



Immunisation

Relevant Legislation

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) ACT 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011: 77, 88, 168
National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care: Standard / Element: 2.1, 2.1.2, 4.2.2, 6.1, 6.2
Information Privacy Act 2000
Health Records Act 2001
Health Act 1958
Centre Based and Mobile Child Care Services Regulation (No.2) 1996 (NSW)
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 and Regulations 2001 (NSW)

Aim / Rationale

To have a pre-school in which all children and staff are fully immunised against all harmful early childhood diseases. To provide protection to the children, staff and families attending the centre against diseases within the community.

Policy Goals

The NSW Parliament passed a Bill to amend the Public Health Act to strengthen vaccination enrolment requirements in child care (also known as early childhood education and care) to be implemented from 1 January 2018:

- ✧ To clearly communicate that a child must be immunised or be on a catch up plan to enrol at pre-school.
- ✧ To implement clear procedures for identifying, notifying and exclusion of children at risk of harm from infectious diseases.
- ✧ To ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff

Strategies: What will we do?

Implementation:

Before enrolment of a child will be offered or confirmed, all families must provide a copy of each child's Immunisation History Statement to the Pre-School.

Parents have the responsibility to provide an updated copy of each child's Immunisation History Statement (ie. an updated version after the child receives their 3 1/2–4 year old shots, as per the Australian [Immunisation Schedule](#)).

The Pre-School will frequently remind families to provide current copies of the child's Immunisation History Statement after vaccines are given. The Pre-School will not enrol children without proof of immunisation in accordance with the Immunisation Schedule.

The Pre-School is obliged by law to exclude non-immunised children from the Pre-School if an incidence of any communicable disease occurs for the period of time.

Immunisation for staff:

Immunisation of staff in children's services is important to minimise the risk of contracting a disease that can be prevented by vaccines. Staff should be encouraged to talk to their GP about vaccinations before commencing work in a children's service.

The Pre-School will:

- ✧ Maintain a current record of vaccination status of all students and employees. All information will be kept confidential.
- ✧ Provide current information on vaccine-preventable diseases to employees and parents.
- ✧ Plan and provide, periodic educational sessions on infectious diseases and immunisation for all employees.

The *Australian Immunisation Handbook, (9th Edition, 2008, p.105)* recommends that people working with children obtain the following vaccinations:

- ✧ MMR (measles) – if not immune
- ✧ Varicella (chicken pox) – if zero negative
- ✧ Pertussis – whooping cough
- ✧ DTPa vaccine (diphtheria, tetanus, whooping) as a booster provided they have previously received a full course of vaccination for diphtheria and tetanus.
- ✧ Hepatitis A (recommended for child care staff, particularly those who care for children who are not toilet trained)
- ✧ Annual Flu (influenza) Vaccination

Immunisation & Infectious Disease Issues for Pregnant Child Care Staff:

The Pre-School will minimise the risk of and manage exposure of pregnant staff to infectious diseases transmitted from children in their care and preventing illness and other risks from vaccine preventable diseases by appropriate immunisation.

Staff are exposed to a number of infectious diseases transmitted from children in their care and other people they come into contact with. Staff can be immunised against many infectious diseases and there are immunisation and other infection control recommendation strategies specific to educators. Pregnant staff are also at risk of specific infectious diseases that can have adverse impacts on pregnancy and there are active steps that they can take to reduce this risk.

The Authorised Supervisor will:

- ✧ Provide information to all staff at the Pre-School on current recommended immunisations for staff in accordance with current Australian Standard Vaccination Schedule and the current edition of the Australian Immunisation Handbook.
- ✧ Recommend to female staff that they seek advice from their local doctor about immunisation needs before planning pregnancy.
- ✧ Advise all staff before commencing work that the above recommendations for immunisation will minimise transmission and risks of those infectious diseases in children and staff and if a staff member has concerns about these diseases or immunisations they should seek advice from their doctor before commencing work.
- ✧ Advise all staff that if an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease occurs in the centre, staff should inform the centre director if they are not immunised against that disease. Unimmunised staff should consult their doctor to determine if it is appropriate for them not to attend work during the outbreak and discuss any issues relating to their immunisation or other medical management.
- ✧ If a pregnant staff member is unsure whether they have had any of the recommended immunisations, advise them to discuss their immunisation needs with their doctor.

Obtaining your child's Immunisation History Statement:

Please note that 'Blue books' are **NOT** accepted as evidence of immunisation. A copy of the Immunisation History Statement, issued by the Australian Immunisation Register, will need to be given to the Pre-School prior to enrolment. If your child was immunised overseas you will have to talk to your Doctor and request that your child's immunisation history is reviewed with the Australian Immunisation Register.

Parents will receive an Immunisation History Statement in the mail after their child has completed their 18 month and 3½ - 4 year old vaccinations. Please bring this to the Pre-School as soon as you receive it.

- ✧ A copy of an Immunisation History Statement can also be obtained at any time:
- ✧ by calling the Australian Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809
- ✧ Using your Medicare online account through myGov at www.my.gov.au
- ✧ Using the Medicare Express Plus App www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/express-plus-mobile-apps
- ✧ by visiting the local Department of Human Services Centre, Medicare office or Centrelink Office.

Sources

Infectious Diseases, NSW Department of Education

Australian Immunisation Handbook, NSW Department of Health – www.immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au

Occupational Health and Safety Directorate, retrieved from DEC intranet site on June 2013: Staying Healthy Preventing infectious diseases in childhood education and care services 5th Edition 2012

Australian Government's National Health and Medical Research Council, retrieved June 2014 and the Australian Immunisation Handbook, 10th Edition, 2013, para 2.3.7. Vaccination of persons at occupational risk, The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, retrieved June 2014)

Staying Healthy in Child Care, NHMRC, 2001: <http://www.health.gov.au/nhmrc/>; Australian First Aid, St John Ambulance Australia, 2001: www.stjohn.org.au

The Australian Immunisation Handbook, 8th edition, NHMRC, 2003, at <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/handbook.htm>

Australian Standard Vaccination Schedule
campaigns.health.gov.au/immunisationfacts

Links to other Policies

Enrolment

Infectious Diseases

Procedures and Forms

Enrolment

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
2006	Developed	2008
October 2013	Reviewed	October 2015
November 2017	Updated to meet National Quality Standards	October 2019