

## Background

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Handwashing is the most effective way to reduce the spread of communicable diseases and minimise cross infection.

## Policy statement

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This Policy details the Service's approach to handwashing.

## Strategies and practices

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- The Service has suitably sized handwashing facilities located throughout the building. Liquid/foam soap and paper towels are provided at each.
- The Service provides an antibacterial hand gel for use upon arrival at and departure from the Service. A Hand Alcohol Rub Poster detailing how to use the rub effectively is displayed beside the hand gel.
- Educators model good handwashing procedures at appropriate times to the children. In addition, they intentionally teach and encourage the children to use the correct handwashing procedure. Children who can stand at a sink but not wash their hands independently are assisted to do so.
- The Handwashing Poster NHMRC - child and the Handwashing Poster – Adult is displayed in nappy change areas and food preparation and eating areas throughout the Service.
- A poster containing photographs of children using the correct handwashing procedure is displayed at child height above each handwashing facility used by children in the Service.
- All staff, students, volunteers, and children should wash their hands:
  - On arrival at the Service (alternatively, antibacterial hand gel may be used)
  - Before and after eating, or feeding a child
  - Before and after handling food
  - Before and after giving medication and providing medical procedures or first aid
  - Before and after changing a nappy
  - After using the toilet or helping a child use a toilet
  - After cleaning up blood, faeces, or vomit
  - After wiping a nose
  - After touching pets and other animals
  - After playing outside
  - Before and after using gloves and when changing gloves (alternatively, antibacterial hand gel may be used)
  - After cleaning, gardening, and handling garbage and,
  - Before going home (alternatively, antibacterial hand gel may be used)

Effective handwashing procedures:

- Wet hands with running water
- Apply liquid/foam soap and spread over hands

- Rub hands together while counting to ten slowly
- Wash hands all over, including backs of hands, wrists, between fingers, under fingernails
- Rinse hands thoroughly under clean, running water while counting to ten slowly
- Turn tap off using a clean piece of paper towel
- Pat hands dry using another clean piece of paper towel

Washing and rinsing your hands should take about as long as singing 'Happy Birthday' twice.

## Additional safe practices for babies

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- Babies need their hands washed as often and as thoroughly as older children. If the baby is unable to stand at a hand basin, wash their hands with either a baby wipe or a pre-moistened hand washer (to be laundered after use), and then pat dry with paper towel.

## Responsibilities of parents

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- To wash their hands when they arrive at and leave the Service, and to help their child to do the same.

## Procedure and forms

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- Hand Alcohol Rub Poster
- Handwashing Poster – Adult
- Handwashing Poster NHMRC – child

## Links to other policies

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- Administration of Medication Policy
- Food Preparation, Storage and Handling Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy
- Managing Infectious Diseases Policy
- Nappy Change and Toileting Policy
- Nutrition, Food and Beverages – Parent Provided Policy
- Nutrition, Food and Beverages – Service Provided Policy
- Supervision Policy

## Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2018

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Regs	88	Infectious diseases
QA	2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation
	2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child

## Sources, further reading and useful websites

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- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (current as of 2025)
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2018 (updated version where applicable)
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2025). Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services. 6th edition.

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au>

- Queensland Health <https://www.health.qld.gov.au> (accessed 24 June 2025)

## Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur, and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

## Version Control

Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	8 January 2018	Kaylene Harper	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018.	January 2019
2	6 February 2019	Kaylene Harper	Reviewed policy. Accessed sources and further readings.	February 2020
3	28 January 2020	Kaylene Harper	Reviewed policy. Accessed sources and further readings.	January 2021
4	13 October 2020	Kaylene Harper	Reviewed policy. Accessed sources and further readings.	October 2021
5	28 September 2021	Kaylene Harper	Reviewed policy	September 2022
6	29 September 2022	Linda Hollard	Reviewed policy Accessed sources and added further information	September 2023
7	24 August 2023	Grace McKinstry	Reviewed policy. Accessed sources and further readings.	August 2024
8	1 July 2024	Tiffany Boeske	Reviewed policy Accessed sources	July 2025
9	24 June 2025	Gen Mahaki	Reviewed and updated to align with current NQF, including updated sources and references.	June 2026