

Intereach Out of School Care

Handwashing Procedure



Applies to	Intereach Out of School Hours (OOSH)				
Policy	NQS Two: Children's Services Health and Safety Policy				
Version	1.0	Date approved	25/07/2025	Next review date	24/07/2028

1. Objective

To promote and maintain a high standard of hygiene and reduce the risk of spreading infectious diseases by ensuring that all children, educators, and visitors follow proper handwashing procedures at appropriate times throughout the day.

2. Background

Maintaining effective hygiene practices is essential in family day care settings, where children are in close contact with each other, educators, and shared surfaces. Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases. Hand hygiene for children also helps them to develop good hygiene habits.

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Nominated Supervisor to:

- be aware of the requirement of the current National Regulations and the relevant standard about handwashing practices and facilities;
- provide current information or changes regarding appropriate hand washing practices to educators and staff; and,
- monitor the implementation of the procedure.
- It is the responsibility of the educators and staff to:
 - ensure hand washing facilities, , ideally with soap and running water, are available or within proximity to toilets, nappy change areas, food areas, pet zones, and outdoors play spaces
 - effectively use handwashing to prevent the spread of infectious diseases; and,
 - follow the recommended practice "How to wash hands" [Staying Healthy – 6th Edition](#).

4. Procedure

4.1. Washing hands with soap and water

The most effective method of hand hygiene is using soap and water. Washing hands with soap and running water loosens, dilutes, and flushes off dirt and germs. Soap alone cannot remove dirt or kill germs - it is the combination of running water, rubbing your hands and the detergent in the soap that helps loosen the dirt, remove the germs, and rinse them off skin.

- The process adopted is of thoroughly washing, rinsing, and drying your hands or a child's hands for around 30 seconds.

The five steps to follow in washing hands are:

- wet hands with running water (preferably warm water, for comfort);
- apply enough soap to cover all surfaces of hands and wrists;
- lather soap and rub hands thoroughly, including the wrists, the palms, between the fingers, around the thumbs and under the nails. Rub hands together for at least 15 seconds (for about as long as it takes to sing 'Happy birthday' once);
- rinse thoroughly under running water; and,

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- dry thoroughly.
- Educators, staff and children will wash their hands with soap and running water where possible.
- In situations where running water is not available or practical, a container with soap and warm water will be used and changed regularly.
- Hands are dried using one of the following methods as effective hand drying is just as important as thorough hand washing;
 - using disposable paper towel - the preferred option in education and care services;
 - individual cloth towels - although if used, should be used by one person (i.e., not shared), hung up to dry between uses and should be laundered regularly to reduce the risk of recontamination or cross-contaminating hands; and,
 - warm air dryers - take longer to dry hands than using paper towel, can only serve one person at a time, and are often not used for long enough to ensure dry hands;

Damp hands pick up and transfer up to 1000 times more bacteria than dry hands. Drying hands thoroughly also helps remove any germs that may not have been rinsed off.

- Where practicable, children are supervised when washing their hands and helped to get into the habit of hand hygiene.
- If rings or other jewellery are worn on hands, the jewellery is moved around the finger or hand while soap is lathered to ensure that the area underneath the jewellery is clean.
- Cuts, abrasions, dermatitis, or open wounds on hands are covered with a water-resistant occlusive dressing, which is changed each time it is soiled or wet.

4.2. Alcohol-based hand rubs

- Alcohol-based hand rubs are useful when performing multiple tasks in which hands can potentially become contaminated; for example, when assisting children with eating, when on excursions, in the playground, or in other situations where soap and water are not always available. or antiseptics, such as alcohol-based hand rub, gel, or foam, and ensure children do not mouth or inhale fumes (alcohol-based hand rubs reduce the number of germs on hands; they do not remove dirt from a person's hands.).
- Alcohol-based hand rubs are used as directed and are kept well out of reach of children and only used with adult supervision as children may be at risk if they eat or drink the hand cleaner, inhale it, or splash it into their eyes or mouth.
- An alcohol-based hand rub is placed at the entrance to the education and care service. This can help remind parents, carers, and children (as well as educators and other staff) to have clean hands when they enter and exit the service.

4.3. When to perform hand hygiene

	Before	After
Educators and other staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting work, so germs are not introduced into the service Eating or handling food Giving medication Putting on gloves Applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children Going home, so germs are not taken home with you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking off gloves Changing a nappy Cleaning the nappy change area Using the toilet Helping children use the toilet Coming in from outside play Wiping a child's nose or your own nose Eating or handling food Handling garbage Cleaning up faeces, vomit or blood Applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children Touching animals Arriving back to the service from outings or excursions
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting the day at the service; parents can help with this Eating or handling food Going home, so germs are not taken home with them Having their nappy changed, their hands will become contaminated while they are on the change mat Coming in from outside play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eating or handling food Touching nose secretions Using the toilet Handling/ touching animals Arriving home from a regular outing

5. Monitoring, evaluation and review

This procedure will be reviewed every three years and incorporate feedback and suggestions from children, families, educators, co-ordinators, volunteers and students or when there is a legislative change.

6. National Quality Framework

Element	Concept	Description
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

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Element	Concept	Description
2.2.2.	Safety – incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service that is child safe

7. Context	
7.1. Standards or other external requirements	<p>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017). <i>National Quality Standards</i>.</p> <p>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017). <i>Guide to the National Quality Framework</i>.</p> <p>Early Childhood Australia (2016). <i>Code of Ethics</i>.</p> <p>NHMRC. (2012) <i>Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care</i>. (5th ed.).</p>
7.2. Legislation or other requirements	<p>Education and Care Services National Regulations consolidated 2017</p> <p>Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010</p> <p>"How to wash hands" Staying Healthy – 5th Edition (including family household members in Family Day Care residences).</p>
7.3. Internal documentation	Handwashing Poster

1. Document control			
Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review
1.0	15/04/2020	R. Phillips, Acting Senior Manager – Children and Family Services	15/04/2023
2.0	21/11/2025	M. Tai, General Manager Operations	21/11/2025
1.0	25/07/2025	<p>The Children's Services procedure separated to be a standalone procedure for OOSH and approved by:</p> <p>N Brown – Compliance, Safety & Risk Manager</p>	24/07/2028