

Procedure related to providing a child safe environment

Associated National Quality Standard	Education and Care Services National Law or Regulation	Associated Department policy, procedure or guideline
2.2	84	Child Protection Policy: Responding to and reporting students at risk of harm
3.1	103	
3.2	105	Working with Children Check policy
	109	Child Protection: Allegations against employees
	115	Work health and safety (WHS) policy
	S. 165	Student safety tools and procedures
	S. 166	
	S.167	

Punchbowl Public School Preschool will ensure the environment is safe, clean and well maintained at all times in order to provide a child safe environment. Our preschool operates between 9am and 3pm Monday to Friday as per the NSW Department of Education schools term dates.

Adequate supervision is maintained at all times of the day

Supervision in Punchbowl Public School Preschool is part of the whole school supervision plan, as described in the [Teachers Handbook](#). The National Law ([section 165](#)) states it is an offence to inadequately supervise children and that responsibility for ensuring the preschool children are adequately supervised at all times rests with the nominated supervisor (school principal). Our principal is aware of the preschool's supervision plans and monitors them to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children.

Casual, relieving and RFF staff are made aware of the requirement to adequately supervise preschool children and how this may differ from the expectation of doing a playground duty in the rest of the school. The supervision plan (see attached) for preschool aged children acknowledges that they need closer supervision than school-aged children, and that an active approach should be taken.

Ratios

Preschool adult to child ratios are strictly regulated. The regulations state that for children between three and six years of age, a ratio of one educator to ten children must always be maintained, regardless of the activity the children are engaged in or the time of day ([regulation 271](#)). In the situation of an additional, unenrolled child visiting the preschool (for orientation or a special activity) they must be in the care of their family and are not counted towards the total number of children in attendance. To be included in the ratio, a staff member must be qualified and be working directly with the children.

Regardless of how many children are in attendance, at least two staff members must be working directly with the children to ensure:

- adequate supervision at all times
- each child is protected at all times
- educators are arranged in ways that promote learning and development.

Always having at least two educators in the preschool will enable staff to deal with:

- emergencies
- a toileting accident
- a sick or injured child, or one requiring medication.

At Punchbowl Public School Preschool, the Principal and preschool supervisor ensures that a ratio of 1:10 is always maintained in the preschool, regardless of the activity the children are engaged in or the time of day.

Educators on duty provide an indoor and outdoor program with either the indoor or the outdoor area being accessed at the one time. This ensures that both the preschool teacher and SLSO are able to have maximum supervision opportunities.

Preschool teachers are entitled to the same number and duration of breaks as other teaching staff, as documented in the whole staff duty roster. Generally, preschool teacher/s are rostered to perform their allocated number of duties within the preschool. It is preferable to have an early childhood teacher relieve for preschool teachers when they have their breaks, however, a primary trained teacher can be used. This applies also to allocating a teacher to cover a preschool teacher's release from face to face teaching.

Preschool educators are able to take a short unplanned break, such as to use the bathroom, answer a phone call or retrieve a resource from a storeroom without being back-filled, however strong educator communication is required at these times to ensure adequate supervision is maintained.

Preschool SLSOs are entitled to a 10-minute paid break and a 30-minute unpaid lunch break each day. At these times, they must be backfilled by another staff member holding at a minimum, a Certificate III qualification. An untrained educator cannot cover breaks, as this breaches the law and regulations. If no other SLSO within the school holds a relevant Certificate III, it may be necessary for a teacher to relieve for an SLSO or AEO to maintain regulatory compliance in terms of qualifications. Information on the conditions of employment of the SLSO can be found in the [Non-Teaching Staff in Schools handbook](#).

Educators ensure the preschool's bathroom is adequately supervised by tracking children's entry and exit into the bathrooms. A viewing window is situated between the preschool room and bathroom to help maintain supervision whilst respecting the dignity and rights of the child.

