

# HYGIENE POLICY

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## Best Practice – Quality Area 2

### PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines for procedures to be implemented at Gray Court Preschool to ensure:

- effective and up-to-date control of the spread of infection
- the provision of an environment that is safe, clean and hygienic.

### POLICY STATEMENT

#### 1. VALUES

Gray Court Preschool is committed to protecting all persons from disease and illness by minimising the potential for infection through:

- implementing and following effective hygiene practices
- implementing infection control procedures to minimise the likelihood of cross-infection and the spread of infectious diseases and illnesses to children, staff and any other persons in attendance at the service
- fulfilling the service's duty of care requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* to ensure that those involved with the service are protected from harm
- informing educators, staff, volunteers, children and families on the importance of adhering to the *Hygiene Policy* to maintain a safe environment for all users, and communicating the shared responsibility between all involved in the operation of the service.

#### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Gray Court Preschool, including during offsite excursions and activities.

#### 3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

##### Background

Infections are common in children and often lead to illness. A person with an infection may or may not show signs of illness and, in many instances, the infectious phase of the illness may be in the period before symptoms become apparent, or during the recovery phase. While it is not possible to prevent all infections in education and care environments, services can prevent or control the spread of many infectious diseases by adopting simple hygiene practices.

An infection can be spread when an infected person attends the service premises and contamination occurs. A service can contribute to the spread of an infection through poor hygiene practices that allow infectious organisms to survive or thrive in the service environment.

The implementation of appropriate hygiene and infection control procedures aims to break the cycle and prevent the spread of infections at every stage. The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) suggest that to reduce illness in education and care services, the three most effective methods of infection control are:

- effective hand washing
- exclusion of sick children, staff and visitors
- immunisation.

Other strategies to prevent infection include:

- cough etiquette
- appropriate use of gloves
- effective cleaning of the service environment.

The NHMRC suggests that if these strategies are not implemented, all other procedures described in the service's *Hygiene Policy* will have reduced effectiveness in preventing the spread of infection and illness.

### Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 77, 106, 109, 112, 168
- *Food Act 1990*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety*
  - Standard 2.1: Each child's health is promoted
    - Element 2.1.3: Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
    - Element 2.1.4: Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*

## 4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**Cleaning:** A process that removes visible contamination such as food waste, dirt and grease from a surface. This process is usually achieved by the use of water and detergent. During this process, micro-organisms will be removed but not destroyed.

**Communicable disease:** A disease capable of being transmitted from an infected person or species to a susceptible host, either directly or indirectly.

**Cough etiquette:** The correct way to prevent the spread of infectious organisms that are carried in droplets of saliva is to cough or sneeze into the inner elbow or to use a tissue to cover the mouth and nose. Place all tissues in the rubbish bin immediately and clean hands with either soap and water or a disinfectant hand rub.

**Hygiene:** The principle of maintaining health and the practices put in place to achieve this.

**Infectious disease:** A disease that can be spread, for example, by air, water or interpersonal contact. An infectious disease is designated under Victorian Law or by a health authority (however described) as a disease that would require the infected person to be excluded from an education and care service.

**Neutral detergent:** A cleaning agent available commercially and labelled as 'neutral' or 'neutral pH'.

**Sanitising:** A process that destroys micro-organisms. Sanitising a surface can reduce the number of micro-organisms present. The process of sanitisation usually involves ensuring a surface is thoroughly cleaned with both heat and water, followed by the use of chemicals.

## 5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### Sources

- Department of Human Services, Victoria, Food Safety Unit
- Department of Human Services, Victoria (June 2000), *Sure protection against infection*

- National Health and Medical Research Council (2013), *Staying Healthy in Child Care: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5<sup>th</sup> Edition)*, [www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines).

