



HYGIENE POLICY

Last reviewed:	January 2026
Next review due:	January 2027

Statement of intent

This hygiene policy applies to all staff while they are at forest school. It covers how we consider hygiene through:

- Toileting and nappy changing areas
- Handwashing
- Food preparation
- Dealing with spillages
- Safe disposal of waste
- General equipment
- Using personal protective equipment
- Storage of hygiene/cleaning equipment
- Administering first aid
- Infection control

Toileting and nappy changing areas

- The supply of water, soap, toilet paper and blue roll are checked at the beginning and end of each day by a staff member.
- The nappy changing mat is disinfected before and after use. Antibacterial spray and antibacterial wipes are both provided for this purpose.
- The practitioner puts on clean disposable gloves (if desired) or washes hands before changing a child's nappy or supporting a child with intimate care while toileting.
- If gloves are used then the practitioner removes their gloves, peeling them inside out from the wrist and placing them in the soiled nappy bag before washing hands.
- Used nappies are to be disposed of in an out of reach nappy bin.
- Potties and toilets are to be cleaned with antibacterial spray and/or wipes after each soiled toileting.
- Soiled clothing should be bagged in nappy bags and sent home. Staff should not clean or rinse soiled clothing.

Handwashing

The handwashing procedure is also referenced in the toileting and nappy changing policy. Hands should be washed before eating snack, lunch and tea, after using the toilet and whenever else required.

Hand washing procedure

Staff will instruct children about hand hygiene after toileting and be vigilant about its practice by children in the toileting area.

Hand washing after toilet use is only to occur at the dedicated toilet use and nappy changing hand washing station. This is located by the compost toilet at both Upton and Kingston Blount sites. There is an additional hand washing station by the polytunnel at Upton for washing hands after toilet use.

Separate hand washing stations are available at both sites to be used before food handling. These are located by the fire circles.

Hands are to be washed using the tap connected to the water dispenser. The child will be assisted to apply handwash, working the handwash all over the front and back of the hands and between the fingers into a good lather.

The washing shall occur at an elevated hand washing station.

Children will dry their hands with blue paper roll. This will be located within reaching distance of the water dispenser and should be disposed of in a bin located near to the hand washing station.

Please note, on particularly cold days practitioners may offer children a bowl of warm, soapy water to wash their hands in (as opposed to the cold, running water). Hands must be dried and hand sanitiser applied as an additional step after using the shared warm water (at the lack of being able to provide warm, running water). Where possible, the original hand washing method is to be used.

When away from the forest school setting and access to water, wet wipes and antibacterial spray will be used to clean children's hands.

Children will be visually reminded of how to wash their hands with a poster displayed in or near the hand washing areas.

Food preparation

The Little Firefly has a food and drink policy that details more specific information about food storage and hygiene.

Food should be stored, prepared and presented in a safe and hygienic environment. This is especially important when providing food for young children, as they may have a low resistance to food poisoning. It is also important that children are taught basic hygiene themselves.

Training

To ensure that food prepared is done so in the best possible conditions all or most of our staff are required to obtain a Food Hygiene certificate prior to, or within, the first three months of employment. Practitioners are required to get a Level 2 in Food Hygiene, where managers are required to get a Level 3 in Food Hygiene.

To maintain high levels of hygiene in food preparation areas we will:

- Provide staff with procedures for food preparation
- Ensure that food preparation and storage areas are kept clean (including food storage boxes/bags, the fridge/freezer, the urns, pans, utensils, serving equipment etc)
- Ensure that appropriate clothing, such as aprons and gloves, are worn by those preparing food where necessary
- Staff members with cuts or abrasions on their hands should use a blue plaster if they are undertaking food preparation. This is because they are highly visible and can prevent food contamination.
- Check all food purchased for expiry dates and quality
- Store foods in such a way that those with the longest shelf life are stored behind one another
- Check all food at the time of use to ensure that it is still in date
- Food which has been opened is labelled with the date opened and date for disposal (in accordance with the instructions on the packaging)
- Note the temperatures of the foods post heating
- Notify Ofsted if there is an outbreak of food poisoning, within 14 days.

