EC HYGIENE POLICY

Best Practice – Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines for procedures to be implemented at Mansfield Rudolf Steiner School & Kindergarten to ensure:

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

POLICY STATEMENT

Mansfield Rudolf Steiner School & Kindergarten is committed to protecting all persons from disease and illness by minimising the potential for infection through:

1. implementing and following effective hygiene practices
2. 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
3. fulfilling the service’s duty of care requirement under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 to ensure that those involved with the service are protected from harm
4. informing educators, staff, volunteers, children and families on 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.

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

1. ensuring 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
2. ensuring 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))
3. establishing robust induction procedures that include the provision of information regarding the implementation of the practices outlined in this policy
4. developing an appropriate cleaning and sanitising schedule that outlines daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual cleaning and sanitising requirements and responsibilities
5. arranging for the service to be cleaned and sanitised regularly, including floors and other surfaces, as per the cleaning contract and schedule
6. ensuring 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))

7. ensuring that the laundry and hygiene facilities are located and maintained in a way that does not pose a risk to children (Regulation 106(2))

8. ensuring 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))

9. ensuring 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)

10. reviewing staff training needs in relation to understanding and implementing effective hygiene practices in early childhood settings

11. providing a copy of the NHMRC guidelines for the prevention of infectious diseases in child care for the service

12. providing hand washing guidelines for display at each hand washing location

13. ensuring there is an adequate supply of non-toxic cleaning and hygiene products, including gloves, at all times.

The Nominated Supervisor and/ or Certified Supervisors is responsible for:

1. implementing and ensuring 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))

2. developing effective hygienic systems for cleaning, such as using colour-coded sponges/cloths in each area

3. ensuring that an inspection of the outdoor areas, in particular the sand and soft fall areas, are conducted daily to ensure they are maintained in a safe and hygienic manner

4. informing the Approved Provider of any issues that impact on the implementation of this policy

5. actively encouraging parents/guardians to keep children who are unwell at home to prevent the spread of infection to other children and educators

6. storing or presenting items, such as beds, bedding and sunhats, in such a way as to prevent cross-contamination

7. ensuring that there is a regular and thorough cleaning and disinfecting schedule for all equipment and toys

8. ensuring any chemicals and cleaning agents are non-toxic and stored out of reach of children

9. ensuring 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

10. maintaining the service in a clean and hygienic manner throughout the day, such as wiping benches and tables before and after eating, and cleaning up spills

11. actively encouraging educators and staff who have, or are suspected of having an infectious disease to not attend the service in order to prevent the spread of infection to others attending the service.

12. In terms of the toileting of children, Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:
a. ensuring 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
b. ensuring children do not share the use of items related to personal care, such as hand towels for drying hands, toothbrushes and hairbrushes
c. encouraging children to flush the toilet after use
d. encouraging and assisting (where required) children to wash their hands according to hand washing guidelines (refer to Attachment 2) after toileting
e. encouraging children to tell a staff member if they have had a toileting accident
f. monitoring and maintaining toileting facilities in a safe, clean and hygienic manner while children are in attendance; this requires periodic checking of the bathroom area
g. respecting diverse styles of toileting children due to cultural or religious practices
h. respecting the possible need to maintain privacy of toileting and dressing.

13. For cleaning toys, clothing and the service in general, Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:
   a. removing toys that a child has sneezed or coughed on
   b. wearing gloves when cleaning (general purpose gloves are sufficient; wash and hang outside to dry when finished)
   c. washing mouthed toys daily using warm water and detergent and, if possible, drying in the sun
   d. wiping over books with a moist cloth treated with detergent
   e. ensuring washable toys and equipment are cleaned term by term or annually, as required
   f. where applicable, washing and disinfecting mattress covers and linen.

14. In regard to children’s contact with one another, Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:
   a. educating and encouraging children in good personal hygiene practices, such as:
      i. washing their hands after blowing and wiping their nose
      ii. not touching one another when they are cut or bleeding
      iii. disposing of used tissues promptly and appropriately, and not lending them to other children
      iv. using their own equipment for personal care, such as toothbrushes, hats, brushes and combs
      v. only touching the food they are going to eat
      vi. using their own drink bottles or cups.