### **Service policies**

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

## **PROCEDURES**

### **The Approved Provider is responsible for:**

- ensuring that all staff and volunteers are provided with a copy of this policy and have a clear understanding of the procedures and practices outlined within
- ensuring the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff and volunteers at the service implement adequate health and hygiene practices, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food (Regulation 77(1))
- establishing robust induction procedures that include the provision of information regarding the implementation of the practices outlined in this policy
- developing an appropriate cleaning and sanitising schedule that outlines daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual cleaning and sanitising requirements and responsibilities
- arranging for the service to be cleaned and sanitised regularly, including floors and other surfaces, as per the cleaning contract and schedule
- reviewing the cleaner's contract and schedule on an annual basis
- contacting the local council's Environmental Health Officer for information about obtaining a needle/syringe/sharps disposal unit and instructions for its use
- ensuring the service has laundry facilities or access to laundry facilities, or other arrangements for dealing with soiled clothing, nappies and linen, including hygienic facilities for storage prior to their disposal or laundering (Regulation 106(1))
- ensuring that the laundry and hygiene facilities are located and maintained in a way that does not pose a risk to children (Regulation 106(2))
- ensuring that there are adequate and appropriate hygiene facilities provided for nappy changing which are designed, located and maintained in such a way that prevents unsupervised access by children (Regulations 112(2)&(4))
- ensuring that adequate, developmental and age-appropriate toilet, washing and drying facilities are provided for use by children, and that these are safe and accessible (Regulation 109)
- reviewing staff training needs in relation to understanding and implementing effective hygiene practices in early childhood settings
- providing a copy of the NHMRC guidelines for the prevention of infectious diseases in child care for the service
- ensuring there is an adequate supply of non-toxic cleaning and hygiene products, including gloves, at all times.

### **The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:**

- implementing and ensuring that all staff members and volunteers at the service follow adequate health and hygiene practices, and safe practices for preparing, handling and storing food to minimise risks to children (Regulation 77(2))

- developing effective hygienic systems for cleaning, such as using colour-coded sponges/cloths in each area
- ensuring sponges are cleaned, rinsed and stored separately, and replaced regularly
- ensuring that an inspection of the outdoor areas, in particular the sand and soft-fall areas, are conducted daily to ensure they are maintained in a safe and hygienic manner
- informing the Approved Provider of any issues that impact on the implementation of this policy
- actively encouraging parents/guardians to keep children who are unwell at home to prevent the spread of infection to other children and educators
- storing or presenting items, such as beds, bedding and sunhats, in such a way as to prevent cross-contamination
- ensuring that there is a regular and thorough cleaning and disinfecting schedule for all equipment and toys
- ensuring any chemicals and cleaning agents are non-toxic and stored out of reach of children
- ensuring that all educators/staff wear disposable gloves when changing nappies or dealing with open wounds or other body fluids, and dispose of those gloves and soiled materials in a sealed container or plastic bag
- maintaining the service in a clean and hygienic manner throughout the day, such as wiping benches and tables before and after eating, and cleaning up spills
- actively encouraging educators and staff who have, or are suspected of having an infectious disease to not attend the service in order to prevent the spread of infection to others attending the service.

**Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:**

- implementing and promoting correct hand washing and hygiene practices, as outlined in this policy
- maintaining the service in a clean and hygienic manner throughout the day, such as wiping benches and tables before and after eating, and cleaning up spills
- conducting a daily inspection of the outdoor areas, in particular the sand and soft-fall areas, to ensure they are maintained in a safe and hygienic manner
- informing the Approved Provider of any issues that impact on the implementation of this policy
- actively encouraging parents/guardians to keep children who are unwell at home to prevent the spread of infection to other children and educators
- being conscious of their responsibility to not attend the service when they have or suspect they have an infectious disease.

*In terms of changing nappies for children, Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:*

- attending to the individual personal hygiene needs of each child as soon as is practicable
- changing nappies and attending to individual personal hygiene and toileting needs of each child according to recommended procedures (refer to Attachment 1 – Hygienic Nappy changing and toileting)
- disposing of soiled nappies in a safe and hygienic manner in line with this policy.

*In terms of the toileting of children, Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:*

- ensuring soap and drying facilities are available at all times when children are in attendance at the service, including ensuring paper towels are available if hand-dryers are not working
- ensuring children do not share the use of items related to personal care, such as hand towels for drying hands, toothbrushes and hairbrushes
- encouraging children to flush the toilet after use
- encouraging and assisting (where required) children to wash their hands according to hand washing guidelines (refer to Attachment 2) after toileting
- encouraging children to tell a staff member if they have had a toileting accident

- monitoring and maintaining toileting facilities in a safe, clean and hygienic manner while children are in attendance; this requires periodic checking of the bathroom area
- respecting diverse styles of toileting children due to cultural or religious practices
- respecting the possible need to maintain privacy of toileting and dressing.

*For cleaning toys, clothing and the service in general, Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:*

- removing toys that a child has sneezed or coughed on (place in a 'toys-to-be-cleaned' box)
- wearing gloves when cleaning (general purpose gloves are sufficient; wash and hang outside to dry when finished)
- washing mouthed toys daily using warm water and detergent and, if possible, drying in the sun
- wiping over books with a moist cloth treated with detergent
- ensuring washable toys and equipment are cleaned term by term or annually, as required
- where applicable, washing and disinfecting mattress covers and linen.