Educators becoming aware of potential hazards in the preschool and minimising risks

The preschool teacher completes a daily checklist before 9am of the indoor and outdoor environment to ensure all urgent potential hazards are removed immediately, reported on the school's intranet system to the Principal/Nominated Supervisor and WHS officer. The Principal/Nominated Supervisor or WHS officer ensures these are addressed promptly by the General Assistant or external agencies. All non-urgent hazards or maintenance issues are reported on the school's intranet system (Sentral) to notify the Principal/Nominated Supervisor and WHS officer. The WHS officer ensures these hazards are resolved in a timely manner.

The preschool educators collaborate with the preschool supervisor to develop risk minimisation plans in accordance with information addressed in [the Guide to the National Quality Framework, the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations](#) and [kidSafe NSW Inc. requirements](#). The development of risk minimisation plans supports educators who have a duty in the preschool to ensure *every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury* (page 71)

Fencing which encloses the outdoor areas are maintained by the General Assistant. They are

checked daily by a preschool educator to ensure they are of a height and design that prevents children of preschool age from going through, over or under the structure.

Adequate space requirements are maintained by all educators in both the indoor and outdoor environments. Educators refer to regulation 107 and 108 and discusses the space requirements in these regulations with the preschool team when setting up the indoor and outdoor environment. This ensures that space requirements are always maintained.

Toilet, washing and drying facilities are developmentally and age appropriate and are located and designed in a way that support safe use and convenient access by children.

All educators monitor the preschool room and ensure it is well ventilated and has adequate natural light. Indoor temperatures are discussed and maintained at levels that support children's safety and wellbeing.

Reporting and maintenance of damaged or broken furniture, equipment or the building

A preschool educator completes a daily checklist before 9am of the indoor and outdoor environment to ensure all urgent potential hazards are removed immediately, reported on the school's intranet system to the Principal/Nominated Supervisor and WHS officer. The Principal/Nominated Supervisor or WHS officer ensures these are addressed promptly by the General Assistant or external agencies. All non-urgent hazards or maintenance issues are reported on the school's intranet system (Sentral Issue Tracking) to notify the Preschool General Assistant. The DP Instructional Leader ensures these hazards are resolved in a timely manner.

'What, how and when' is cleaning carried out

Professional cleaners are employed by the Principal/Nominated Supervisor to clean the indoor learning environment of the preschool by 8am each day or after 3:30pm. The cleaner is responsible for cleaning the adult and children's bathrooms, vacuuming, mopping, emptying the bins, wiping over surfaces including door handles, tables and benches.

In the school holidays the Principal/Nominated Supervisor ensures the professional cleaners extensively clean the windows, skirting boards, window sills and light brackets in addition to their general daily cleaning duties.

All preschool educators regularly check furniture and resources are kept in a safe, clean and hygienic condition. Educators regularly clean (when needed):

- Tables and chairs
- Indoor and outdoor equipment
- Indoor and outdoor resources

All children's play equipment is cleaned at point of need and a cleaning schedule is displayed in the laundry, kitchen and outdoors. Used resources are labelled with a used sticker to allow all educators to be aware of the need to clean them at the end of term.

Any mouthed resources are placed in a container near the sink in the room to be washed with warm water and detergent when appropriate.

The Principal/Nominated Supervisor delegates additional staff in the preschool on the last day of each term. This allows for educators to clean equipment, furniture, beds, resources and equipment ready for the new term.

In the event of a pandemic the Department of Education hires extra cleaning contractors to undergo a strict contact cleaning schedule ensuring all high traffic surfaces and areas are cleaned multiple times during the day. Educators also ensure there is extra cleaning of high use resources as per risk management plan.

Products and methods used for cleaning

Educators consider the type of products used for cleaning desks, toys and equipment in the preschool. Many chemical cleaning products (including disinfectants) may be a potential risk to health, possibly triggering conditions such as asthma, allergies and poisoning.

