

IMMUNISATION POLICY

Rationale and Policy Considerations

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.

Legislation and Government Requirements

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (SA)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Privacy Act (1988) Commonwealth

National Quality Framework

Education and Care Services National Regulations 77, 88, 90 162

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education Elements 2.1, 2.1.2, 2.2, 2.2.2

Policy Statement

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.

Strategies for Policy 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'.

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:

- 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 to 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.
- ensure staff and visitors (contractors, health professionals, volunteers, students, committee members) hold mandatory immunisation requirements as set by current Public Health Orders (including COVID-19 mandatory vaccination requirements).

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 12 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.

STAFF AND VISITORS WILL:

(Visitors including health professionals, volunteers, students, committee members)

- ensure they abide by any Public Health Orders enforced around mandatory immunisation and vaccinations (including COVID-19 mandatory vaccination requirements)
- ensure they carry evidence of immunisation of the COVID-19 vaccination or a medical contraindication certificate, as per Public Health

South Australia (SA)

- The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule **TO BE DISPLAYED IN THE SERVICE** can be accessed and downloaded from:
<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-immunisation-program-schedule-portrait>
- [National Immunisation Program South Australia Schedule](#)
- For more information go to - <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning/early-childhood-education-and-care/preschool-and-kindergarten>
- Telephone: (08) 8226 6000
- Immunise Australia National Hotline: 1800 671 811
- 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>

Links to other Policies

Enrolment Policy

Family Communication Policy

Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy

Orientation of New Families Policy

Record Keeping and Retention Policy

Infectious Disease Policy

Sick Children Policy

Work Health and Safety Policy

Sourced from

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://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy/who-can-get-it/immunisation-requirements>

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)

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/conditions/immunisation/immunisation>

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2012). *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*.

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

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/>

National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS). No Jab No Play, No Jab No Pay:

<https://www.ncirs.org.au/public/no-jab-no-play-no-jab-no-pay>