*In regard to children's contact with one another, Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:*

- educating and encouraging children in good personal hygiene practices, such as:
  - washing their hands after blowing and wiping their nose
  - not touching one another when they are cut or bleeding
  - disposing of used tissues promptly and appropriately, and not lending them to other children
  - using their own equipment for personal care, such as toothbrushes, hats, brushes and combs
  - only touching the food they are going to eat
  - using their own drink bottles or cups.

*For the indoor and outdoor environments, Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:*

- keeping the indoor and outdoor environments as clean and hygienic as possible at all times, including the safe disposal of discarded needles/syringes/sharps
- promptly removing blood, urine and faeces (including animal) either indoors or outdoors, using the appropriate cleaning procedures
- covering the sandpit when not in use to prevent contamination
- emptying water containers, such as water trays, each day (refer to *Water Safety Policy*)
- disposing of any dead animals/insects found on the premises in an appropriate manner.

*Safe handling of body fluids or materials in contact with body fluids:*

Accidental spills and secretions of body fluid are a fact of life in a child care setting. In managing these spills, Certified Supervisors and other staff/educators must ensure that they:

- avoid direct contact with blood or other fluids
- are not at eye level when cleaning/treating a child's face that has blood on it, as a child's blood can enter the mouth/nose of a staff member when a child cries or coughs
- wear gloves wherever possible
- cover any cuts/abrasions on their own hands with a waterproof dressing.

*Effective environmental cleaning:*

Cleaning is an important part of infection control as germs are unable to multiply on clean, dry surfaces. Effective cleaning with detergent and warm water followed by rinsing and drying removes the bulk of infectious organisms from a surface. Particular attention should be paid to the following:

- toilets/sinks must be cleaned daily and separate cleaning cloths/sponges must be used for each task

- mouthed toys must be washed immediately or placed in a separate container for washing at a later time
- all bench tops and floors must be washed regularly
- children's cups/drink bottles used for water must be washed daily
- when washing at the child care premises, staff are to consider washing items separately to minimise cross-contamination, for example, tea towels washed separately from sheets, face washers washed separately to play mats/rugs
- nappy change areas/mats must be washed with detergent and warm water after each use.

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- keeping their child/ren home if they are unwell or have an infectious disease that requires their exclusion from the education and care service
- informing the service if their child has an infectious disease
- supporting this policy by complying with the hygiene practices when attending the service or when assisting with a service program or activity
- encouraging their child/ren to develop and follow effective hygiene practices at all times, including handwashing on arrival at the service.

**Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

## **EVALUATION**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy and ensure satisfactory resolutions have been achieved
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1: Hygienic Nappy changing and toileting
- Attachment 2: Handwashing guidelines

## **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Committee of Management of Gray Court Preschool on 18/07/2017.

**REVIEW DATE: 18/07/2019**

## ATTACHMENT 1

### Hygienic nappy changing and toileting

Faeces (and sometimes urine) contain billions of germs. Hygienic nappy changing and toileting is important to prevent these germs from spreading disease.

#### Nappy changing

Parents and education and care services may have different preferences for nappies: some may choose to use cloth nappies, and some may choose disposable nappies. However, the use of disposable nappies is strongly encouraged in education and care services. This is because disposable nappies are less likely to spread germs into the environment<sup>15</sup> because they are less prone to 'leaking' than cloth nappies and can be disposed of immediately.

Whether you choose cloth nappies or disposable nappies, it is important to minimise the risk of contact with urine and faeces when dealing with soiled nappies. This includes keeping soiled nappies in a contained space, and having a separate, dedicated nappy change area.

An area should be specifically set aside for changing nappies. Ensure that the nappy change mat or surface is not torn and can be easily cleaned. Do not share the same nappy change mat with children from another room, if possible. Having separate change mats for each room can help limit the spread of an infection and contain it to a single room. If this is not possible, take extra care to ensure that the change mat is thoroughly cleaned after each nappy change, especially if a child is known to have an infection.

Check that all the supplies you need are ready. If the child can walk, walk with them to the changing area. If the child cannot walk, pick them up and carry them to the changing area. If there are faeces on the child's body or clothes, hold the child away from your body if you need to carry them.

#### Nappy changing procedure

##### PREPARATION CHANGING CLEANING

PREPARATION	CHANGING	CLEANING
1. Wash your hands	4. Remove the child's nappy and put any disposable nappy in a hands-free lidded bin. Place any soiled clothes (including any cloth nappy) in a plastic bag	12. After each nappy change, clean the change table with detergent and warm water, then rinse and dry
2. Place paper on the change table	5. Clean the child's bottom	13. Wash your hands
3. Put disposable gloves on both hands	6. Remove the paper and put it in a hands-free lidded bin	
	7. Remove your gloves and put them in the bin	
	8. Place a clean nappy on the child	
	9. Dress the child	
	10. Take the child away from the change table	
	11. Wash your hands and the child's hands	

The above table shows three stages in the nappy changing procedure: preparation, changing and cleaning. You are most likely to come in contact with germs during the changing stage, shown in orange. It is also important to note that the person changing the nappy should wash their hands three times during the entire procedure: before they start, after changing the nappy and after cleaning the change table.

