**Infection Control Procedures**

**1: Hand Hygiene for Staff and Children**

The hands of children and staff are the main pathways of germ transmission. Hands can pick up dirt, viruses and bacteria from surfaces, equipment and infected persons. These contaminated hands can then spread infection when they come into contact with other staff, children or equipment.

Fortunately, proper hand hygiene routines can reduce the risk posed by dirty hands. Both staff and children should routinely wash their hands. Children need to wash their hands before meals, after using the toilet, and after dealing with bodily fluids — for example, after blowing their nose, sneezing or coughing. Staff should routinely encourage and remind children to wash their hands, and remember to wash their own hands.

## 2: Clean and Disinfect Surfaces

Surfaces and equipment can become breeding grounds for bacteria if not kept clean. With children, staff and visitors coming and going while touching various surfaces and sharing equipment, germs can easily be spread around the physical environment.

To ensure that facilities are a safe environment for children and staff, all surfaces and equipment should be routinely cleaned and disinfected per infection control guidelines. All surfaces should be cleaned frequently, at least once a day, while visibly soiled surfaces need immediate attention.

## 3: Staff Should Take Contact Precautions

Even with thorough hand hygiene procedures in place, there’s still the risk of infections spreading through contact. Staff should take contact precautions to protect themselves from germs and prevent the accidental spread of infection to others.

Gloves and aprons should be worn when there’s a risk of contamination through bodily substances. Personal protective gear should be disposed of after coming into contact with any infected persons.

## 4: Investigate All Outbreaks

Infection outbreaks, no matter how minor, should be taken seriously. To ensure infections don’t spread further, and to prevent future outbreaks from occurring, investigate all incidents.

The infection must be diagnosed and its cause identified. To reduce the risk of further contagion, control measures need to be enforced and continually evaluated to ensure the setting has responded effectively.

## 5: Protect against Airborne Infections

Some bugs and infections are transmitted through the air, and children or staff may inhale airborne pathogenic organisms. Types of airborne diseases include the common cold, as well as more serious illnesses such as measles, whooping cough, tuberculosis and influenza.

These infections can be hard to control, but the spread of infection is preventable with precautions such as avoiding close contact with infectious persons. Staff and children should cover their mouths and noses after coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose.

Children or staff with severe airborne infections should stay at home and notify the setting.