



BLUE GUM

Early Learning & Child Care Centre

Immunisation and Disease Prevention Policy

To be read with - Infectious Diseases Policy

NQS

Qa2	2.1.2	Health practices and procedures - effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
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National regulations

Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	88	Infectious diseases
	90	Medical conditions policy
	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record

Aim

Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting individuals against infectious diseases. Immunisation also protects others in the community when immunisation rates in the community reach critical levels. Note homeopathic immunisation is not recognised.

Related Policies

Enrolment policy
Infectious diseases policy
Privacy and confidentiality policy

Implementation

<http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au>

Parent/guardian responsibilities

Parents/guardians who wish to enrol their child are required to provide a copy of their child's immunisation history statement from the Australian immunisation register at the time of enrolment and re-enrolment. The statement must be dated within the last two months of enrolment or re-enrolment. The AIR maintains immunisation records for children until they turn 20. The statements

can be requested using Medicare online accounts through MyGov, using express plus Medicare mobile app, by calling 1800 653 809 or by visiting the local Medicare or Centrelink office.

Parents/guardians must also:

- Provide updated copies of their child's immunisation record when the child receives a vaccine on the national or state immunisation schedule.
- Organise to have any overseas immunisation records transcribed onto the air and provide a copy of the air immunisation history statement when received. We do not accept overseas immunisation records because they often differ from the Australian immunisation schedule. Children vaccinated overseas must attend an immunisation provider (eg doctor) who will assess the overseas record and offer appropriate immunisations. The provider will complete an immunisation history form.
- Inform the nominated supervisor or educators if their child has come into contact with someone with a vaccine preventable or infectious disease.
- Pay fees while their child is excluded.

Immunisations are available from doctors, and from local immunisation clinics - see <https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/>.

Nominated Supervisor Responsibilities

The nominated supervisor will:

- Ensure children do not attend the service unless they provide a copy of their child's immunisation history statement from the Australian immunisation register(air) at the time of enrolment and re-enrolment. (If a parent/guardian cannot provide this statement, for example children are from overseas, the nominated supervisor will make a report to the chief health officer.)
- Maintain an immunisation register which records the immunisation status of each child enrolled at the service. Immunisation certificates will be placed in the child's file.
- Regularly remind parents/guardians to update their child's immunisation details via newsletters, emails, or letters
- Provide a copy of a child's immunisation record and certificates to:
 - Parents/guardians so they can enrol the child at another education and care service or
 - The approved provider or nominated supervisor of another service at which the child may enrol.
- Comply with all requests for information and action from the chief health officer (CHO) in relation to immunised and unimmunised children if requested to do so, including:
 - Providing a report in the approved format to the CHO about the immunisation status of a child or children
 - Providing a report in the approved format to the CHO about a child who has or is believed to have contracted a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease.
 - Excluding a child who has not been vaccinated against a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease.
 - Closing all or part of the service in line with any direction given by the CMO to limit or prevent the spread of a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease.
- Provide information to parents/guardians about the benefits of immunizing children against seasonal influenza.

- Ensure the national and state immunisation schedules are displayed. These can be accessed from
 - The national immunisation program schedule <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/>
 - The WA immunisation schedule <http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au>

Exclusion periods

The nominated supervisor or educators may exclude a child who is not fully immunised (ie received all vaccines recommended for their age) for a period of time if there is a case of a vaccine preventable disease at the service, or if the child has been in contact with someone outside the service who has a vaccine preventable disease. This will help to protect the child and assist in containing the spread of the disease. Exclusion periods will be based on recommendations by the national health and medical research council (NHMRC) where these do not conflict with any advice from the child's doctor. In these cases, the nominated supervisor has ultimate discretion about the length of the exclusion period.

Where the nominated supervisor excludes an unimmunised child in line with a direction from the chief health officer, he or she will write to the child's parents/guardians naming the disease the child is not immune to, and the period of time the CMO states the child must not attend.

Employee immunisations

It is important that employees remain up to date with their vaccinations both to protect themselves and children in their care. The NHMRC recommends that employees are immunised against:

- Hepatitis a
- Measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) for employees born during or since 1966 who don't have records of two doses of MMR or don't have rubella antibodies.
- Varicella if not previously infected with chickenpox
- Pertussis (whooping cough). An adult booster dose is especially important for those educators caring for the youngest children who are not fully vaccinated.
- Influenza (annually)
- Hepatitis b if caring for unimmunised children with intellectual disabilities although risk is low.

The nominated supervisor will:

- Regularly provide employees with information about diseases that can be prevented by immunisation through for example in-service training sessions, fact sheets and staying healthy publication
- Regularly advise employees that some infectious diseases including chickenpox, cytomegalovirus and rubella (German measles) may injure an unborn child if the mother is infected while pregnant through for example in-service training sessions, fact sheets and staying healthy
- Ask new employees to confirm in writing that have been provided with this information during orientation/induction.
- Strongly encourage all non-immune staff to be vaccinated
- Advise female employees who are not fully immunised to consider doing so before getting pregnant.

- Advise pregnant employees to review the staying healthy publication and consult their doctor about the risks of working at the service.
- Ensure pregnant employees follow good infection control and hygiene procedures at all times.
- Exclude all unvaccinated employees during an outbreak of an infectious disease for periods recommended by the MHMRC, their doctor or at the nominated supervisor's discretion. Employees won't be paid for the duration of this period as it's not personal leave. They may be granted annual leave at the nominated supervisor's discretion.

Immunisation related payments for parents - child care subsidy

Families are eligible for childcare subsidy if their child is fully immunised, on an approved catch-up schedule or has an approved exemption from immunisation. Approved exemptions include a general practitioner has certified the child can't receive one or more vaccine(s) for medical reasons or the child has a natural immunity, but do not include conscientious objection.

This initiative reminds parents/guardians about the importance of immunising their children at each of the milestones. Further information is available at <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/>

Sources

Education and care services national law and regulations

National quality standard

National immunisation program schedule

Staying healthy 5th edition NHMRC

Medicare Australia

Public health act 2016

Public health regulations 2017

department of health WA

Strengthening immunisation reporting requirements guidelines for childcare services, kindergartens, and schools dept of health

Strengthening immunisation reporting requirements frequently asked questions

A new tax system (family assistance) act 1999 (includes no job no pay)

Review

the policy will be reviewed annually by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested parties.

Last reviewed: February 2023

date for next review: February 2024