#### Placing paper on the change table

Every time a child has their nappy changed, germs are put on the change table. Placing a piece of paper on the change table catches many of these germs so they do not reach the change table itself. Any paper can be used for this, including paper towel (but this can be expensive), greaseproof paper or large sheets of butcher's paper or recycled paper. The paper is removed in the middle of the nappy change, before the child's clean clothes are put on, and the paper and the germs are put in the bin. If an education and care service does not wish to use paper on the change table, extra care must be taken in cleaning the change mat between nappy changes.

#### Wearing disposable gloves

Disposable gloves should always be worn on both hands when changing nappies, to prevent the spread of germs in faeces and urine. Wear gloves only during the part of the nappy changing process when you may come in contact with faeces or urine. Once the child is clean and the paper has been removed from the change table, remove your gloves so you will not touch the clean child with dirty gloves.

#### This is the best method to keep the nappy change table clean:

- After each nappy change and at the end of each day, wash the surface well with detergent and warm water, rubbing with paper towel or a cloth as you wash. Put the paper towel in the bin, or put the cloth aside for washing after each nappy change— there will be many germs on this cloth, and it cannot be used again until it has been washed. Leave the change surface to dry.
- If faeces or urine spill onto the change surface, clean the surface with detergent and warm water and leave it to dry.
- Halfway through the day, remove the morning change mat or waterproof sheet, clean it with detergent and water and leave it to dry, preferably outside in the sun. Use the fresh mat for the afternoon.
- Always wash your hands after cleaning the nappy change area.

### **Toilet training**

Ask parents to supply a clean change of clothing for children who are toilet training. Place soiled clothes in a plastic bag or alternative, and keep these bags in a designated place until parents can take them home.

Help the child use the toilet. It is better for the child to use the toilet rather than a potty chair, which increases the risk of spreading disease. If the child must use a potty, empty the contents into the toilet and wash the chair with detergent and warm water. Do not wash the potty in a sink used for washing hands.

Children, especially girls, should be encouraged to wipe front to back, to reduce the chance of introducing bowel bacteria to the urinary tract.

After toileting, help the child wash their hands. Ask older children if they washed their hands. Explain to the child that washing their hands and drying them properly will stop germs that might make them ill. Always wash your own hands after helping children use the toilet.

## **ATTACHMENT 2**

### **Handwashing guidelines**

These guidelines are based on information provided in *How to wash hands* from the website of the National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5<sup>th</sup> edition):

#### **When to perform hand hygiene**

Before After Educators and other staff Starting work, so germs are not introduced into the service  
Eating or handling food Giving medication Putting on gloves Applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children  
Going home, so germs are not taken home with you Taking off gloves Changing a nappy  
Cleaning the nappy change area Using the toilet Helping children use the toilet Coming in from outside play  
Wiping a child's nose or your own nose Eating or handling food Handling garbage  
Cleaning up faeces, vomit or blood Applying sunscreen or other lotions to one or more children  
Touching animals Children Starting the day at the service; parents can help with this Eating or handling food  
Going home, so germs are not taken home with them Eating or handling food Touching nose secretions  
Using the toilet Having their nappy changed—their hands will become contaminated while they are on the change mat  
Coming in from outside play Touching animals

#### **How to wash hands with soap and water**

The process of thoroughly washing, rinsing and drying your hands or a child's hands should take around 30 seconds.

There are five steps to washing hands:

1. Wet hands with running water (preferably warm water, for comfort).
2. Apply soap to hands.
3. Lather soap and rub hands thoroughly, including the wrists, the palms, between the fingers, around the thumbs and under the nails. Rub hands together for at least 15 seconds (for about as long as it takes to sing 'Happy birthday' once).
4. Rinse thoroughly under running water.
5. Dry thoroughly.

Hands can be dried with paper towel or cloth towels. Cloth towels, if used, should be used by one person (i.e. not shared) and hung up to dry between uses. Cloth towels should be laundered regularly to reduce the risk of re-contaminating or cross-contaminating hands. Supervise children when washing their hands, and help them get into the habit of hand hygiene.

