

Infectious Diseases

The spread of infections in the early childhood environment is facilitated by crowding and microbial contamination of the environment, as well as the unhygienic behaviours and greater exposure of young children. Our Service will minimise children's exposure to infectious diseases by adhering to all recommended guidelines from relevant authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases, promoting practices that reduce the transmission of infection, ensuring the exclusion of sick children and educators, supporting child immunisation and implement effective hygiene practices.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation
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

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

CHILDREN (EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES) NATIONAL LAW NSW	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
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

RELATED POLICIES

Nappy Change & Toileting Policy Physical Environment Policy Bottle Safety and Preparation Policy Sleeping & Rest Requirement Policy Infant Bottle Safety & Preparation Policy Incident, Illness, Accident & Trauma Policy Immunisation Policy Family Communication Policy	Administration of Medication Policy Hand Washing Policy Sick Children Policy Work Health and Safety Policy Medical Conditions Policy Health and Safety Policy Dental Health Policy
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PURPOSE

Children encounter many other children and adults within the Service environment, which can result in the contracting of infectious illnesses. Our Service has a duty of care to ensure that children, families, educators and visitors of the Service are provided with a high level of protection during the hours of the Service's operation. We aim to manage illnesses and prevent the spread of infectious diseases throughout the Service. Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases before they come into contact with them in the community. Immunisation not only protects individuals, but also others within the community, by reducing the spread of disease and illnesses.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

INFORMATION TO BE DISPLAYED AT THE SERVICE.

INFORMATION	WEBSITE	PHONE NUMBER
The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Service	http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/national-immunisation-program-schedule	1800 671 811
The Victorian Immunisation Schedule	https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/immunisation-schedule-vaccine-eligibility-criteria/immunisation-schedule-victoria	
Better Health Channel	https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthy-living/immunisation-childhood	

Note homeopathic immunisation and/or medication is not recognised.

NEW IMMUNISATION REQUIREMENTS

- Only parents of children (less than 20 years of age) who are fully immunised or are on a recognised catch-up schedule can receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and the Family Tax Benefit Part A end of year supplement.
- The relevant vaccinations are those under the National Immunisation Program (NIP), which covers the vaccines usually administered before age five. These vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR).
- Children with medical contraindications or natural immunity for certain diseases will continue to be exempt from the requirements.
- Conscientious objection and vaccination objection on non-medical grounds will no longer be a valid exemption from immunisation requirements.
- **From 1 January 2016** children who are unvaccinated due to their parent's conscientious objection will no longer be able to be enrolled in childcare in Victoria. Children who cannot be fully vaccinated due to a medical condition or who are on a recognised catch-up schedule will still be able to be enrolled upon presentation of the appropriate form signed by a medical practitioner.
- Families eligible to receive family assistance payments and have children less than 20 years of age, who may not meet the new immunisation requirements, will be notified by Centrelink. (The ACIR was expanded from 1 January 2016 so you can submit the details of vaccinations given to persons less than 20 years of age.)

Refer to Immunisation Policy for more information

Management will ensure:

- That all information regarding the prevention of infectious diseases is sourced from a recognised health authority.
- The implementation of recommendations from Staying Healthy in Child Care – Preventing the spread of Infectious Diseases in the early childhood environment.
- Children are protected from harm by ensuring relevant policies and procedures are followed regarding health and safety within the Service.
- They collect, maintain, and appropriately store the required enrolment documents and enrolment information of children in the Service.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible person will ensure:

- A hygienic environment is maintained.
- Cleaning charts are completed each day and signed by the Educator.
- Children are directed in their understanding of health and hygiene throughout the daily program and routine.
- Educators and Staff are aware of relevant immunisation guidelines for children and themselves.
- Information is collected on enrolment and maintained regarding each child's immunisation status, and any medical conditions.
- To provide families with relevant sourced materials and information on infectious diseases, health and hygiene including:
 - The current Victorian Immunisation Schedule for children
 - Exclusion guidelines in the event of an infectious illness at the Service for children that are not immunised or have not yet received all their immunisations
 - Advice and information regarding any infectious diseases in general, and information regarding any specific infectious illnesses that are suspected/present in the Service
- To provide information to families about an infectious disease by displaying and/or emailing the details when a notifiable infection disease is diagnosed in a child in care at the Service..
- That an illness record form is completed no later than 24 hours of an illness occurring, remaining up to date and current
- All educators are mindful and preserve confidentiality of individual children's medical circumstances
- Children's enrolment records are updated with regards to immunisation as required, (i.e. as children reach age milestones for immunisation), or at least twice a year
- Advise staff of the recommended immunisations for people working with children
- To retain current records of staff immunisation status and ensure educators are familiar with procedures for exclusion of educators as well as children in the event of an infectious illness
- To provide opportunities for educators to source pertinent up to date information on the prevention of infectious diseases, and maintaining health and hygiene from trusted sources
- To notify and implement the advice of the health department, or local health unit regarding a notifiable Infectious Diseases as required
- To provide opportunities for staff, children and families to have access to health professionals by organising visits/guest speakers to attend the service to confirm best practice.
- Children do not attend the Service if they are unwell. If a child has been sick they must be well for 24 hours (ie. 'the next day') before returning to the Service. For example, if a child is absent due to illness or is sent home due to illness they will be unable to attend the next day as a minimum. The

Nominated Supervisor may approve the child's return to the Service, if families provide a doctor's certificate/clearance outlining the child is no longer contagious and in full health.

