

19. Hygiene

Statement of intent

Polesden Lacey Playschool puts the wellbeing of children in our care at the core of our services. We are keen to ensure we provide a high-quality environment and premises that are kept in a clean and hygienic condition for all children, parent/guardians, staff and visitors. We recognise the potential for diseases and viruses to spread relatively easily in an early years environment.

Aim

We will apply best practice in infection control to reduce the risk of infection and illness for all children, parent/guardians, staff and visitors.

Practice

Early years services are an ideal environment for the spread of diseases and viruses. This is because of the relatively high numbers of children mixing together, the low state of immunity of some children and the difficulties in maintaining high standards of hygiene among small children.

Bacteria and viruses that cause infectious illnesses are spread in a number of ways, most commonly either by touch, in the case of bugs like norovirus, or in the air when people sneeze, as is the case with coughs, colds and flu. Ingesting food contaminated with bacteria or viruses is another method, as is contact with infected body fluids such as blood or faeces.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the premises are kept clean and hygienic at all times. Staff will be expected to tidy up and keep the premises clean within the reasonable limits of their role and to report any areas where the Playschool may be falling below its set standards. This will include the following:

- A general cleaning service is provided by the school throughout the week. When additional cleaning is required this is completed by the Playschool staff. The cleaning will be closely managed and monitored to ensure it functions effectively.
- Cleaning task lists are in place daily, weekly, monthly, termly and annually. The schedule will also include the standards of cleanliness expected. All staff will be provided with detailed cleaning statements, giving easy-to-follow instructions on specific items or areas to be cleaned.
- All staff will be requested to pay particular attention to areas where hygiene is especially important for preventing the spread of infection. This includes kitchen and toilet areas. Colour-coded cleaning clothes specific to each area should be used.
- In the event of illness among the children, staff will be informed and asked to intensify cleaning for a given period and to follow Public Health Agency guidance.
- The Manager will undertake ad-hoc risk assessments and inspections to ensure the cleaning schedule is being followed to the standard required and that the premises are being kept clean and hygienic.
- To encourage and support effective handwashing, an adequate number of sinks for handwashing are provided along with soaps and disposable paper towels.
- All staff will be expected to display high standards of personal hygiene and to wash their hands regularly throughout the day and specifically:
 - before preparing and eating food for mealtimes, snack times or as part of a food-related activity
 - between handling raw and cooked food
 - after handling waste food or refuse
 - after tending children with cuts, abrasions or suspected infections
 - after wiping their own or a child's nose
 - after changing a nappy
 - after handling body fluids and soiled items
 - after taking a child to the toilet or going to the toilet themselves

- after eating, coughing or sneezing
- after handling cleaning chemicals.
- Staff will help the children to keep clean throughout the day and to wash their hands appropriately, especially after using the toilet, before eating or after messy play. A range of teaching resources will be employed including hygiene posters, play equipment and singing hand-washing rhymes.
- Children with a potentially infectious disease that could be passed on to others should be excluded from attending the Playschool until they have recovered. See the Public Health Agency 'Guidance on infection control in school and other childcare settings' in the children's cloakroom.
- Staff should always ensure that toys and equipment are inspected and cleaned regularly. In the case of a pandemic the Playschool will follow government guidelines.
- Unhygienic or broken toys should be discarded.
- Play sand and playdough can also spread disease if dirty. It will be replaced when necessary and will be removed from use during any infection outbreak.
- The Manager will make appropriate pest control monitoring arrangements and respond promptly to any evidence of pests.
- All staff will be expected to keep all cleaning materials safely and securely and out of the way of children. They will also be expected to ensure that all of their cleaning work practices include appropriate health and safety safeguards.
- All staff will be provided with suitable personal protective equipment (PPE), such as disposable gloves and aprons. They will be trained in maintaining good standards of cleanliness and hygiene.
- Any spillages of urine, blood, faeces, saliva and vomit will be cleaned up immediately.

Potentially Infectious Spillages Procedure

Staff will treat every spillage of body fluids or body waste such as blood, vomit, faeces and urine; with caution as potentially infectious.

As with ordinary spillages, potentially infectious spillages must be cleaned up immediately.

If the spillage involves blood and body fluids staff should:

- secure the area around the spillage;
- assemble the required equipment;
- wear appropriate PPE;
- solid or semi-solid matter (e.g. faeces) in the spillage should be removed first as this can inhibit the disinfectant;
- contain, absorb and cover the spill with disposable paper towels;
- apply a suitable disinfectant product or a product which combines detergent and disinfectant;
- leave the area for two minutes (or as per manufacturer's instructions) then clear away the towels/disinfectant directly into a nappy sack;
- wash the area with a general purpose detergent and warm water using a disposable cloth/paper towels; and
- remove PPE and place immediately into the nappy bag and discarded.

Mops should never be used for cleaning up blood and body fluid spillages.

Policy Review

As part of Polesden Lacey Playschool monitoring of hygiene this policy will be subject to periodic review.

Policy adopted by: Ellie Pragnell (Chair), Caroline O'Leary (Manager)

Date: September 24

Policy Review Date: September 25