If you wear rings or other jewellery on your hands, move the jewellery around your finger while you lather the soap to ensure that the area underneath the jewellery is clean.

Always wet hands first before applying soap. This helps the soap to lather more and prevents the skin from drying.

#### ***Part 3 Procedures 3.1 PERSONAL HYGIENE Staying Healthy 5th Edition***

#### **How to clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub**

Only use an alcohol-based hand rub if your hands are not visibly dirty. The hand rub should contain 60–80% alcohol.

There are three steps to using alcohol-based hand rub:

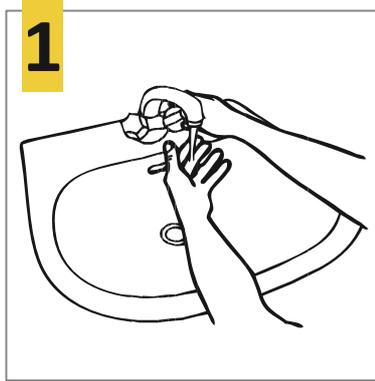
1. Apply the amount of hand rub recommended by the manufacturer to palms of dry hands.
2. Rub hands together, making sure you cover in between fingers, around thumbs and under nails.
3. Rub until hands are dry.

# How to wash hands

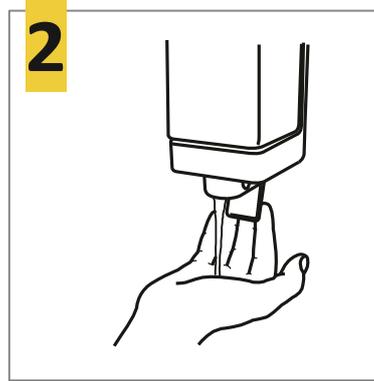
STAYING HEALTHY | 5<sup>TH</sup> EDITION | 20



A hand wash should take around 30 seconds.



**1** Wet hands with running water (preferably warm, for comfort).



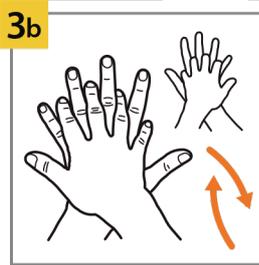
**2** Apply soap to hands.



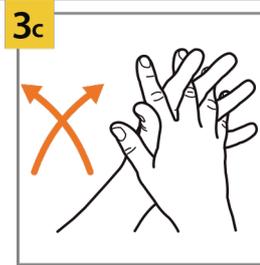
**3** Lather soap and rub hands for at least 15 seconds, including:



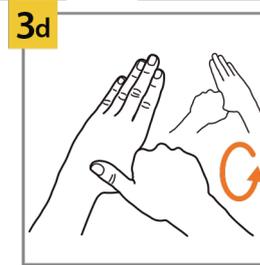
**3a** palm to palm,



**3b** back of hands,



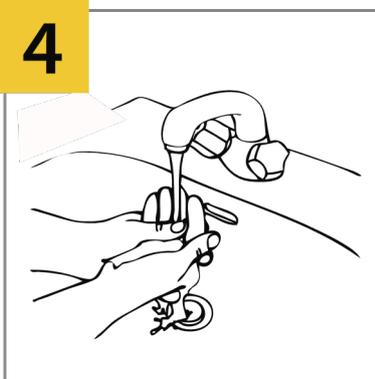
**3c** in between fingers and back of fingers,



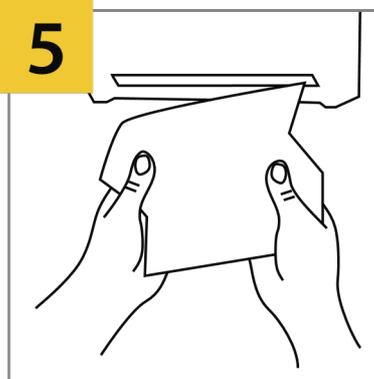
**3d** around thumbs and



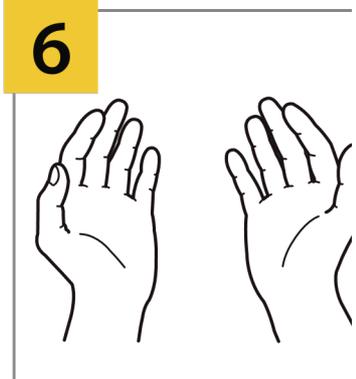
**3e** tips of fingers.



**4** Rinse hands with water.



**5** Dry hands thoroughly.



**6** Your hands are clean.

THIS POSTER REFERENCES THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION'S 'HOW TO HANDWASH' POSTER NHMRC Ref. CH55g Printed June 2013