- Toys and equipment that are absorbent and hard to clean will be aired in sunlight
- Washable toys and equipment will be washed in detergent and warm water or the dishwasher and aired to dry. All toys and equipment that have been cleaned will be recorded on the toy cleaning register.
- All cleaning procedures will be recorded on the Service's Cleaning Checklist.
- Furnishings, fabric, tablecloths and pillowcases are to be laundered at the end of each week and hung out to dry. This will be increased as needed during winter months or during an outbreak of illness in the Service.
- Floor surfaces are to be cleaned on a daily basis after each meal and at the end of each day.
- Toilets/bathrooms are to be cleaned in the middle of the day, the end of the day and whenever needed throughout the day using Germex neutral detergent, mops and paper towel.
- Disposable paper towel and Germex neutral detergent are used to clean bodily fluids off beds, floors, bathrooms, etc.

Educators will ensure:

- That any child suspected of having an infectious illness are responded to and their health and emotional needs supported at all times.
- To implement appropriate health and safety procedures, when treating ill children.
- Families are aware of the need to gather their children as soon as practicable.
- Advise families that they will need to alert the Service if their child is diagnosed with an Infectious Illness.
- To maintain their own immunisation status, and advise the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor of any updates to their immunisation status.
- To provide diverse opportunities for children to participate in hygiene practices, including routine opportunities, and intentional practice.
- To take into consideration the combination of children to decrease the risk of attaining an infectious illness when planning the routines/program of the day.
- To adhere to the Services health and hygiene policy including:
 - Hand washing
 - Daily cleaning of the Service
 - Wearing gloves (particularly when in direct contact with bodily fluids)
 - Appropriate handling and preparation of food

- Maintain up to date knowledge with respect to Health and Safety through on going professional development opportunities.
- Children are not to share beds at the same time
- Paper Towel and Germex neutral detergent is used to clean the beds after each use
- Any toy that is mouthed by a child is to be placed in the mouthed toy container located in an area inaccessible to children to be washed with warm soapy water at the end of the day. All washable toys out on display for the children are to be washed on a weekly basis to decrease the risk of cross contamination and recorded with the date and a signature as evidence.
- All play dough is to be made fresh every week. If there is an outbreak of vomiting and/or diarrhoea, or any other contagious communicable disease play dough is to be discarded at the end of each day and a new batch made during this time. Children are to encouraged to wash their hands before and after using the play dough.
- A weekly clean will be carried out on other surfaces that may transmit germs such as doorknobs, low shelving, etc. This will be increased if an outbreak has been recorded in the Service
- If a child has a toileting accident, soiled items will be discarded and other items will be placed in a plastic bag with the child's name on it in and stored in a soiled items container.

Families will:

- Advise the Service of their child's immunisation status, by providing an approved written documentation of for the Service to copy and place in the child's file.
- Advise the Service when their child's immunisation/medical condition is updated to ensure that enrolment records are up to date.
- Provide sufficient spare clothing, particularly if your child is toilet training.
- Continue to pay any fees for absences, quarantine or exclusion from childcare.

Source

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations

ECA Code of Ethics

Guide to the National Quality Standard

[http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/67D8681A67167949CA257E2E000EE07D/\\$File/No-Jab-No-Pay.pdf](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/67D8681A67167949CA257E2E000EE07D/$File/No-Jab-No-Pay.pdf).

Department of Human Resources: National Immunisation Program Schedule
NHMRC

Staying Healthy Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services 5th edition

Medicare Australia

Public Health Act 2010 (as amended by Public Health Amendment (Vaccination of Children Attending Child Care Facilities) Act 2013

Public Health Regulation 2012

Revised National Quality Standard

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	June 2018	NEXT REVIEW DATE	June 2019
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated the opening statement, included the ‘Related Policy’ section and made general improvements to grammar to support further understanding and implementation. 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor changes made to policy and terminology to ensure best practice 	June 2018	
October 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated the references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard 	June 2018	
March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added clause to state parents/guardians are liable for continued payment of fees in the event of an absence, exclusion or quarantine from childcare. 	March 2021	