

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 LAW AND REGULATIONS	
174(2)(a)	Notification to the Regulatory Authority- (a) any serious incident at the approved education and care service
12	Meaning of serious incident
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
88	Infectious diseases
90	Medical conditions policy
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record

168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
172(2)(g)	a notice stating that there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease at the premises

RELATED POLICIES

Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy Enrolment Policy Family Communication Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy	Pregnancy in Early Childhood Policy Record Keeping and Retention 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 OSHC 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 OSHC 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, educators, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the OSHC 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 Out of School Hours 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. For a child to be eligible for Child Care Subsidy and other family payments, immunisation must be in accordance with the National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER / NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- ensure that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- ensure educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- ensure all new employees are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction process
- ensure information about immunisation, infectious diseases and exclusion periods is available to families at time of enrolment/orientation and is included in the Family Handbook
- 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 OSHC 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 through various channels of communication:
 - verbally
 - through a letter from the educator or approved provider
 - posting a note or sign at the entry of the residence
 - via electronic message- text message or email
- notify the regulatory authority of any incidence of a notifiable infectious illness or disease [ACECQA contact regulatory authority](#)
- exclude any child who is not immunised from the OSHC 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 discuss [Cytomegalovirus during pregnancy](#) (CMV) with their doctor and inform management so that an individual risk assessment can be assessed and managed. There is NO vaccination to prevent against infection with CMV. Occupational risks of CMV in childcare should be managed and control measures implemented. CMV [see: Pregnancy in Early Childhood Policy]

FAMILIES WILL:

- adhere to the OSHC Service's policies regarding *Dealing with Infectious Diseases, Immunisation, Incident, Injury, Trauma and Sickness* and exclusion requirements
- provide the OSHC 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 OSHC 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 OSHC 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.

INFORMATION TO BE DISPLAYED IN SERVICE

INFORMATION	WEBSITE/INFORMATION	PHONE NUMBER
The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Service	https://beta.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/national-immunisation-program	1800 020 103
Notification of an occurrence of an infectious disease/vaccine preventable disease	Notify local Public Health Unit Provide information to families about the infectious disease- Children unimmunised against vaccine preventable diseases must be excluded from care	1300 066 055
Australian Government Department of Health	In the event of a community spread virus- (COVID-19) publications from Government agencies will be displayed https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-campaign-resources	1800 020 080

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH- IMMUNISATION SAVES LIVES

Currently there are different immunisation requirements for early childhood education and care services across states and territories. OSHC Services who operate as part of an approved ECEC service may need to ensure information on immunisation requirements as available to all families and updated as required.

New South Wales (NSW)
<p>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-portal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Health Phone number: 02 9391 9000 • Local NSW Public Health Unit Contact Details: http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/Pages/default.aspx • NSW Health Immunisation Schedule https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/immunisation-providers.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

RESOURCES

AIR General Enquiries line 1800 653 809

Australian Government Services Australia Australian Immunisation Register

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register>

[NSW Government Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit](#)

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

[Time Out Keeping your child and other kids healthy!](#) (Queensland Government)

Time Out Brochure [Why do I need to keep my child at home?](#)

[Victoria State Government Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood services](#)

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

The *Immunisation Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in conjunction with children, families, staff, educators and management.

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

Australian Government. Department of Health (2019). *National Immunisation Strategy for Australia 2019-2024*

https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/national-immunisation-strategy-for-australia-2019-2024_0.pdf

Australian Government Department Of Health National Immunise Program: <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/national-immunisation-program>

Australian Government. Services Australia. [Australian Immunisation Register](#)

Australian Government. Services Australia. (2023). [Immunisation requirements](#)

Australian Government. Services Australia: [How to get immunisation statements](#)

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).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).

Federal Register of Legislation *Privacy Act 1988*.

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>

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th Ed.). Australia: Commonwealth of Australia. NSW Government. (n.d.).

NSW Public Health Act- NSW Government (2023) [Questions and answers about vaccination requirements for child care](#)

Pregnancy Birth and Baby. [Cytomegalovirus \(CMV\) during pregnancy](#).

[Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Libby Haines	Director	March 2024
POLICY REVIEWED	MARCH 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MARCH 2025
VERSION NUMBER	V10.03.24		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy maintenance • minor edits within policy • updated information re: CMV for staff/educators who are pregnant 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
MARCH 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy maintenance • additional regulations added • name change of Control of Infectious Disease Policy to <i>Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy</i> • Vaccination requirements for COVID 19 removed • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • Continuous improvement section added • link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in 'Sources' 	MARCH 2024	
MARCH 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of policy as per annual review cycle • No major edits 	MARCH 2023	
OCTOBER 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information added to reflect mandatory COVID-19 vaccination requirements for NSW/VIC • deleted information related to ECEC services only • updated sources (broken links updated) 	MARCH 2022	
MARCH 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • updates to reflect 'no jab no play' in each state/territory • links to each state/territory immunisation schedules checked and edited as required • further resources added 	MARCH 2022	
MARCH 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additions to introduction statement • Additional information added to content • Resources section added • Jurisdiction specifications checked for currency 	MARCH 2021	
MARCH 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextualised for OSHC • Introduction, purpose, & implementation mostly re-written • New immunisation requirements changed to past tense 	MARCH 2020	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional information added to points• Sources checked for currency	
MARCH 2018	Updated to further comply with changes to immunisation requirements DELETED: As of January 2016, new immunisation requirements came into force affecting child care benefits and family assistance payments (the Commonwealth) and the enrolment of children in child care and children’s services (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.	MARCH 2019
OCTOBER 2017	Updated to comply with new vaccination regulations in NSW. Effective January 1, 2018	MARCH 2018