



Hygiene Policy

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1. Our Commitment

St Francis Nursery is committed to promoting and maintaining the highest standards of hygiene to ensure a safe, healthy, and welcoming environment for all children, staff, parents/carers, and visitors. We understand that effective hygiene practices are crucial in preventing the spread of infection and contributing to the overall wellbeing of the children in our care. This policy outlines our procedures for maintaining excellent hygiene standards, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, guidance from Public Health England (PHE), the Food Standards Agency (FSA), Ofsted, and any specific recommendations from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Public Health department.

2. Policy Aims

- To minimise the spread of infection amongst children and staff.
- To ensure all staff, children, parents/carers, and visitors understand and adhere to the nursery's hygiene procedures.
- To maintain a consistently clean and hygienic environment throughout the nursery premises, including all play areas, nappy changing facilities, toilets, kitchens, and eating areas.
- To implement and maintain robust procedures for handwashing, nappy changing, food handling, cleaning equipment and the environment, and waste disposal.
- To manage outbreaks of infectious diseases effectively, including adhering to recommended exclusion periods.
- To ensure all staff receive appropriate training in hygiene and infection control practices.
- To work in partnership with parents/carers to promote good hygiene practices both at nursery and at home.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Nursery Manager** has responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented, monitored, and reviewed effectively and that adequate training and resources are available.
- **All Staff must** adhere to this policy and all hygiene procedures at all times and ensure that they promptly report any hygiene concerns or outbreaks of illness to the Nursery Manager.
- **Parents/Carers must** inform the nursery if their child is unwell or has an infectious disease, and to adhere to exclusion periods.

4. Hand Hygiene

Effective handwashing is the single most important way to prevent the spread of infection.

4.1 When to Wash Hands (Children and Staff)

- On arrival at the nursery.
- Before and after eating or handling food.
- After using the toilet or having a nappy changed.
- After messy play (e.g., with sand, paint, glue, playdough).
- After playing outdoors.
- After touching animals (if applicable).
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing/wiping their nose.
- Before and after administering first aid or medication.
- After handling waste or bins.
- Before going home.

4.2 Handwashing Procedure

- Wet hands with clean running water (warm water is preferable).
- Apply liquid soap.
- Rub hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds (singing "Happy Birthday" twice is a good guide for children), covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers, including between fingers, thumbs, wrists, and backs of hands.
- Rinse hands thoroughly under clean running water.
- Dry hands with a clean paper towel.

- Dispose of the paper towel in a designated bin.

4.3 Handwashing Facilities

- Designated handwashing sinks with running warm water, liquid soap, and disposable paper towels will be accessible to children and staff in toilet areas, nappy changing areas, and near eating areas.
- Children will be supervised and supported to ensure they wash their hands effectively.

4.4 Hand Sanitisers

- Alcohol-based hand sanitisers (minimum 60% alcohol content) may be used by staff as an additional measure when handwashing facilities are not immediately available (e.g., on outings, or between tasks if hands are not visibly soiled).
- Hand sanitisers are **not** a substitute for thorough handwashing with soap and water, especially if hands are visibly dirty or after using the toilet/nappy changing.
- Use of hand sanitisers by children will be strictly supervised by staff.

5. Nappy Changing and Toileting

5.1 Nappy Changing Procedure

- Nappy changing will only take place in the designated nappy changing area, which will be equipped with a changing mat, disposable gloves, aprons, wipes, nappy sacks, and a lidded, foot-operated bin for soiled nappies.
- Only staff with an Enhanced DBS and who are employed by CCS will be permitted to change nappies.
- All nappy changing must be discussed with the parent/carer and carried out in accordance with the child's individual needs.
- Staff must be mindful of the need to preserve the dignity of the child (E.G do not allow other children to watch nappy changing.)
- Staff must wear disposable gloves and an apron for each nappy change.
- The changing mat will be cleaned with a suitable disinfectant spray or wipe after each child.

