

# 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 school aged care services are also at increased risk of contracting certain infectious illnesses due to the close proximity of working with children. Immunisation is therefore an important health measure and an effective way of protecting children and adults from harmful diseases by reducing the spread of disease.

(Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment, 2020)

## 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

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3.2	Children take increasing responsibility to for their own health and physical wellbeing
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**RELATED POLICIES**

Enrolment Policy Family Communication Policy Orientation of New Families Policy Record Keeping and Retention Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Infectious Disease 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 Vacation Care 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 Vacation Care 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 Vacarion 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'.

Enrolment in an early education and care service requires parents to provide an *Immunisation History Statement* as recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) to prove that their child is up to date with their scheduled vaccinations. This documentation also is required to be updated as per the childhood immunisation schedule.

When enrolling a child in an Out of School Hours Care service, parents will be asked to provide an Immunisation History Statement. Should a child not be fully immunised according to the National Immunisation Program Schedule, they will not be prevented from enrolling.

Children without proof of recommended immunisation for their age will be excluded from attending the service during an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease.

#### MANAGEMENT/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- request families to provide an AIR Immunisation History Statement or an AIR Immunisation History Form (for a child on an approved catch-up-schedule) prior to enrolment
- record in the immunisation register, children as 'unimmunised' if an AIR is not provided
- advise parents and families about the [National Immunisation Program \(NIP\)](#)
- review children's immunisation regularly, updating the child's records kept at the Vacation Care Service
- develop a staff immunisation record that documents each staff member's previous infection or immunisation
- 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
- 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 Vacation Care 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 BE REQUESTED TO:

- Provide the Vacation Care Service with a copy of one or more of the following documents upon enrolment
  - 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 Vacation Care Service with an updated copy of their child's current immunisation record when the next scheduled immunisation has been completed
- Complete their child's immunisation schedule
- Support their child's exclusion from the Service if there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease at the Vacation Care Service or if they come into contact with a person with a vaccine preventable disease, even if there is no outbreak at the Service or Primary School.

#### 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/>

## New South Wales (NSW)

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>

- NSW Health Phone number: 02 9391 9000
- Local NSW Public Health Unit Contact Details:  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/Pages/default.aspx>
- 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>

Note homeopathic immunisation is not recognised

## 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. ~~(2017)~~–(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: DECEMBER 2020

NEXT REVIEW DATE: DECEMBER 2021

