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 an early childhood education and care service are also at increased risk of contracting certain infectious illnesses. Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases. Our Service implements the Australian Government Department of Health, '*No Jab No Play*' policy.

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 NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 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
173	Prescribed information to be displayed
175(2)(c)	Prescribed information to be notified to the Regulatory Authority- (2) any circumstance arising at the service that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or children attending the service

RELATED POLICIES

Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy Enrolment Policy Family Communication Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy	Orientation of Families Policy Pregnancy in Early Childhood Policy Record Keeping and Retention Policy Work Health and Safety Policy

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, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers 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'.

Children must meet the immunisation requirements to be eligible for Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A and Child Care Subsidy (CCS). As of January 2018, unvaccinated children due to their parent's conscientious objection are no longer able to receive CCS benefits. Children who cannot be fully vaccinated due to a medical condition or who are on an approved catch-up schedule may still be able to receive CCS benefits.

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
- advise parents and families about the National Immunisation Program (NIP)
- 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 (Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) as evidence)
- provide staff and families with information about vaccine-preventable diseases
- display wall charts about childhood immunisation schedules in each room
- review children's immunisation regularly, updating the child's records kept at the service, and send reminder letters and emails to families as required
- develop a staff immunisation record that documents each staff member's previous infection or immunisations (including dates)
- require all new and current staff to complete the staff immunisation record
- update staff immunisation records as staff become vaccinated
- 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 (PHU) of any outbreak of vaccine preventable diseases (1300 066 055)

- notify families when an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs though 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 through the NQA-ITS
- 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 female employees of childbearing age to discuss Cytomegalovirus during pregnancy (CMV) with their doctor if they are planning a pregnancy and inform management so that their individual risk can be assessed and managed. There is NO vaccination to prevent against infection with CMV. Educators working with young children in ECEC services have an occupational risk of contracting CMV [see: *Pregnancy in Early Childhood Policy*].

FAMILIES WILL:

- adhere to the Service's policies regarding *Dealing with Infectious Diseases*, *Immunisation*, *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Sickness Policies* and exclusion requirements
- 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. A current AIR Immunisation History Statement can be accessed at any time by the parent/guardian through logging in to their Medicare online account: Services Australia
- support their child's exclusion from the Service if there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease at the Service or if they come into contact with a person with a vaccine preventable disease, even if there is no outbreak at the Service.

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- Immunisation saves lives

Currently there are different immunisation requirements for early childhood education and care services across states and territories. National and state legislation to immunisation requirements for child care are listed below. (NCIRS- No Jab, No Play, No Jab, No Pay).

Victoria (VIC)
Children must be fully immunised to attend early childhood education and care services. A current Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) must be provided to services.
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 • Department of Health, Victoria Immunisation Program- children https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children Telephone - 1300 882 008 • No Jab No Play for early childhood education and care services • Australian Government Australian Imminustion Register • Australian Government Immunisation history statement

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

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

Time Out Brochure Why do I need to keep my child at home?

No Jab No Play for early childhood education and care services (VIC)

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. (2025). *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
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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). (2024) . No Jab No Play, No Jab No Pay:
National Health and Medical Research Council. (2024). *Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (6th Ed.). NHMRC. Canberra.
Pregnancy Birth and Baby. *Cytomegalovirus (CMV) during pregnancy*.

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Krystle Hills	Centre Manager	21/05/2025
POLICY REVIEWED	May 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	May 2026
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy maintenance • minor edits • updated state and territory immunisation requirements and links • soucres checked for currency and updated as requried		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
MARCH 2024	• annual policy maintenance • minor edits within policy • updated information re: CMV for staff/educators who are pregnant		MARCH 2025
MARCH 2023	• annual policy maintenance • additional regulations added • name change of Control of Infectious Disease Policy to *Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy*		MARCH 2024

	• Vaccination requirements for COVID 19 removed • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • Continuous improvement section added	