Nappy changing facilities in early years, nurseries and large childminding services: requirements for service providers applying for registration or variation of an existing service

Publication date: 10 April 2014

Publication code: OPS-0314-266
Version 2
Introduction and purpose of this document

Within the text of this document, numbers in brackets correspond to numbered references and links given at the end of the document.

*We will assess large childminding services based on environment and numbers of young children attending.

Nurseries and large* childminding services taking young children who are in nappies or children who may require assistance with continence aids must have appropriate facilities for nappy changing/personal care (1). The facilities must provide children with a safe, clean environment and equipment whilst promoting privacy, dignity and in older children independence (2).

This document is

- To inform service providers applying for registration or variation of an existing service of important factors that they must consider when providing nappy changing/personal care facilities.

- To highlight to those involved in commissioning, regulating or using nursery or large* childminding services of expected standards for nappy changing/personal care facilities

- To inform Care Inspectorate staff who are involved in registration and variation work of expected standards.

- To remind Care Inspectorate staff involved in inspection and complaint work and existing service providers of elements essential for nappy changing/personal care facilities

- We will highlight this document during inspection to existing service providers who maybe considering building new premises or upgrading facilities.

- To provide tips associated with nappy changing facilities commonly seen during regulatory activities

Background

Children under the age of three are particularly susceptible to infection and evidence from outbreak situations, notifications to the Care Inspectorate of infection and research highlights this.

In 2006 and 2012, E.coli O157 outbreaks in Scottish nurseries resulting in serious infection in children and affecting staff were reported (3) (4). Outcomes of infection may have long-term effects for those affected and their families. One method of spreading E.coli O157 and many other types of gastro-intestinal infections can be failures in provision of appropriate nappy changing/personal care facilities, which includes hand wash sinks and associated practices.
The following information will help reduce the potential for infection to children and staff from nappy changing and personal care facilities and activities.

Within this document, a distinction is made between facilities needed for children aged 0–2 years, who are especially vulnerable to infection due to an immature and developing immune system and totally dependent on staff, and over two years who are more independent and learning to use toilet facilities or have additional care needs.

**Information**

**Service providers applying for registration or variation of an existing service must take into consideration the following information. This document also applies to services being registered where there is a change of provider/legal entity.**

The information on building standards for baby changing facilities (5) with regards to manoeuvring space, heights of wash hand basins and changing surface heights is available from the Scottish government building standards division.

Children 0-2 years must have a self-contained designated nappy changing room with nappy changing units provided on a minimum ratio of one unit for every ten children requiring to be changed. You must use a room in close proximity to the rooms used for care and the changing area must not be a corridor providing access to other areas of the service or be open plan with any adjoining rooms.

Children over two who are learning to use the toilet or potty may have nappy changing units housed within a partitioned area of the children’s toilets to provide safe and easy access to toilets and potties. Within the partitioned area, there must be an adult height wash hand sink with running hot and cold water (5) and provision for the child’s privacy and dignity. The use of curtains as a partition is not acceptable as children can easily contaminate these during use and represent other difficulties regarding cleaning and safety.

You must not carry out nappy changing in toilets for staff (6), visitors or people with disabilities (5) or within the playrooms (7). It must be a separate area. However if a mobile nappy changing/personal care unit housed elsewhere in the nursery (not accessible to children) is required on occasions this may be wheeled into the accessible toilet for immediate use and then removed immediately after cleaning.
The following elements are essential:

Regardless of age group you are accommodating, the common features for all nappy changing areas will be as follows:

Walls, ceiling, door and flooring
- must be of suitable surfaces that can be easily cleaned.

Appropriate lighting
- this can be natural or artificial but must be sufficient to allow safe practice and provide reassurance to the child.

Appropriate heating
- to maintain an acceptable temperature for the comfort of the child
- in a form that eliminates the risk of burns or scalds.

Ventilation can include
- a window that opens, complies with the Scottish building standards and takes account of any health and safety warnings
- an extractor fan that does not directly vent into another room and is operational during the period of use and for a period of time after the room has been vacated

Nappy changing unit
- must be of a suitable size and strength appropriate to the age and weight of the child.
- must be of a surface capable of being cleaned.
- conforms to safety standards such as those from BSI (8) or equivalent international standards and health and safety regulations particularly in relation to wall mounted units.
- may require steps up to the unit depending on age of the child.
- if multiple units are in use within the same area they must have some form of separation, either by a clear space or a cleanable partition between each nappy changing unit to prevent possible contact between staff and children during the process.