Detergent and water are suitable for all general environmental cleaning. The use of disinfectant is only necessary if a surface is contaminated with potentially infectious material. However, the surface needs to be cleaned with detergent and water before using disinfectant or bleach.

Educators use a cleaning chart as a point of reference to maintain a clean environment. Cloths are colour coded to reduce risk of cross contamination when cleaning the preschool (see attached).

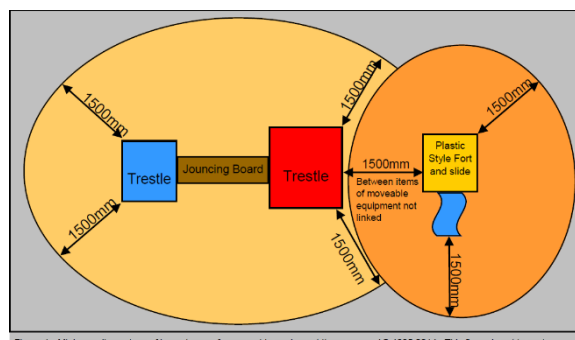
Potentially hazardous products are stored securely

Preschool educators are responsible for ensuring the following items are kept in secured storage:

- All cleaning products are safely stored away in locked cupboards or storerooms and the cupboard/storeroom is clearly labelled with a poison sign with the Poisons Information phone number on it.
- Dangerous tools, equipment and gardening materials are kept in the General Assistants outdoor locked shed
- Medications are kept in the kitchen in a locked container, kitchen door is also locked
- First aid equipment is kept in the first aid cupboard in the locked kitchen and the outdoor first aid kit is on a high shelf out of the reach of children
- All potentially hazardous products have printed Material Safety Data Sheet accessible where they are stored. A master copy is kept in the preschool office.

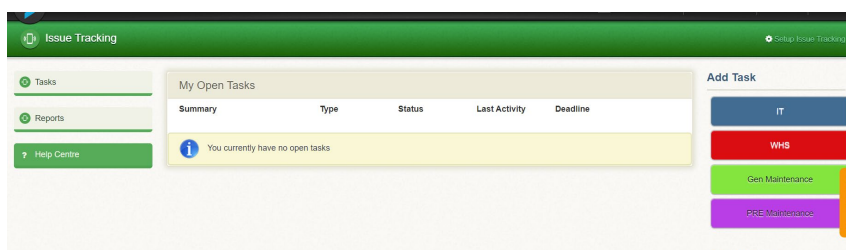
Outdoor environment and Play equipment safety

- Gates leading to and from the outdoor environment are the same height and are equipped with a childproof self-locking mechanism. Gates receive regular maintenance by the General Assistant to ensure they remain self-locking
- The outdoor environment includes an artificial grass area with approved soft fall, which is checked for recertification every three years to ensure that it meets the *Australian Standard AS/NZS 4422:2016*. All equipment with a height over 600mm and no more than 1500mm is placed in this area to minimise injury in the event of a fall
- The falling space and impact area is a safety zone that surrounds the equipment and is free of obstacles
- Educators ensure all moveable play equipment over 600mm and no more than 1500mm have a minimum impact area of 1500mm



(from https://www.kidsafensw.org/imagesDB/wysiwyg/MoveablePlayEquipment2020_2.pdf)

- Educators ensure an impact area of less than 1500mm is required for equipment less than 600mm above ground level. A circulation zone of 1000mm is recommended surrounding low equipment items that are designed for climbing, rocking or jumping.
- The outdoor environments are enclosed by a fence that is of a height and design that children preschool age of under cannot go through, over or under it
- Boundary fencing is a minimum of 1800mm
- Fencing away from the boundary is a minimum of 1200mm
- All educators ensure equipment is placed at least 900mm from the fence line to create a non-climbable zone.
- Gaps between pickets on fences is 100mm or less
- Latches on gates are above 1500mm from ground level
- The preschool teacher checks the outdoor play equipment daily and reports maintenance, repairs, hazards or broken equipment on the school's intranet system (Sentral Issue Tracking), the Deputy Principal Instructional Leader Preschool and Deputy Principal monitor this system for the issues to be addressed. The timeframe is based on the risk associated with the issue.