- Soiled nappies will be placed in individual nappy sacks, sealed, and disposed of immediately in the designated lidded bin. This bin will be emptied regularly throughout the day into an external, lidded waste bin.
- Children and staff must wash their hands thoroughly after every nappy change.
- Parents/carers are to provide nappies, wipes, and any required barrier creams for their child. Creams must be labelled with the child's name and will only be applied with parental consent, using a fresh disposable glove or spatula for application.

5.2 Toileting

- Toilets and potties will be cleaned and disinfected regularly throughout the day, and at least daily.
- Children will be encouraged to flush the toilet and wash their hands properly after use. Staff will provide assistance as needed.
- Potties will be emptied immediately after use into the toilet, then cleaned and disinfected.
- Separate potties should be used for children with diarrhoea, if feasible, or disinfected thoroughly after each use by such a child.
- Staff will wear disposable gloves when assisting children with toileting or cleaning toilet accidents.

6. Food Hygiene

The nursery adheres to the Food Standards Agency (FSA) guidance on food safety and hygiene. Staff involved in food preparation and handling hold relevant food hygiene qualifications.

6.1 Food Preparation and Storage

- All food preparation areas, including surfaces, equipment, and utensils, will be kept scrupulously clean and disinfected.
- Separate chopping boards and utensils will be used for raw and cooked foods to prevent cross-contamination.
- Food will be stored correctly: perishable foods refrigerated at appropriate temperatures (below 5°C), frozen foods kept at -18°C or below, and dry foods stored in clean, sealed containers off the floor.
- Fridge and freezer temperatures will be checked and recorded daily.

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- Food will be cooked thoroughly to the correct temperatures.
- Staff preparing food will maintain high standards of personal hygiene, including tied-back hair, clean aprons (changed regularly), and no jewellery (except a plain wedding band). They must wash their hands thoroughly before handling any food.
- Any staff member suffering from diarrhoea, vomiting, or any other potentially infectious condition must not handle food and must report their symptoms to the Nursery Manager immediately.

6.2 Serving Food and Mealtimes

- Children will wash their hands before all meals and snacks.
- Eating areas will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each meal.
- Staff supervising mealtimes will ensure good hygiene practices are followed.
- Individual dietary requirements and allergies will be strictly adhered to, with clear systems in place to prevent cross-contamination (refer to Allergies and Dietary Needs Policy).
- Fresh drinking water will be available and accessible to children at all times. Cups will be named or used by individual children and cleaned regularly.

6.3 Milk Feeds (Babies)

- Expressed breast milk and formula must be provided by parents/carers in clearly labelled, sterilised bottles.
- Staff will follow parents' instructions for preparing and warming feeds, ensuring correct temperatures.
- Bottles will be stored safely in a designated refrigerator.
- Used bottles will be rinsed and returned to parents/carers daily.
- Staff will wash their hands before preparing any milk feed.

7. Cleaning and Disinfection

A clean environment is essential to prevent the spread of infection.

7.1 General Environment

- A regular cleaning schedule is in place for all areas of the nursery, including floors, surfaces, toilets, sinks, and staff areas. This will be documented.
- High-touch surfaces (e.g., door handles, light switches, tables, handrails) will be cleaned and disinfected frequently throughout the day.
- Cleaning products will be COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) assessed, used according to manufacturers' instructions, and stored securely away from children.

7.2 Toys and Equipment

Toys and equipment will be cleaned regularly, appropriate to their use:

- Mouthed toys will be cleaned and disinfected after each use or at the end of each session/day.
- Hard-surfaced toys will be cleaned and disinfected at least weekly, or more often if visibly soiled or during an outbreak of illness.
- Soft toys will be laundered regularly.
- Sandpits will be covered when not in use and the sand cleaned or changed regularly.
- Water play troughs will be emptied, cleaned, and disinfected daily.

