

# Intereach Children's Services

## Handwashing Procedure



<b>Applies to</b>	Intereach Family Day Care (FDC) and Intereach Out Of School Hours (OOSH)				
<b>Policy</b>	NQS Two: Children's Services Health and Safety Policy				
<b>Version</b>	2.0	<b>Date approved</b>	21/11/2022	<b>Next review date</b>	21/11/2025

### 1. Objective

Using standard infection control precautions will reduce the occurrence and risks of infectious disease. These precautions are especially important in early childhood settings where risks of transmission of infectious disease are higher than in other work or community settings. Intereach staff and educators will minimise the spread of infectious diseases between children, staff, and educators, by:

- using standard infection control precautions against the transmission of infection; and
- conforming to National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) requirements for exclusion of children with infectious diseases and other legislative requirements.

### 2. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Nominated Supervisor to:

- be aware of the requirement of the current National Regulations and the relevant standard in regard to handwashing practices and facilities;
- provide current information or changes regarding appropriate hand washing procedures to educators and staff; and,
- monitor the implementation of the procedure.

It is the responsibility of the educators and staff to:

- ensure facilities are available for washing hands, ideally with soap and running water, close to areas where children, educators or staff use toilets, nappies are changed, food is stored, prepared or served, pets handled or kept, and play outdoors;
- effectively use handwashing to prevent the spread of infectious diseases;
- encourage children, visitors, staff and persons normally residing in the home use liquid soap as microbial contamination is less likely to occur;
- follow the recommended practice "How to wash hands" Staying Healthy – 5th Edition (including family household members in Family Day Care residences).

### 3. Procedure

#### 3.1. 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.

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- The five steps to follow in washing hands are:
  - wet hands with running water (preferably warm water, for comfort);
  - apply soap to hands;
  - 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,
  - 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.
- 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.

### **3.2. 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.

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- 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.

### 3.3. When to perform hand hygiene

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

## 4. 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.
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

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Element	Concept	Description
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service

5. Context	
<b>5.1. Standards or other external requirements</b>	<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>. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.).</p>
<b>5.2. Legislation or other requirements</b>	<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>
<b>5.3. Internal documentation</b>	Handwashing Poster

6. 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