

Toys, Games and Equipment Cleaning Policy - 2022



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Person responsible for implementation: Esme Olyn Principal

This policy forms part of ABC Kidz Educare’s Health and Safety Policy and is aligned with our Infection Control Policy and COVID-19 Policy.

Aims and Intent

1. To provide guidance to establish safe and effective procedures to minimise the risks of transmission of micro-organisms when using toys and therapeutic play equipment as part of ABC Kidz Educare’s quality ECD service.
2. To ensure all toys, games and play equipment for use at this centre are clean, fit for use and stored safely when not in use.
3. To ensure toys/games/play equipment are checked regularly for signs of damage and wear and tear.

Key Facts

1. This document applies to all staff employed by or working on behalf of ABC Kidz Educare who use toys and play equipment with the children as part of their role and job description.
2. This includes all toys in all rooms at the centre.
3. The sharing of toys between children can be a potential source of infection as they can become contaminated by dirty hands, dust or bodily fluids and toys have been implicated in outbreaks of infection.

Definitions

1. **Cleaning** – The process that physically removes contamination but does not necessarily destroy microorganisms.
2. **Disinfection** - The process used to reduce the number of micro-organisms but may not destroy bacteria spores or some viruses but is considered to reduce the number to a level that is safe.
3. **Toys and Games** - Refers to all toys, games, equipment and other used for recreational, therapeutic, or educational purposes by children and staff.

4. **Wear and Tear** - Damage that naturally and inevitably occurs as a result of normal wear or aging.

Source of Toys

1. Purchased:

- a. The toys, games and play equipment at ABC Kidz Educare are age appropriate.
- b. Before purchasing toys, careful consideration is given to how toys will be kept clean.
- c. Wherever possible toys/games will be chosen with hard non-porous surfaces (which can be thoroughly cleaned).
- d. Toys/games with fabric parts must be able to be laundered in the washing machine.

2. Donated:

- a. Toys etc. which are donated by the public/parents will be checked to ensure:
 - i. They are undamaged (if damaged they will be discarded).
 - ii. They are suitable for age cohorts within the facility.
 - iii. If the toys are soft, they must be able to withstand a hot wash in a washing machine.
- b. Safety equipment will not to be accepted second hand – i.e. car seats.

3. Children's Own Toys:

- a. Children may not bring their own toys to the centre except on Fridays for "Show and Tell"
- b. Parents are requested to help enforce this rule. The reasons are:
 - i. It causes fights.
 - ii. The toys will have to be disinfected before they can be used in our environment.
- c. If toys does make it onto our premises, it will be confiscated and the child will be reassured that the toy will be returned to his/her parents when he/she is collected at the end of the day. This can cause unhappiness and we encourage all parents to help us avoid it.

Storage of Toys and Games

1. Toys/games are stored in dedicated boxes/cupboards/containers in the classrooms, storerooms and play areas.
2. Only clean toys/games may be stored in the boxes/cupboards.
3. **"Used Toy" Crate:**
 - a. Toys and apparatus are used once and then cleaned and sanitised.
 - b. Toys that must go for cleaning and disinfecting are placed in the box/crate marked "Used Toys".
 - c. The box/crate has a lid and can be closed.
 - d. It is kept out of reach of children.
4. The storage boxes/cupboards/containers and emptied, cleaned, and repacked neatly every week.

Cleaning of Toys

1. All toys/equipment will be cleaned after each use with a disinfectant wipe or placed in the "Used Toy" crate for washing.
2. After the toys have been cleaned and dried, they are returned to their correct storage container in the classrooms or storeroom.
3. The number of toys that are taken out each must be sufficient to support the curriculum; however, they must be kept to a manageable amount so that appropriate cleaning can be undertaken. Please refer to the paragraph "Usage of Toys" for further details.
4. Staff will examine each toy/game to check that it is clean and unbroken.
 - a. If it is soiled it is immediately placed in the "Used Toy" box to await cleaning that day.
 - b. If it is broken it is handed in at the office immediately and the Practitioner updates the Classroom Inventory List by hand. **NB: Broken toys pose a danger to children!**
5. Evidence, by way of a Condition Check and Cleaning Record for Toys, Games and Play Equipment, is kept in each classroom/playroom. This register must be completed each time the toys are checked or cleaned.

6. The completed forms are handed in to the office at the end of every week and are retained for a period of 12 months.
7. The play equipment and storage containers used at ABC Kidz Educare are made of materials that can easily be cleaned using general purpose detergent and water or a disposable detergent wipe.
8. Storage boxes must be used whenever practicable, these should have lids and be and washable.
9. Toys, games, and equipment will be cleaned using detergent and warm water or a detergent wipe.
10. Certain toys are wiped down with a wipe after each use, e.g., puzzles, whilst others are washed in the laundry and then returned to the classroom.

