

Hygiene Policy and Procedure

We recognise the importance of maintaining the highest possible standards of hygiene in and around the premises so as to minimise the risks posed to children, staff and other visitors. The leader and all staff are committed to taking all practicable steps to prevent and control the spread of infectious germs, and to uphold high standards of personal hygiene in order to minimise the risk of catching or spreading infections.

Personal Hygiene

In all circumstances, staff will adhere to the following examples of good personal hygiene:

- Washing hands before and after handling food or drink.
- Washing hands after using the toilet.
- Encouraging children to adopt these same routines.
- Covering cuts and abrasions while at the premises.
- Keeping long hair tied back.
- Taking any other steps that are likely to minimise the spread of infections.

Hygiene in the Setting

All staff will be vigilant to any potential threats to good hygiene in the setting. To this end, a generally clean and tidy environment will be maintained at all times. More specifically, staff will ensure that toilets, taps, door handles, table tops and other points of regular contact are cleaned regularly, as necessary, and that there is always an adequate supply of soap and hand drying facilities for both staff and children. Staff will also be vigilant to any sharp objects, such as glass, which may be on the premises.

Dealing with Spillages

Spillages of substances likely to result in the spread of infections will be dealt with rapidly and carefully. Blood, vomit, urine and faeces will be cleaned up immediately and disposed of safely and hygienically. Staff will wear disposable plastic gloves and an apron while using bleach or disinfectant solution, and wash themselves thoroughly afterwards. Children will be kept well clear while such substances are being dealt with.

First Aid and Hygiene

Further to the provisions set out in the Health, Illness and Emergency policy (as applicable), the designated First Aider will be mindful of the need to observe the highest standards of personal hygiene when administering any treatment to children.

As such, they will wash their hands thoroughly both before and after giving first aid, and ensure that any cuts, wounds or skin damage are covered by plasters or disposable gloves.

Kitchen Hygiene

All areas where food and drink are stored, prepared and eaten are prone to the spread of infections. Therefore, staff must be particularly careful to observe high standards of hygiene in such instances. To this end the following steps will be taken:

- Food is regularly checked to ensure that it is “in date”. Waste will be disposed of safely and all bins will be kept covered.
- Food storage facilities and kitchen equipment will be regularly and thoroughly cleaned after each use.
- All staff will take a food hygiene qualification renewed each three years.
- Staff and children will wash and dry their hands thoroughly before coming into contact with food.
- If cooking is done as an activity, all surfaces and equipment involved will be thoroughly cleaned before and after the session.

Nappy Changing and Toileting Policy and Procedure

Our Playgroup believes that children have the right to have their needs met quickly and in a caring responsive way in regards to nappy changing and toileting, in order to build children’s sense of trust and security.

It is important to remember that the way that child care professionals react to soiled or wet nappies, toileting needs and accidents give children powerful messages about themselves and their bodies.

Procedure

The Playgroup has a duty to respond as quickly as possible when a child indicates a need to use the toilet or have their nappy changed. Children may ask to go to the toilet/have their nappy changed but non-verbal signs should also be recognised and acted on. Children wearing nappies should be checked throughout the day.

The Playgroup has a duty to understand that in addition to meeting children’s physical needs, nappy changing and toileting are a time to:

- Have one to one interactions with children, and to give them your full attention;
- Build trusting and caring relationships with children;
- Interact with children using verbal and nonverbal communication, and respond to children’s communication;

- Use the opportunity to engage in simple play activities with children, such as singing, rhymes and general chat to make them feel at ease;
- Build children's understanding of what is happening now and promote their ability to predict what will happen next; and
- Help children begin to develop and extend their self-help skills, for example hand-washing and dressing, and to encourage them to recognize the feelings of achievement and satisfaction that go with those.

Health, Hygiene and Safety

Supporting children's health and safety by ensuring that practices are hygienic is fundamental to good quality care. Procedures regarding nappy changing and toileting should be reviewed regularly to ensure they contain current information.

Nappy Changing: Nappies should be changed in a designated place. The nappy change area must have a surface that can be cleaned easily and thoroughly after each nappy change. Staff should wear appropriate PPE when changing nappies and helping a child in the toilet. Both adults and children should wash their hands after a nappy change. Nappy change and toileting supplies will be kept out of reach of children.

Toileting: Toddlers need close supervision to ensure hygiene when they are learning to use the toilet. Careful hand-washing and drying by both adults and children is essential after using the toilet, and staff may need to remind and support children to do this effectively.

Many toddlers have a drive to do things themselves. Staff should respect and support children's independence, while also using sensitive strategies to ensure that children are clean when they have finished using the toilet.

Positive Nappy Changing and Toileting

Staff can use a range of practical strategies to support positive nappy changing and toileting experiences for children. These include:

- responding as quickly as possible when a child indicates a need to use the toilet. Don't make children wait to use toilet;
- asking or reminding children about using the toilet. Staff should be alert to signs that a child is uncomfortable, and for older children be especially sensitive to any signs or communications that they need to use the toilet;
- speaking respectfully with children about what you are doing. For example, tell children that you are checking their nappy, and talk with them about what is happening as you are changing their nappy or assisting them to use the toilet;
- changing nappies or helping children to use the toilet on a needs basis, as well as having times during the day when each child's nappy is checked. While some children will let adults know when their nappies are wet or soiled, others don't seem to mind if their nappy needs to be changed;

- never showing displeasure or negative reactions to a child's bowel movements, no matter how messy or smelly they are;
- allowing children to take their time. It is important that staff slow down to the pace of a baby or toddler;
- encouraging families to provide children with clothes that assist them to toilet independently, for example, elastic waisted clothes that are easy to pull up and down;
- Where possible, using the correct terms for going to the toilet. Ask families what words they use at home, as consistent language between home and care will help children to understand and learn more easily;
- Respond to children's cues and allowing them to be active participants in the process of starting to use the toilet. This should be discussed with parents/carers at the appropriate time in order to support each child's learning while also avoid pressuring them;
- Be sensitive to individual children's needs and styles, and tailor individual nappy change and toileting procedures to each child; and,
- Take full advantage of every opportunity for a focused, positive interaction with children during toileting and nappy change times, however brief these might be.

Supporting Children to Learn to Use the Toilet

Staff can use a range of practical strategies to support children learning to use the toilet. These include:

- Keeping the process low key, with a minimum of fuss. Avoid calling unnecessary attention to it or putting pressure on the child to succeed. Don't allow learning to use the toilet become an area for a power struggle between an adult and child;
- Getting to know each child's usual time(s) for bowel movements;
- Acknowledging children's successes, no matter how infrequent or small;
- Expecting accidents and setbacks and treat them in a matter of fact and supportive way. Children, like adults, rarely learn a new skill all at once, without any setbacks;
- Never embarrassing, shaming or punishing children, or in any way making the child feel bad about any aspect of using the toilet;
- Sharing information with families about how the toilet learning is going, both in the Playgroup and at home;
- Supporting children when they want to become more independent. Make tasks manageable whilst being present to provide help and encouragement as needed. Allow children do things such as toileting, washing hands and flushing the toilet independently, while at the same time keeping in mind the importance of hygiene and providing assistance when needed.

- Giving help in ways that empower children. Give just enough help to encourage the child to persevere and be successful. The staff's role is to be helpful and encouraging.

Although learning to use the toilet varies for individual children, take advantage of the child being in a group and the many opportunities that provides for learning from each other. Avoid comparing children but at the same time capitalize on children's interest in other children using the toilet.

Older children may benefit from the use of pictorial sequences to show how to use the toilet or wash hands.

Signed Chairperson