We will also:

- Ensure children wash their hands with soap and water before eating
- Ensure children do not eat food that has fallen on the floor
- Wash tea towels, kitchen cloths and sponges daily
- Regularly clean kitchen equipment and their storage boxes

Food preparation procedure

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before preparing or handling food. If at any point you touch the bin, blow your nose or otherwise get your hands dirty, you must wash your hands again.
2. Worktops, utensils and chopping boards must be washed thoroughly with warm, soapy water before and after food preparation.
3. Clean dishcloths must be used each day and allowed to dry between uses.

Use chilled food within two days of cooking. You should only ever reheat food once. When reheating, make sure the food is steaming hot and heated all the way through. Ensure it cools down enough before giving it to the children.

Dealing with spillages

It is the responsibility of staff to clean up spillages immediately. This should be done using blue paper roll to soak up the remaining liquid.

- Bodily fluids, blood and chemical spillages - wearing PPE, staff should remove the contaminant, cordon off the area if needed, and wash the ground with a large amount of water from the water container.

- Food spillages - removed immediately and placed in appropriate bin.

Safe disposal of waste

- A waste bin with lid and liner will be available to children for safe disposal of waste e.g. used tissues. There should be one located in the kitchen area, and one in the toilet areas.
- An out of reach bin should be provided for the disposal of nappies.
- Food should be disposed of in a compost bin where possible.
- PPE should be disposed of in the black bin.
- All bins should be taken to the main wastage bins at the end of the day.
- Bins are considered a 'high touch surface' so all bins will be cleaned with antibacterial spray or wipes as part of the end of day cleaning process.

General equipment

- Staff should check areas that need cleaning daily, especially for things like bird faeces.
- Forest school equipment is cleaned on a rotational basis. Areas that should be paid attention to include:
 - Mud kitchen resources
 - Surfaces throughout forest school e.g. climbing frame/equipment, tops of cable drums
- Soft forest school resources should be washed on a termly basis, or more if required. These include:
 - High vis jackets
 - Sleeping bags
 - Hammocks
 - Soft toys and teddies
 - Baby dolls and puppets
 - Fabric/materials e.g. den making

Using personal protective equipment (PPE)

- PPE in the form of aprons and disposable gloves is provided for the use of administering first aid, nappy changing and toileting
- PPE should be disposed of in the black waste bag

Use and storage of hygiene/cleaning equipment

- Spray cleaners and all cleaning equipment will be kept in a locked shed/locked box or out of reach of the children at all times within The Little Firefly. Children do not have access to the shed without an adult.
- Cleaning equipment will be stored immediately after use. Any safety settings to be used e.g. spray cleaners turned to 'off' switch.
- Clean disposable blue roll, washable cloths and antibacterial spray and/or wipes are to be used for all cleaning in the forest school.

Administering first aid

- Hand hygiene: Always wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after providing care. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser, these are provided in first aid bags.

- Equipment sterilisation: Ensure all equipment used, such as tweezers, scissors, and bandages, is sterile to prevent the introduction of harmful microorganisms into the wound. First aid bags should be checked monthly to ensure equipment is in-date and intact.
- PPE: Use gloves, masks, aprons, and face shields to protect both the first aider and the patient from potential infections.
- Surface cleaning: Clean and disinfect surfaces in the area where first aid will be administered. Use disposable paper towels for this.
- Wound care: Use clean water or saline solution to flush out debris from a wound. Avoid using cotton wool or anything that might leave fibres in the wound. All staff and children with minor cuts, open or weeping skin lesions and abrasions keep them covered with waterproof dressings. If staff have cuts or abrasions themselves, they should not administer first aid if another member of staff can provide it.

By adhering to these hygiene practices, first aid providers can create a safe environment for the injured person and promote their recovery.

Infection control

- Tissues will be provided and are accessible to children throughout the day
- Children are encouraged to blow their nose and dispose in a bin
- When notified of a contagious illness, disease or infection by a child who has attended forest school, extra steps will be taken to:
 - Increase the frequency of hand washing and ensure this is closely monitored
 - Make the use of PPE mandatory
 - Increase the frequency of cleaning frequently touched surfaces and resources with antibacterial spray
 - Wash soft resources
 - Improve ventilation in indoor areas e.g. open the window/door in the log cabin
 - Remind children and adults to cough/sneeze into their elbow, away from other people

Policies, procedures and risk assessments referred to in this document:

- Toileting and nappy changing policy
- Health and safety (inc COSHH) policy
- Food and drink policy

External references:

- [Preventing and controlling infections - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/preventing-and-controlling-infections)