15. For the indoor and outdoor environments, Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:
   α. keeping the indoor and outdoor environments as clean and hygienic as possible at all times
   β. promptly removing blood, urine and faeces (including animal) either indoors or outdoors, using the appropriate cleaning procedures

16. covering the sandpit when not in use to prevent contamination
17. emptying water containers, such as water trays, each day (refer to Water Safety Policy)
18. disposing of any dead animals/insects found on the premises in an appropriate manner.

Safe handling of body fluids or materials in contact with body fluids:

Accidental spills and secretions of body fluid are a fact of life in a child care setting. In managing these spills, Certified Supervisors and other staff/educators must ensure that they:

a. avoid direct contact with blood or other fluids are not 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
b. wear gloves wherever possible
c. cover any cuts/abrasions on their own hands with a waterproof dressing.

Effective environmental cleaning:

1. Cleaning is an important part of infection control as germs are unable to multiply on clean, dry surfaces. Effective cleaning with detergent and warm water followed by rinsing and drying removes the bulk of infectious organisms from a surface. Particular attention should be paid to the following:
   a. toilets/sinks must be cleaned daily and separate cleaning cloths/sponges must be used for each task
   b. mouthed toys must be washed immediately or placed in a separate container for washing at a later time
   c. all bench tops and floors must be washed regularly
   d. children’s cups/drink bottles used for water must be washed daily
   e. when washing at the child care premises, staff are to consider washing items separately to minimise cross-contamination, for example, tea towels washed separately from sheets, face washers washed separately to play mats/rugs
   f. nappy change areas/mats must be washed with detergent and warm water after each use.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

1. keeping their child/ren home if they are unwell or have an infectious disease that requires their exclusion from the education and care service
2. informing the service if their child has an infectious disease
3. supporting this policy by complying with the hygiene practices when attending the service or when assisting with a service program or activity
4. encouraging their child/ren to develop and follow effective hygiene practices at all times, including handwashing on arrival at the service.

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

ATTACHMENT 1
Sample nappy-changing and toileting guidelines
All children’s personal hygiene needs must be attended to as soon as is practicable; therefore, if a child is not toilet trained or soils their underclothing, the service will need to ensure that appropriate facilities and supplies are provided for changing nappies/clothing in a safe and hygienic matter. It is not appropriate to leave a child in a wet or soiled nappy/clothing until the parent/guardian is available to attend to their child’s personal hygiene. How and where these facilities are provided in a child care environment will depend on the space and layout of the bathroom area (refer to Occupational Health and Safety Policy).

Services are advised to consider implementing procedures that ensure that the requirements of the regulations are met while recognising an individual child’s need for respect and privacy, hygiene, supervision and occupational health and safety requirements.

Changing nappies

1. Wear disposable gloves.
2. Ensure that the nappy changing area has been cleaned with detergent and water, and that the change sheet/paper has been placed on the changing area prior to changing the nappy.
3. Ensure that all adults at the service who change children’s nappies use their hands to hold the child away from their body as they carry them to the changing area. Wherever possible, children should be encouraged to walk to the changing area.
4. Children should not be left alone during the entire time their nappy is being changed.
5. All soiled items of clothing should be removed from the child’s body along with the nappy.
6. Extremely soiled nappies/clothing may need to have the contents tipped into the toilet.
7. Nappies must be placed into plastic bags or a lined rubbish bin (a hands-free lidded bin that is inaccessible to children is recommended).
8. Children should be cleaned, and soiled wipes placed into a lined rubbish bin. The change sheet/paper should also be discarded immediately after the nappy change.
9. The adult must remove their gloves before touching the child’s clean clothes or putting on a clean nappy, taking care not to let their skin touch the outer contaminated surface of the glove. Used gloves must be discarded in the bin along with other soiled items.
10. Dress the child and wash the child’s hands.
11. The nappy change area must be cleaned immediately after each use with neutral detergent and warm water.
12. If necessary, the cloth nappy/clothing should be rinsed before being placed into a plastic bag for collection by the parent/guardian.
13. Adults involved in the nappy change process must ensure that their hands are washed and dried thoroughly after each change.