- All educators regularly check that all play equipment is safe and in good repair
- If purchasing garden soil for programming experiences educators check that it meets Australian Standard AS4419:2018
- All educators read the manufacturer's instructions printed on the potting mix bag before use
- All educators dampen potting mix with a light spray of water before use to reduce the risk of airborne particles.
- All educators ensure that all children using potting mix wear gloves and thoroughly wash hands with soap and water after use
- Educators intentionally teach children how to safely use real tools and children use tools as part of educational program under direct supervision of an educator
- All educators are mindful to keep an extra eye on children when they are using real tool

Electrical and fire safety

- The Principal/Nominated Supervisor ensures the WHS officer organises for all electrical and fire safety equipment to be checked each year
- All educators ensure electrical equipment is well maintained and safe for use
- The preschool teacher checks all electrical cords are secured safely away from children's reach
- The preschool checks all power points are fitted with safety protectors each morning
- All educators are responsible for storing equipment in a safe place that is inaccessible to children
- One fire extinguisher is located outside the kitchen, fixed to the wall. Another fire extinguisher is located in each playroom on the wall
- A fire blanket is located outside the kitchen attached to the wall.
- The preschool room, foyer, offices and storerooms are fitted with several fire alarms

Protection of children when there are animals in the preschool

- All children and adults wash their hands thoroughly before and after handling animals
- The preschool teacher intentionally teaches safe handling and care of animals when planned programming includes animal interactions or care
- All educators model appropriate handling of animals
- All educators will ensure children are supervised when handling and caring for animals
- Food and water containers for animals must be kept in the animal's enclosure
- Animal food must be stored out of reach of children
- Animals should be well cared for and kept healthy
- Animal enclosures and cages must be kept clean
- If an animal is unwell, the advice of a vet must be sought
- Children should not handle animals that are unwell
- Risk minimisation procedures are developed by the preschool educators in the event of planned programming which includes animal

Plants in the preschool

The preschool teacher ensures that plants are selected to minimise risks to children. No poisonous or dangerous plants will be included in the preschool indoor or outdoor environment. The preschool educator will refer to the fact sheet on poisonous plants - <https://www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/fact-sheets/poisonous-or-harmful-plants> and <https://www.kidsafensw.org/growmesafely/>

Any plants in the preschool indoor or outdoor environment that pose any risk of injury, severe discomfort or poisoning will be identified and removed. If any plants are identified as posing a risk to the children this is reported on the school's intranet system (Sentral Task Manager) to the Principal/Nominated Supervisor and WHS officer who arranges for the removal of the plant by the General Assistant. This task is carried out when children are indoors to ensure all reasonable precautions are taken to avoid exposure to plant matter and/or spores.

For more information, refer to the Department's Landscape Management in NSW Public Schools at https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/assetmanagement/assets/media/landscape_management.pdf

Maintenance of the sandpit

The sand pit is securely covered when not in use to prevent contamination from animal excreta, broken glass and other objects. The sandpit is inspected daily to remove any contaminated sand or hazards. It will be raked as required and dug over monthly by educators and children to aerate, ensuring it is exposed to fresh air and sunshine.

The sand will be kept within 10cm of the top edge of the sand pit and will be completely replaced should extensive contamination occur, 'Washed beach' or 'river' sand is recommended. Each term the sand will be cleaned by putting salt in the sand and turning it over.

