



HANDWASHING POLICY



Purpose

Insight Early Learning is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all educators, staff, volunteers, families, and children by promoting effective hand hygiene practices. Handwashing significantly reduces the risk of infection and the spread of illness. This policy ensures consistent hygiene practices that minimise risks associated with cross-infection from viral and bacterial diseases.

Scope

This policy applies to all children, families, educators, staff, management, volunteers, approved providers, nominated supervisors, and visitors to the service.

Policy Statement

Hand hygiene is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection. This policy outlines when and how handwashing should occur, safe use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and strategies for supporting children to develop lifelong healthy hygiene practices.

Legislative Requirements

Education and Care National Law	
Regulations	Description
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
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Amended 2018)	
National Health and Medical Research Council (2013). Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services (5th Ed.)	
Safe Work Australia – ECEC Workers: Minimising the risk of exposure to COVID-19 (2020)	
Relevant State and Territory Health Department guidelines	

Relevant National Quality Standard (NQS) Elements

Quality Area 2 – Children’s Health and Safety	
2.1	Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected

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	from harm and hazard.
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Implementation

Purpose of Washing Hands

Handwashing prevents the spread of infectious diseases by reducing bacteria, viruses, germs, and parasites on our hands.

When to Wash Hands

All educators, staff, families, and children are expected to wash their hands:

- On arrival at the service (soap and water for at least 20 seconds or alcohol-based sanitiser under adult supervision).
- Before and after using the toilet.
- After wiping noses, eyes, or mouths.
- After handling animals or cleaning high-touch surfaces.
- Before and after eating, preparing food, or preparing bottles.
- Before and after applying sunscreen or lotions.
- After assisting children with toileting or wiping noses.
- After using chemicals, cleaning, or handling garbage.
- Before leaving the service at the end of the day.

Handwashing Procedure

1. Wet hands with clean, running water.
2. Apply soap and lather, covering all surfaces of the hands, fingers, wrists, and under nails.
3. Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds (singing a short song can help).
4. Rinse thoroughly under running water.
5. Dry hands completely using a disposable paper towel or hand dryer.

Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitiser Procedure

- To be used only when soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty.
- Apply sanitiser to one palm, rub hands together covering all surfaces, until dry.
- Use only products with a minimum 60% alcohol content.
- Keep sanitiser out of children’s reach and use under adult supervision.

Drying Hands

- Wet hands can transfer up to 1000 times more bacteria than dry hands.
- The service provides disposable paper towels and/or hand dryers.
- Foot-operated bins are available for paper towel disposal.
- Sustainable alternatives to single-use paper towels are considered where possible.

Supporting Children with Handwashing

Educators will:

- Teach and model correct handwashing techniques.
- Remind children to wash hands at appropriate times.
- Provide accessible resources (soap, water, paper towels, posters).
- Use songs, visual cues, and routines to make handwashing engaging.
- Offer supervision and assistance to ensure correct technique.
- Include hand hygiene in STEM learning opportunities (e.g., germ experiments).

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Information for Families

Families are encouraged to:

- Reinforce handwashing practices at home.
- Teach correct handwashing techniques.
- Encourage handwashing before meals, after toileting, and after playing outdoors.
- Use songs and routines to make handwashing fun and consistent.

Related Policies

- Administration of Medication Policy
- Control of Infectious Diseases Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Nappy Change and Toileting Policy
- Sick Children Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as legislation, regulations, or best practice changes.

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