (refer to Attachments 3 and 4) dispose of soiled nappies in a safe and hygienic manner in line with this policy 			x	
<p><u><i>In relation to toileting of children:- refer to Attachment 5</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure soap and drying facilities are available at all times when children are in attendance at the service, including ensuring paper towels are available if hand-dryers are not working ensure children do not share the use of items related to personal care, such as hand towels for drying hands, toothbrushes and hairbrushes encourage children to flush the toilet after use encourage and assist (where required) children to wash their hands according to hand washing guidelines (refer to Attachment 4) after toileting encourage children to tell a staff member if they have had a toileting accident monitor and maintain toileting facilities in a safe, clean and hygienic manner while children are in attendance; this requires periodic checking of the bathroom area respect diverse styles of toileting children including those related to cultural or religious practices respect the need to maintain privacy of toileting and dressing 			x	

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Action	Approved Provider	Nom'ed S'visor	Certified S'visor; Educators	Parents
<p><u><i>For cleaning toys, clothing and the service in general:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remove toys that a child has sneezed or coughed on (place in a 'toys-to-be-cleaned' box) • wear gloves when cleaning (general purpose gloves are sufficient; wash and hang outside to dry when finished) • wash mouthed toys daily using warm water and detergent and, if possible, dry in the sun • wipe over books with a moist cloth treated with detergent • ensure washable toys and equipment are cleaned term by term or annually, as required • where applicable, wash and disinfect mattress covers and linen 			x	
<p><u><i>In relation to children's contact with one another:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • educate and encourage children in good personal hygiene practices, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – washing their hands after blowing and wiping their nose – not touching one another when 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, such as toothbrushes, hats, brushes and combs – only touching the food they are going to eat – using their own drink bottles or cups 			x	
<p><u><i>In relation to indoor and outdoor environments:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep indoor and outdoor environments as clean and hygienic as possible at all times, including safe disposal of discarded needles/syringes/sharps • promptly remove blood, urine and faeces (including animal) either indoors or outdoors, using the appropriate cleaning procedures • cover the sandpit when not in use to prevent contamination • empty water containers, such as water trays, each day • dispose of any dead animals/insects found on the premises in an appropriate manner 			x	
<p><u><i>In relation to the safe handling of body fluids or materials in contact with body fluids:</i></u></p>			x	

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Action	Approved Provider	Nom'ed S'visor	Certified S'visor; Educators	Parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid direct contact with blood or other fluids • avoid being at eye level when cleaning/treating a child's face that has blood on it, as a child's blood can enter the mouth/nose of a staff member when a child cries or coughs • wear gloves wherever possible • cover any cuts/abrasions on their own hands with a waterproof dressing 				
<p><u><i>In relation to effective environmental cleaning:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean with detergent and warm water followed by rinsing and drying to remove the bulk of infectious organisms from a surface. Particular attention should be paid to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ toilets/sinks must be cleaned daily and separate cleaning cloths/sponges must be used for each task ○ mouthed toys must be washed immediately or placed in a separate container for washing at a later time ○ all bench tops and floors must be washed regularly ○ children's cups/drink bottles used for water must be washed daily ○ when washing at the service premises, staff should consider washing items separately to minimise cross-contamination, for example, tea towels washed separately from sheets, face washers washed separately from play mats/rugs ○ nappy change areas/mats must be washed with detergent and warm water, rinsed and dried after each use 	x			
Keep child/ren home if they are unwell or have an infectious disease that requires their exclusion from the education and care service				x
Inform the service if their child has an infectious disease				x
Support this policy by complying with the hygiene practices when attending the service or when assisting with a service program or activity				x
Encourage child/ren to develop and follow effective hygiene practices at all times, including hand washing on				x

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Action	Approved Provider	Nom'ed S'visor	Certified S'visor; Educators	Parents
arrival at the service				

Note: Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

Attachment 2: LEGISLATION AND SOURCES

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 77, 106, 109, 112, 168
- Food Act 1990
- *Keeping Children Safe Policy* of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Approved June 2015:
<http://victasintranet/hr/Documents/Keeping%20Children%20Safe%20Policy.pdf>
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
 - Standard 2.1: Each child's health is promoted
 - Element 2.1.3: Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
 - Element 2.1.4: Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>
- Commonwealth Legislation – ComLaw: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/>

Sources

- Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria, Food Safety:
<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/>
- Communicable Diseases Section, Public Health Group, Victorian Department of Human Services (2005) *The Blue Book: Guidelines for the control of infectious diseases*. Available at:
<http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/The-blue-book>
- National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th edition):
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ch55>

Attachment 3: Nappy change procedure

Download and attach the poster: *Changing a nappy without spreading germs* from the website of the National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th edition):

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ch55>

Attachment 4: Handwashing guidelines

Download and attach the poster: *How to wash hands* from the website of the National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th edition):

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ch55>

Attachment 5: Toileting procedures

Educators will encourage children to go to the toilet independently, assisting when necessary, and talking about hygienic practices during toilet routine.

Toilet area is to be supervised by educators as per roster.

CHILDREN TRAINING:

- Educator to collect children individually and / or in pairs, take them to toilet and encourage them to go to toilet between each meal time.
- Educator will put on gloves if they need to assist a child to wipe their bottom.
- Educator will put on gloves if they need to assist a child with wet or soiled clothing (as per procedure for wet/soiled clothing)
- Educator will put on gloves to clean up areas if they are wet or soiled (as per procedure for cleaning up bodily fluid spills)
- Educator will support each child throughout the toileting routine, talk about going on the toilet, wiping bottom – front to back, pulling up clothes when finished, flushing the toilet and then washing and drying hands before going back to play experiences.
- Older children who have accidents are also to be encouraged to go to the toilet between meal times, or if showing signs of needing to go.
- Rostered educators will ensure that the toilet area is clean and dry at all times.
- After initial routine, rostered educators will keep checking area and supervise children using the toilets to maintain supervision and hygiene.