The preschool educators refer to the following KidSafe NSW Inc. information factsheet to support them in ensuring the sandpit is maintained hygienically
https://www.kidsafensw.org/imagesDB/wysiwyg/Sandpits2020_1.pdf

Child protection

Regulation 84 requires all staff who work with the preschool children to be aware of current child protection law and understand their legal obligations as a mandatory reporter. The department requires all non-teaching, part-time and casual staff complete annual mandatory child protection training. **This department training is recognised by the regulatory authority as being equivalent to the ACECQA approved courses.**

To be reviewed July 2021

The following Department of Education policies can be found on the Department's website in the policy library <https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library>

- [Child Protection Policy: Responding to and reporting students at risk of harm](#)
- [Child Protection Policy Guidelines: Responding to and reporting students at risk of harm](#)

All staff at Punchbowl Public School preschool are responsible for enrolling and completing the NSW Department of Education Mandatory child protection training each year in term1. A register for mandatory training completed by all staff working at Punchbowl Public School is kept by the School Administrative Manager (SAM) in the main school office.

- a copy of each educator's certificate of completion for Mandatory Child Protection is located in the *Staff Information* folder in the preschool office.
- part of the induction process for casual staff is for executive to check mandatory training has been completed and printed certificates stored in the main school office.

Reporting suspected risk of harm within the preschool

As per department policy, all staff have a duty to inform the principal when they have reasonable grounds to suspect any risk of harm to a child or young person. It is the responsibility of the principal to then use the [Mandatory Reporter Guide](#), professional judgment and/or seek advice to assist them in decision making about whether a situation is one of suspected risk of significant harm.

Notification of a serious incident must be made to Early Learning (who will notify the regulatory authority on behalf of the preschool) when:

- a staff member reasonably believes that physical or sexual abuse of a child has or is occurring at the preschool.
- an allegation or complaint is made that physical or sexual abuse of a child has or is occurring at the preschool.

This must be within **24 hours** of becoming aware of a serious incident (Section 174(2)(a) and Regulation 176(2)(a)).

Responding to allegations against staff in the area of child abuse

If the complaint relates to the abuse of a child within the service by a staff member or volunteer, a notification needs to also be made to the NSW Ombudsman (reportable conduct scheme, ph. 9286 1021). Schools will be supported through this process by Employee Performance and Conduct Directorate (EPAC).