Usage of Toys

The children are each given their own set of toys for the day; the process is as follows:

1. Each child has an individual 'toy tray' or 'toy basket'.
2. The trays are baskets as sensibly prepared:
 - a. Depending on the activity a tray or basket will be chosen, e.g. puzzle pieces on a tray and plastic animals in a basket.
 - b. The trays/baskets are not too heavy as the child may drop it.
 - c. The trays/baskets are not too large to enable the child to handle it well.
 - d. The trays are organised and the toys are not placed haphazardly as this will not attract a child.
 - e. The toys in the trays/baskets are deconstructed so that the child can do his/her "own work".
3. Familiar and unknown toys will be placed on the trays or in the baskets and the child will be guided and encouraged to use them all.
4. At the end of the activities the toys and trays will be wiped, sanitised, air dried and put away or they will be placed in the 'used toy' crate for washing (as per the toy cleaning procedure in this policy).

Cleaning Procedure for Toys, Games and Play Equipment

The children's hands are washed and dried/sanitized before and after they play with the toys or use the apparatus.

All toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a week, on a designated day, all toys are removed from their storage container and washed in water and detergent. • Toys must be thoroughly dried before being put away.
Balls and ball pools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be inspected daily for cleanliness. Debris and items that don't belong there • Balls must be cleaned daily with warm water and detergent. • The surface of ball ponds walls and floor must be wiped down daily with disinfectant wipes.
Books and posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be examined before each use for visible wear and tear • When the edges of a poster are visibly frayed with ingrained dust, dispose of it. • Between each use wipe book covers with a detergent wipe. • Sanitise the children's hands before they touch the books
Cars and dinosaurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All cars and dinosaurs must be placed in the Used Toy box for cleaning at the end of the day. • Pay attention to the crevices and moving parts to make sure they are thoroughly clean and dry.
Construction toys, blocks, Lego, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be put in the Used Toys container after each use. • Care must be taken to examine small parts and wash them thoroughly. • Warm water and detergent must be used and blocks can be soaked for a period of 5 minutes. • Alternatively, place in a 'net bag' and wash in the washing machine.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wooden blocks cannot be soaked and must be carefully wiped with disinfectant wipes.
Dolly's clothes and linen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All dolls clothes and linen must be machine washable. • It must be placed in the Used Toy container at the end of the day and washed at a minimum temperature of 60°C for 15 minutes.
Dress up clothes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be kept together on a rail or in a box. • All clothes must be laundered weekly. • If clothes are visibly soiled they must be removed immediately and laundered.
Hard-surface toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have a smooth, non-porous surface that is easy to clean. • Toys with moving parts or openings can harbour dirt and germs in the crevices and must be washed carefully with a soft brush. • After disinfecting wipes on toys after each use and allow to dry completely before storing them.
Hollow toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inside of hollow toys may support the growth of moulds as water can seep into them when they are washed. • Carefully examine the hollow toys, shake them and listen for the sound of liquid, to make sure that there is no water inside. • If there is water inside, hand the toy in at the office for disposal.
Outdoor Apparatus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outdoor apparatus will be wiped down with water and disinfectant twice a day every day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In the middle of the day when the children are indoors. ○ At the end of the day.
Playdough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playdough apparatus must be put in the Dirty Toy container after each use. • Home-made playdough does not contain preservatives and should be discarded after each use. • Shop-bought playdough should be checked that it contains preservatives and then use it according to the manufacturer's instructions.
Sandpits and sand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only silica (washed play sand) is used in the sandpits at ABC Kidz Educare. • Coarse salt is added to the sand every month. • Once per annum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The sandpit is emptied and the walls and floor are washed and disinfected. • It is filled up again with new sand.
Soft toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft toys are washed at the end of every day. • In order to achieve thermal disinfection and thorough drying, soft toys are washed in the washing machine at temperatures of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 71°C for 3 minutes, or ○ 65°C for 10 minutes to achieve thermal disinfection and thorough drying. • Repeated washing of soft toys can compromise the integrity of the fabric and loosen small parts such as eyes or noses and create a choking hazard. Therefore, soft toys must be thoroughly examined for hazards before each use.
Storage containers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be cleaned and disinfected weekly.
Wall-mounted and large toys/games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After each use, clean all surfaces using disinfecting wipes.
Water play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water must be discarded after each use. • The water trough must be wiped with a disinfecting wipe and dried.
Wooden toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wooden toys are porous and must be carefully examined to ensure that the surface coating is intact. • If not, hand it in at the office to be sent for repairs.

Training

Staff will receive training in recognised disinfecting procedures, where it is identified in their appraisal as part of the specific development needs for their role and responsibilities.

This policy was adopted on 19th of May 2020 At Braamfontein and is in full force and effect at ABC Kidz Educare. Where necessary all the parents have been informed of this policy. All our employees have a good understanding of the contents of this policy and if at any time any of the clauses in this policy are contravened, normal disciplinary sanctions, as per the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, will be taken.

Name and Signature 1:

Name and Signature 2:

Name and Signature 3: