

# IMMUNISATION POLICY

When groups of children are together, illness and disease can spread rapidly. Preventable diseases such as measles and whooping cough can have serious health consequences for children, and especially young children. Staff members who work in an early childhood education and care service are also at increased risk of contracting certain infectious illnesses. Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases. Our Service implements the Australian Government Department of Health, 'No Jab No Play' policy.

## NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

| QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY |                                   |   |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| 2.1  | Health                            | Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.  |
| 2.1.2  | Health practices and procedures   | Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.   |
| 2.2  | Safety                            | Each child is protected   |
| 2.2.2  | Incident and emergency management | Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented. |

| EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS |   |
|--|---|
| 77   | Health, hygiene and safe food practices           |
| 88   | Infectious diseases                               |
| 90   | Medical conditions policy                         |
| 162  | Health information to be kept in enrolment record |

**RELATED POLICIES**

|   |  |
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| <p>Enrolment Policy<br/>                 Family Communication Policy<br/>                 Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy<br/>                 Orientation of New Families Policy</p> | <p>Record Keeping and Retention Policy<br/>                 Infectious Disease Policy<br/>                 Sick Children Policy<br/>                 Work Health and Safety Policy</p> |
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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide information to manage and prevent the spread of infectious illnesses and diseases. Our Service has a duty of care to ensure that all children, families, and educators are protected from infectious diseases whilst at the Service. Along with maintaining a clean and hygienic environment, this also includes notifying families and educators when an excludable illness or disease is present in the Service, maintaining a record of children’s and educators’ immunisation status, complying with relevant health department exclusion guidelines, and increasing educators’ awareness of cross-infection.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Immunisation is a reliable way to prevent many childhood diseases. Immunisation works by giving the person a vaccine (weakened or killed disease-causing bacteria or virus), against a particular disease. This makes the person’s immune system respond in a similar way to how it would respond if they actually had the disease, but with less severe, or possibly no symptoms. The vaccine therefore leads to the creation of antibodies that provide future protection if the person comes into contact with the disease.

Immunisation also protects other people who are not immunised, such as children who are too young to be immunised, or people whose immune systems did not respond to the vaccine. This is because the more people who are immunised against a disease, the lower the chance that a person will ever come into contact with someone who has the disease. The chance of an infection spreading in a community therefore decreases if a large proportion of people are immunised, because the immune people will not become infected and can protect the vulnerable people; this is known as ‘herd immunity’.

As of January 2018, unvaccinated children due to their parent's conscientious objection are no longer able to be enrolled in childcare in NSW. Children who cannot be fully vaccinated due to a medical condition or who are on a recognised catch-up schedule may still be enrolled upon presentation of the appropriate form signed by a medical practitioner.

#### MANAGEMENT / NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- display wall charts about childhood immunisation schedules in each room.
- review children's immunisation regularly, updating the child's records kept at the service, and sending reminder letters and emails to families as required.
- ensure that evidence is provided for each child prior to enrolment that confirms the child is fully immunised for their age or has a medical reason not be immunised (Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) as evidence).
- develop a staff immunisation record that documents each staff member's previous infection or immunisations (including dates)
- require all new and current staff to complete the staff immunisation record
- update staff immunisation records as staff become vaccinated
- provide staff and families with information about vaccine-preventable diseases
- advise parents and families about the [National Immunisation Program \(NIP\)](#)
- take all reasonable steps to encourage non-immune staff to be vaccinated
- document advice given to educators and other staff, and any refusal to comply with vaccination requests
- notify the Public Health Unit of any outbreak of vaccine preventable diseases (1300 066 055)
- notify families when an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs
- exclude any child who is not immunised from the Service if and when an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs to protect that child and to prevent further spread of infection. In the instance of the child being immunised but the immunisation record has not been sighted by the Service, the child is to be considered as not being immunised.
- advise any staff members who fall pregnant to visit their GP immediately and have a test for Cytomegalovirus (CMV) to check their immunity. Any pregnant staff member who is at a heightened risk will not change nappies and will double glove when coming into contact with any body fluids, including saliva.

## FAMILIES WILL:

- Provide the Service with a copy of one or more of the following documents:
  - An Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is 'up to date' with their scheduled vaccinations; or
  - An AIR Immunisation History Form on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule; or
  - An AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form which has been certified by a GP
- Provide the service with an updated copy of their child's current immunisation record every 6 months, or when the next scheduled immunisation has been completed.
- A current AIR Immunisation History Statement can be accessed at any time by the parent/guardian through logging in to their Medicare online account: [myGov website](#).
- Support their child's exclusion from the Service if there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease at the Service or if they come into contact with a person with a vaccine preventable disease, even if there is no outbreak at the Service.

## RESOURCES

AIR General Enquiries line 1800 653 809

Australian Government Department of Health *Get the facts on childhood immunisation-help protect your community* <https://campaigns.health.gov.au/immunisationfacts>

Australian Government Services Australia *Australia Immunisation Register*  
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register>

Sharing Knowledge About Immunisation. (2020). < <http://talkingaboutimmunisation.org.au/>

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| South Australia (SA)   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule <b>TO BE DISPLAYED IN THE SERVICE</b> can be accessed and downloaded from: <a href="https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-immunisation-program-schedule-portfolio">https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-immunisation-program-schedule-portfolio</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National Immunisation Program South Australia Schedule</a></li> <li>• For more information go to - <a href="https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning/early-childhood-education-and-care/preschool-and-kindergarten">https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning/early-childhood-education-and-care/preschool-and-kindergarten</a></li> <li>• Telephone: (08) 8226 6000</li> <li>• Immunise Australia National Hotline: 1800 671 811</li> <li>• Australian Government, Department of Human Services:</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/online-help/medicare/getting-your-immunisation-history-statement-using-your-medicare-online-account">https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/online-help/medicare/getting-your-immunisation-history-statement-using-your-medicare-online-account</a></li> </ul> |

**SOURCE**

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).  
 Australia Childhood Immunisation Register: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register>  
 Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment, (2020) *Child Care Subsidy immunisation requirements* <https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/immunisation>  
 Australian Government – Department of Human Services: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/online-help/medicare/getting-your-immunisation-history-statement-using-your-medicare-online-account>  
 Australian Government Department Of Health National Immunise Program: <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/national-immunisation-program>  
 Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).  
 Federal Register of Legislation *Privacy Act 1988*.  
 Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).  
 Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2020)  
 National Health and Medical Research Council. (2012). *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*.  
 NSW Public Health Act- NSW Government October 2017: [http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/childcare\\_qa.aspx#15](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/childcare_qa.aspx#15)  
 Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).  
 Sharing Knowledge About Immunisation. (2020). <http://talkingaboutimmunisation.org.au/>

**REVIEW**

|                 |   |                  |            |
|-----------------|---|------------------|------------|
| POLICY REVIEWED | MARCH 2020  | NEXT REVIEW DATE | MARCH 2021 |
| MODIFICATIONS   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additions to introduction statement</li> <li>• Additional information added to content</li> <li>• Resources section added</li> <li>• Jurisdiction specifications checked for currency</li> </ul> |                  |            |
| POLICY REVIEWED | PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS  | NEXT REVIEW DATE |            |

|                |   |            |
|----------------|---|------------|
| MARCH 2019     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction, purpose, &amp; implementation revised</li> <li>• New immunisation requirements changed to past tense.</li> <li>• Additional information added to points.</li> <li>• Irrelevant information deleted.</li> <li>• Sources checked for currency.</li> </ul> <p>Sources/references corrected and alphabetised.</p>  | MARCH 2020 |
| MARCH 2018     | <p>Amendments made to comply with changes to Immunisation requirements<br/>                 DELETED FROM PAGE 2 – Implementation paragraph 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As of January 2016, new immunisation requirements came into force affecting childcare benefits and family assistance payments (the Commonwealth) and the enrolment of children in child care (in NSW). The Commonwealth has made changes under the 'No Jab, No Pay' measure to increase childhood vaccination rates causing families to no longer be eligible for child care benefits and family assistance payments with exceptions for children recorded with medical contraindications or natural immunity for certain diseases and those on a recognised catch-up schedule.</li> </ul> | MARCH 2019 |
| OCTOBER 2017   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated to comply with new vaccination regulations in NSW. Effective January 1, 2018</li> </ul>  | MARCH 2018 |
| SEPTEMBER 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated the references to comply with the revised National Quality Standards</li> </ul>  | MARCH 2018 |
| MARCH 2017     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy has been researched and reviewed, no changes made.</li> </ul>   | MARCH 2018 |