7.3 Bedding

- If bedding is used (e.g., for cots/sleep mats), each child will have their own designated bedding, which will be laundered weekly or more often if soiled or if a child has been unwell. Sleep mats will be wiped down and disinfected after each use.

7.4 Spills of Bodily Fluids

- Spills of blood, vomit, faeces, or other bodily fluids will be cleaned and disinfected immediately.
- Staff will wear disposable gloves and an apron when cleaning spills.
- The area will be cleaned with a suitable detergent and then disinfected with a product effective against bacteria and viruses (e.g., a bleach-based solution at the correct dilution, or a proprietary disinfectant).

- Paper towels used for cleaning will be disposed of in a sealed bag in the clinical waste bin.

8. Waste Disposal

- All waste will be disposed of hygienically and safely.
- Lidded, foot-operated bins will be used where possible, especially in nappy changing areas, toilets, and food preparation areas.
- Bins will be lined with plastic bags and emptied regularly throughout the day, at least daily.
- Soiled nappies and clinical waste (e.g., contaminated dressings, gloves, aprons from nappy changing or first aid) will be placed in designated, clearly marked clinical waste bins with lids. These will be collected by a registered waste contractor.
- External bins will be kept clean, lidded, and stored away from play areas.

9. Managing Illness and Infectious Diseases

9.1 Exclusion

- Parents/carers are requested not to send their child to nursery if they are unwell or displaying symptoms of an infectious disease.
- The nursery follows Public Health England's (PHE) guidance on 'Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities' regarding exclusion periods for common infectious diseases (e.g., diarrhoea and vomiting, chickenpox, measles, conjunctivitis). A copy of this guidance is available for parents/carers.
- Children who become unwell at nursery will be monitored, and parents/carers will be contacted to collect their child if they are unable to participate in nursery activities, have a fever, or are suspected of having an infectious disease. They will be cared for in a quiet area, away from other children where possible, while awaiting collection.
- Staff members with symptoms of infectious illness (particularly diarrhoea and/or vomiting) must not attend work until they have been symptom-free for 48 hours.

9.2 Reporting Notifiable Diseases

- The Nursery Manager will inform the local UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Health Protection Team (via the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Public Health department if advised) of any notifiable diseases or outbreaks of infectious illness at the nursery, as required by law.
- Parents/carers will be informed of any outbreaks of infectious diseases within the nursery, while maintaining confidentiality.

10. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The nursery will provide appropriate PPE for staff, including:

- Disposable gloves (non-latex).
- Disposable aprons.
- Face masks/coverings (as per current government or public health guidance).
- Eye protection (if risk assessed as necessary for specific tasks, e.g., cleaning significant spills).

Staff will be trained on the correct use and disposal of PPE.

11. Animals and Pets (if applicable)

- If animals are kept at or visit the nursery, a risk assessment will be undertaken.
- Children will be supervised closely when interacting with animals.
- Handwashing will be mandatory after touching animals or their enclosures/bedding.
- Animal housing will be kept clean and hygienic.
- Waste from animals will be disposed of safely.

12. Staff Training

- All staff will receive induction training on this Hygiene Policy and associated procedures, including infection control, handwashing, nappy changing, food hygiene, and managing illness.
- Refresher training will be provided regularly, at least annually, or when procedures change.
- Specialist training (e.g., food hygiene qualifications) will be provided for relevant staff.

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13. Monitoring and Review

- The Nursery Manager will regularly monitor compliance with this policy through observation, checklists, and review of records.
- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Nursery Manager, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, national or local (Tower Hamlets) guidance, Ofsted requirements, or as a result of an incident or outbreak.
- Parents/carers will be informed of any significant changes to this policy.

14. Local Contact Information

London Borough of Tower Hamlets Public Health: 020 7364 5016 and ask for the public health team.

UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) London Health Protection Team: 0300 30 30 450 or via email on london.region@ukhsa.gov.uk

This policy has been made available to all staff and is accessible to parents/carers via our website. We believe that by working together, we can maintain a healthy and hygienic environment for all.