Preschool Supervision Plan

Reviewed July 2020 as part of P-6 Supervision Plan

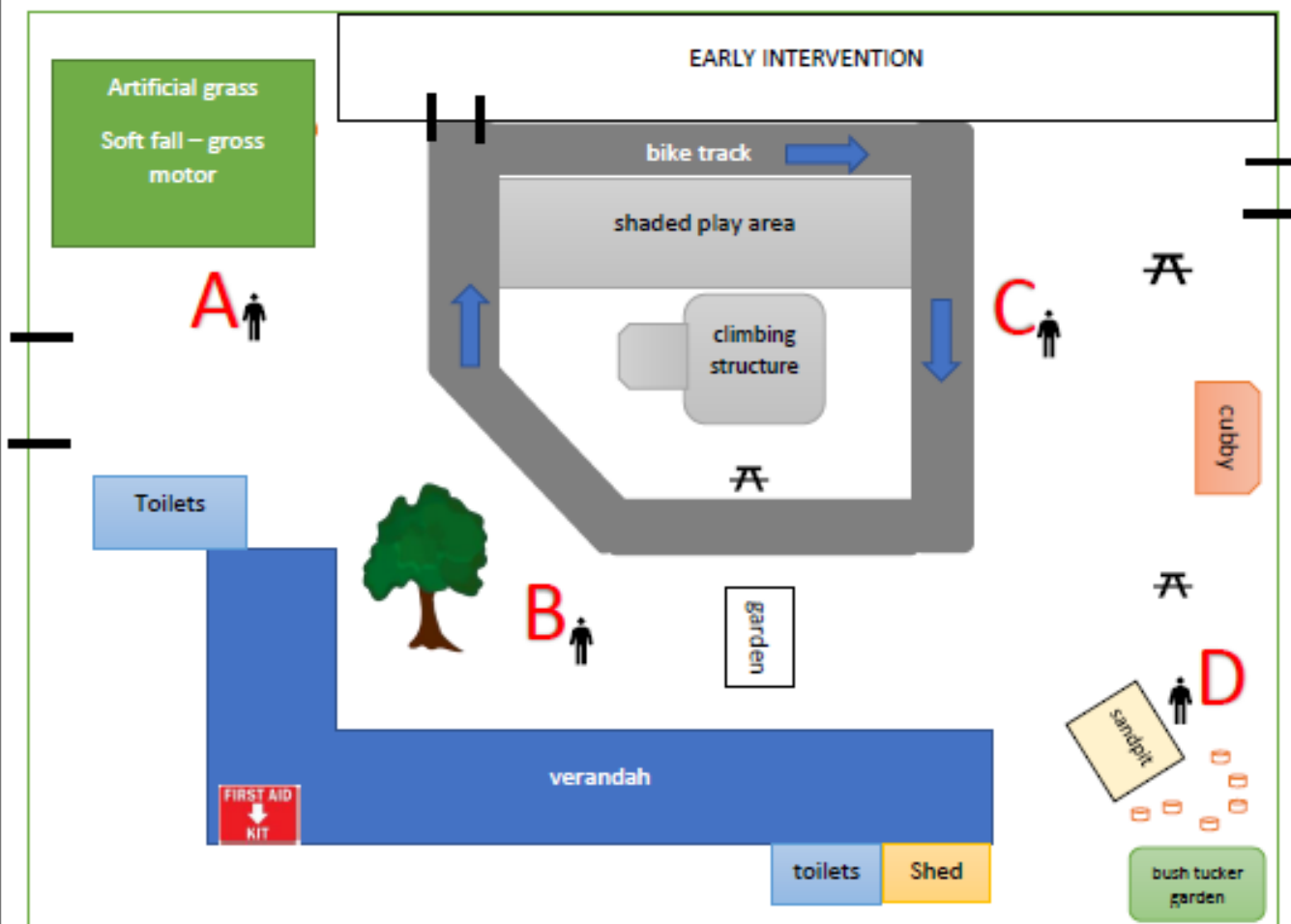
The National Law (section 165) states it is an offence to inadequately supervise children and that responsibility for ensuring the preschool children are adequately supervised at all times rests with the nominated supervisor (school principal).

Casual, relieving and RFF staff must be aware of the requirement to adequately supervise preschool children and how this may differ from the expectation of doing playground duty in the rest of the school. Supervision of preschool aged children requires an understanding that they need closer supervision than school-aged children, and that an active approach should be taken.

In order to ensure children are adequately supervised at all times educators must:

- maintain a ratio of 1 adult to 10 children at all times
- be aware that the preschool is securely fenced and gated and families enter through self-closing gates from the outdoor area and the main entry door
- be aware that families and children are greeted on arrival and departure to ensure children are safe and well arriving and leaving
- ensure all children are signed in by a responsible adult and take a headcount of children by 9:30 am
- ensure they can respond to children immediately, particularly if a child is distressed or in an unsafe situation
- know where all children are at all times by actively and diligently monitoring their activities
- ***balance supervision and engagement by drawing on a range of skills such as positioning, using peripheral vision and monitoring changes in noise and stress levels***
- have an awareness of potential hazards in the environment and proactively take steps to predict and intervene in situations where children's health and safety may be compromised
- use ***flexible positioning*** and ***strong communication*** between educators to ensure all children are supervised
- inform another educator if they are going into a storeroom or bathroom
- ensure that all students are wearing a hat, teachers to also bring their hats to model sun safe behaviour
- supervise the children on the equipment to ensure that they are playing safely
- supervise children climbing on the tree
- ensure students are riding tricycles on the bike track and wearing a helmet, and when finished, students are to park them in the parking bay
- active supervision in **ALL** areas that the students are playing in, moving around to where the students are playing (**A, B, C, D** refer to supervision map)
- interact and play with the students
- make yourself visible for children to know you are there to assist them
- supervision of the student bathrooms
- if children go indoors, redirect them to go back outside
- communicate with regular staff if there were any medical, first aid incidents
- encourage children to have morning tea (progressive morning tea)
- when visiting the main school or attending excursions, the teacher will take a head count of children before leaving the preschool, on arrival and departure from the destination and upon return to the preschool.
- teachers will be relieved for lunch and/or recess by a teacher from the school as per the weekly duty roster
- SLSOs will be relieved for a lunch and recess break by a suitably qualified SLSO or teacher from the school.
- full time teachers will receive 2 hours release from face to face per week and will be replaced by a teacher from the school as per the school RFF timetable