Hand wash facilities must have
- designated hand wash sink for staff which must only be used for hand washing and is located within the nappy changing area but may have a step for use by children depending on age and ability.
- hand wash sink of a suitable size to allow hand washing without spillage onto the floor or surrounding area (9)
  - running hot and cold water (9).
  - non-hand operated taps (7) (9)
  - no sink plug (9)
  - dispensers for non-antibacterial liquid or foam soap and paper towels (7)

Children and staff must never share water in communal basins or bowls for hand washing (4) (7). Hand sanitisers or alcohol based hand rubs are not a substitute for hand washing (10).
Waste bins

- for the disposal of used disposable nappies and equipment, these must be hands free operated. This could be a foot operated lined, lidded bin or a specific bin designed for used disposable nappies. (11)
- The service must provide a general waste bin for disposal of used paper towels.

A storage facility for bagged, used, non-disposable nappies or soiled clothing awaiting collection by parents may also be necessary.

The service must enclose all storage in the nappy changing area, for example cupboards with doors, storage drawers, sealed plastic containers or impervious cleanable bags, for storage of individual children’s items

Best practice is for all nappy changing products to be taken directly to the nappy changing unit for each child on each occasion (7)

Secure storage for cleaning products:

- general purpose detergent or non-antibacterial surface cleaner to be used for cleaning of surfaces and nappy changing unit including mat (7) must be kept out of reach of children (12)

Provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as disposable aprons and disposable gloves

- must be stored within a cupboard or drawer or in a designated easy to clean dispenser, holder or containers that protect the items from potential environmental contamination
- storage of PPE must permit ease of access for staff but not children
- storage facilities out with cupboards or drawers must not obstruct cleaning within the nappy changing area

If a service uses children’s potties, it is essential that facilities for cleaning and storage are available. Staff must never wash potties in a designated hand wash sink and must store potties out of reach of children when not in use.
Tips from regulatory activities associated with nappy changing and personal care facilities

- Always ensure that the door to nappy changing/personal care facilities is a full sized door that staff can close during care procedures and after leaving the room. Extractor fans cannot work effectively unless the door is closed and this can lead to malodours as well as compromising privacy and dignity of the child receiving care.

- Wooden surfaces must not be used for nappy changing as they cannot be effectively cleaned, even if varnished, and are easily damaged.

- Wall mounted nappy changing units must always be closed when not in use to prevent potential contamination.

- All non-manufactured wall mounted units must comply with safety standards.

- Always ensure that hand wash facilities are available within the nappy changing/personal care areas. Travelling to other areas or rooms for hand washing involves touching doors and other items en-route and increases the risk of infection.

- Hand wipes, alcohol gels and sanitising lotions are not an alternative to hand washing after toileting or nappy changing procedures for children or staff.

- Good practice is to allow children including babies to wash their hands after nappy changing. Staff in some nurseries support children of eight months and make hand-washing fun.

Summary

Provision of appropriate nappy changing/personal care facilities is essential for the health and wellbeing of children and the health and safety of staff.

It is important that all those providing, commissioning or using nursery and large childminding services are aware of what good facilities must have. Service providers must take into account lessons learned from outbreaks or new guidance as it becomes available.

Please note

Information on pages 6 and 7 can be used by existing service providers to support improvements within their care settings.
References/useful links/further reading


2. National care standards early education and childcare up to age 16 years, revised September 2009
   National Care Standards available on www.nationalcarestandards.com


   Welfare at Work Guidance for employers on welfare provisions.
   http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg293.pdf


8. Standards which relate to nappy changing units can be purchased from www.standardsuk.com this includes BS – British Standards, EN – European Standards but ISO which are international standards.

   BS EN 12221-1:2008 and BS EN 12221-2:2008 - these refer to maximum weight of a child which can be supported by the nappy changing unit
BS EN 71 – 3:1994 – covers installation by a professional tradesman who understands the product appropriately and is able to determine suitability of wall or panel the device is attached

9. Information relating to types of sinks and associated equipment which reflect the key principles which can help prevent infection can be found in Scottish Health Facilities Note 30; Version Infection control in the built environment: Design and planning. January 2007. This is currently under review, but available on www.hfs.scot.nhs.uk/guest/SHFN30/SHFN30V3.pdf

10. Preventing or controlling ill health from animal contact at visitor attractions provides good information on hand hygiene and the need for hand washing as other products such as gels and sanitisers are not generally effective against gastro-intestinal infections. http://www.hseni.gov.uk/news.htm?id=8897&preventing-or-controlling-ill

11. Waste information available on http://www.ciwm.co.uk/CIWM/RegionalCentres/Scotland


Other articles that may be of interest:

- http://scholar.google.co.uk/scholar?hl=en&q=toilet+flushing+aerosols+contamination&btnG=&as_sdt=1%2C5&as_sdtp=

- Health and safety regulations and guidance is available www.hse.gov.uk

- Hand washing information available on www.hps.scot.nhs.uk

- Think before you flush or brush article by Sarah Tan published in 2008 discusses the dangers associated with aerosol contamination of the environment from flushing toilets
Nappy changing facilities in early year’s and large childminding services

Headquarters
Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

web: [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)
email: enquiries@careinspectorate.com
telephone: 0845 600 9527

Copyright of Care Inspectorate 2014