

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 a childcare setting are also at increased risk of contracting certain infectious illnesses.

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

Enrolment Policy Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy Record Keeping and Retention Policy	Infectious Disease Policy Sick Children Policy Work Health and Safety Policy
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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 eligible to receive government subsidies. If there is an outbreak of any infectious disease at the Centre, unimmunised children will be exempt from attending the Centre. If an unimmunised child has an infectious disease, they will also be exempt from the Centre until they have fully recovered.

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 be immunised, or has signed the Centre's letter stating that they have chosen not to immunise their child and are aware of their responsibilities toward the Centre.
- Provide staff with information about vaccine-preventable diseases.
- 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 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.

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.
- Ensure they provide the Service with the Medicare immunisation record which can be downloaded through the myGov website. Please note that the 'blue book' is no longer an acceptable form of evidence.

i The Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) used to be the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register. It now records vaccines for people of all ages in Australia.

South Australia (SA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule TO BE DISPLAYED IN THE SERVICE can be accessed and downloaded from: http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Home • National Immunisation Program South Australia Schedule http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+topics/health+conditions+prevention+and+treatment/immunisation/immunisation+programs/childhood+immunisation+program/childhood+immunisation+program • For more information go to - https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-skills-and-learning/early-childhood-education-and-care/preschool-and-kindergarten • Telephone: 1300 232 272 • Fax: 8226 7197 • 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

Source

Australia Childhood Immunisation Register:
 Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
 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>
 Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
 Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).
 Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).
<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register>
 Immunise Australia Program: www.immunise.health.gov.au
 National Health and Medical Research Council. (2012). *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services.*
Privacy Act 1988.
 Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	January 2020	NEXT REVIEW DATE	January 2022
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed formatting to be in line with other policies. • Updated legislation in regards to immunisation. 		