

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Staff from Fairstart Early Intervention come into contact with many children who also use the same resources on a daily basis, creating a highly infectious situation. Appropriate hygiene practices are one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of infection and to protect the health of each individual in group environments.

1.2 PURPOSE

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has identified effective hand washing as one of the three most important ways to prevent the spread of infection in child care environments. Consequently it is quite important to know how to wash hands appropriately as well as how often to do it.

This policy aims to ensure that staff follows procedures to ensure appropriate standards of personal and equipment hygiene, in order to minimise risk of infection, to protect the health of children, families and staff and promote hygienic practices in delivery of services.

1.3 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 place a primary duty on organisations to provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health of workers and visitors.

1.4 STAKEHOLDERS

This policy informs staff from Fairstart Early Intervention of their personal hygiene responsibilities in relation to hygiene.

SECTION 2 - POLICY

2.1 OBJECTIVE AND GOALS

- To minimise the risk of infection and to protect the health of children, families and staff.
- To ensure that all equipment and materials are cleaned appropriately on a regular basis.
- To promote standards of personal hygiene for staff, children and families.

2.2 POLICY STATEMENT

Fairfield City Council:

- will ensure that staff maintain personal hygiene and practice effective hand hygiene at all times whilst carrying out their duties.
- will enable staff to wash and dry their hands effectively in a range of environments. Antibacterial wipes or alcohol-based hand rubs may be used when access to water is difficult.
- will enable staff to wash their hands before commencing work with a child, after cleaning a child's or their own nose, after contact with any bodily fluids e.g. saliva, and after any incident that would normally occasion hand washing by staff during interaction with children.
- will ensure that individual team members are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting equipment after use. Equipment should be cleaned using soap and hot water or antibacterial cleaning wipes:
 - after their use and or
 - after being mouthed by a child or coming into contact with bodily fluids
- will provide protective equipment for staff use. To guard against cross infection, team members are required to wear disposable gloves when undertaking procedures that involve inspection of the mouth and surrounding area of the face or dealing with other bodily fluids or waste. All cuts, abrasions, dermatitis or open wounds should be covered with a water-resistant occlusive dressing, which should be changed each time it is soiled or wet.
- will promote Work Health and Safety procedures including communication networks through its intranet.
- will ensure that staff are trained in Work Health and Safety procedures and are complying with this policy. Failure to comply will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

2.3 APPLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION

Hand hygiene is one of the most simple and effective ways to break the chain of infection. The most effective method of hand hygiene is using soap and running water. This is the best option when hands are visibly dirty. If hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol based rub may be used.

The process of thoroughly washing, rinsing and drying your hands or a child's hands should take around 30 seconds.

There are five steps to washing hands:

1. Wet hands with running water
2. Apply soap to hands
3. Lather soap and rub hands thoroughly, including wrists, the palms, between the fingers, around the thumbs and under the nails
4. Rinse thoroughly under running water
5. Dry thoroughly

Reference: 'Staying Healthy- Preventing Infectious Diseases in Childcare.' 5th Edition. (2012) p.42

Ball pit balls to be cleaned and air dried on regular basis and ball pit closed when this period is deemed too long or when good hygiene practices are deemed at risk.

Fairstart maintains an up to date COVID safe plan in line with recommendations from Department of Health and Fairfield City Council COVID advisory committee. This plan works in conjunction with this policy and documents how Fairstart manages and minimises risks for staff and clients

2.4 SECTION 3 – GOVERNANCE

3.1 RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Policy Number	QMPOL-FS-06 Service Management Fairstart COVID safe plan
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3.2 RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner	Children and Family Services
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3.3 RISK

Risk of infection to clients, families and staff during the delivery of services

3.4 VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
2	30 October 2014	Children and Family Services Manager	Information modified to include areas in new template
4	30 October 2019	Children and Family Services Manager	Address changed and Logo Add ball pit cleaning
5	30/10/2021	Children and Family Services Manager	Link to COVID plan

3.5 REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed every five years or when a change to governing legislation occurs, whichever occurs sooner.