

# Wash down guidelines

## Advice on wash down facilities and procedures for sick or soiled children

All centres are required to have a written policy for washing of sick and soiled children. There are all sorts of reasons why a child may need to have all or part of their body washed, for example:

- At Nappy change time – if wipes are not enough to make sure the soiled child is cleaned up.
- A child has vomited over themselves
- A child has had a toileting/ diarrhoea accident
- A child has become very dirty during play

### Wash down procedure

The procedure must be specific to:

- The centre's wash down facilities.
- The number and age range of the children.
- The number of staff and helpers.

These situations can be emotionally traumatic for a child, so it is important that staff and helpers should always be familiar with the centre's wash down procedure.

The procedure should cover:

- **The child** - A focus on the privacy and personal dignity of the child, and making the child comfortable. It is recommended that the child is cared for by a staff member they have a connection with.
- **Supervision** – Supervision plan.  
*Include:* the role teachers and support staff will have when a sick and soiled child is being wash down that comforts and protects the child and staff.
- **Wash down facility** – Instructions on how to use the plumbed in shower or shub to prevent the spread of illness.
- **Clean up of wash down area** – How to effectively clean up the wash down area.  
*Include:* Wash the area and equipment with hot soapy water, then spray down with bleach solution and left to dry in the air.
- **Soiled clothing** – Instructions on cleaning and storing.  
*Include:* Do not rinse. Remove any solid poos/vomit then double bag and stored in an area (laundry) that is not accessible to children until collected by parents.
- **Staff health and safety** – It is important that staff involved in washing the children wear personal protective equipment or PPE; gloves, masks and disposable apron and are aware of the correct way to put on and remove the protective equipment. Once the child is washed down wipes, washcloths, protective clothing and equipment must be disposed of carefully. All soiled or contaminated clothing or disposable equipment should be double bagged. Care should be taken when opening the bag not to breathe in viral particles released from the bag.
- **Record keeping** – Record the event in your incident register and in the child's personal file.

- **Spill Kit contents** – items required for washing the child and cleaning up an area contaminated by vomit or diarrhoea.

*Include* - A list of the spill kit contents, and regular checks to make sure it is fully stocked. Below we outline the required items.

Attach the procedure to a wall in a visible location by the wash down area. We recommend that a spill kit be placed in an accessible location.

When cleaning up the vomit or diarrhoea off the floor, grab your spill kit, which has everything needed to safely clean the area, cloths, rubbish bags, and most importantly the personal protective equipment or PPE which is the gloves, masks and plastic aprons. These are worn to protect the staff member from contact with the bugs, reducing the risk that they will get sick.

Putting on and removing the protective gear properly is really important:

## Spill kit contents

### ■ 20 litre bucket

A 20 litre bucket is a good place to store all your 'spill kit' contents.

- Use your bucket for the hot soapy water used to clean the area that has had vomit or poos on it.
- Discard the water used for cleaning down the toilet.
- Clean the bucket before putting the 'spill kit' contents back in.



### ■ Bleach 1 litre

After the area has been cleaned with hot soapy water and wipe down with a bleach solution. Make a new bleach solution daily using either of the following formulas:



### ■ Personal Protective Equipment (sometimes known as PPE, e.g. disposable aprons, masks, gloves)

All staff involved with the clean-up of vomit or poos and/or washing down the sick child, need to wear a disposable apron, a mask and gloves (personal protective gear).

After the area has been cleaned, and the sick child changed and cared for, the protective clothing and cleaning items need to be placed inside a plastic rubbish bag, tied up then placed inside another bag and disposed of immediately.

Your 'spill kit' includes the following:

- **Plastic aprons x 4.** Wear the apron to protect your clothing when you are cleaning the area or the child that has been sick.
- **Masks x 4.** Wear the masks so you don't breathe in the germs (viruses) that cause the illness. During a confirmed gastro outbreak we recommend staff use a N95 face mask. Some gastro bugs can be inhaled but the N95 mask will provide more protection than a standard face mask. You can buy N95 masks from hardware and safety stores.
- **Gloves x 2 pairs.** Wear gloves when cleaning the area or the child that has been sick. Wearing gloves does not replace the need to wash your hands and you should make sure you wash and dry your hands thoroughly before and after using gloves.



N95 Mask



## ■ Towel

- Use the towel to dry the sick child, wash separately in hot water.



## ■ Polar fleece blanket

- The blanket is to keep the child warm after they have been put in clean clothing and while waiting for their parent or guardian to pick them up.
- Wash separately in hot water.



## ■ Plastic rubbish bags x5

- Clothing with vomit or poo needs to be placed inside a plastic rubbish bag, tied up then placed inside another rubbish bag. Store the bag in an area that is not accessible to children until collected by parents.



## ■ Microshield hand sanitiser x1

- Soap and water is the best option when your hands are visibly dirty. After washing your hands use the hand sanitiser, follow the instructions on the bottle.