Preschool Supervision Plan- Outdoor Area



Educators will:

- Display awareness– monitor children actively and diligently
- Be aware of positioning – all children must be within sight or sound
- Scan areas where children are playing, in particular the visibility and accessibility
- Use *PBL* posters to support and guide children in their interactions
- Ensure adequate supervision based on risks in the environment and experiences provided
- Implement quality interactions
- Not perform other duties while responsible for the supervision of children
- Be aware of the importance of *communicating* with each other about their location within the environment
- In the case of an injury where first aid is administered. It is a teacher on duty responsibility to fill in the Incident, injury, trauma and illness form (blank copies kept in folder next to outdoors First Aid Kit)

NB: At the beginning of each duty educators *handover* and discuss adequate supervision and ensure one educator is positioned at areas **A, B, C, D**.



Model sun safety by wearing a hat

- S** Supervise effectively
- A** Age appropriate activities
- F** Follow staff/child ratios (1:10)
- E** Ensure environment is safe
- T** To always scan, communicate, supervise & interact
- Y** You are responsible for more than just being there

When to Clean and What to Use

ITEM	WHEN	WHAT TO USE
Check & clean grounds	Daily prior to going outside	Gloves and disposable gloves
Tables	Before Lunch After Lunch After craft Any other time required	Green cloth Detergent and water Red cloth, detergent and water
Chairs	When required	Wiped down Detergent and water
Outdoor tablecloth	After morning tea	Detergent and water
Rubbish & worm bowls	After morning tea and lunch	Detergent and water
Lunch Trolley	End of day	Detergent and water
Eskys (Cooler)	End of day	Detergent and water
Painting easel	After painting	Red craft cloth- water
Paint brushes/pots	After use	Detergent and water
Cleaning cloths	2-3wks As required	Throw out and replace
Bathrooms	Monitored through the day by staff End of day	Single use paper towel Disinfectant used by contractor.
Bodily Fluids	As required	Gloves Single use paper towel to clean up excess Warm water and detergent, allow to dry Disinfect
Floors	Sweep after lunch As required End of day	Broom Mopped/vacuumed by contractor
Bench tops	As required End of day	Detergent and water Green Cloth
Sandpit	Swept after use Also end of term Topped up or replaced	Rake to remove leaves Broom (children help) Salted and turned over by educators and children As required or if significant contamination
Paint Aprons	Wed & Fri	Red craft cloth Detergent and water
Indoor Equipment	After use, when being stored	Detergent and water Blue cloth
Outdoor Equipment	After use, when being stored	Detergent and water Blue cloth
Puzzles	After use, when being stored	Detergent and water Blue cloth
Books	After use, when being stored	Detergent and water Blue cloth
Carpet	End of day End of term	Vacuumed (contractor) Professional cleaned

Cleaning Cloths

Punchbowl Public School Preschool

Red- Craft Equipment
Craft Table



Green- Other Tables
Benchtops
Washing Up



Blue- Equipment
Toys
Puzzles
Books

