

# Tocumwal Pre-School

**SECTION:** 2 – Children’s Health and Safety

**POLICY NO:** 2.5.2

**POLICY:** Immunisation

**REVIEW DATE:**

**DATE OF APPROVAL:**

## **Introduction**

Ensuring the health and safety of children and staff, and supporting children’s ongoing wellbeing, is a core focus in our Centre. Educators need to be aware of the likelihood of young children being exposed to an infectious illness whilst in care. Maintaining hygiene practices within the service and teaching young children about health and hygiene will assist in the prevention of infectious diseases. Providing families with timely and current information will further support this process. Immunisation is a means of protecting people against diseases that can have serious complications. Immunisation, defined exclusion periods and good hygiene practices reduces the potential risk of exposure within the early childhood environment.

## **Goals – What are we going to do?**

The Centre follows all recommended guidelines from relevant authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases and provides all families and staff with information on immunisation, vaccines and recognised exclusion periods defined by the National Health and Medical Research Council. Providing information and keeping up to date records will ensure the Centre is meeting the needs of the staff, children and families and allowing them to make informed decisions about immunisation.

## **National Quality Framework, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety**

### ***National Quality Framework Standard 2.1 Each child’s health is promoted***

- 2.1.1 Each child’s health needs are supported

- 2.1.4 Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognized guidelines

**National Quality Framework, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities**

***National Quality Framework Standard 6.2 Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing are respected***

- 6.2.1 The expertise of families is recognized and they share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing
- 6.2.2 Current information is available to families about community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing

**Strategies - How will it be done?**

**The Approved Provider will:**

- ensure that all information regarding the prevention of infectious diseases is sourced from a recognised health authority, such as: Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5th Edition), National Health and Medical Research Council and the NSW Ministry of Health, or NSW public hospitals websites;
- implement the recommendations from Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services to prevent the spread of infectious diseases at the service;
- ensure that children are reasonably protected from harm by working with the Nominated Supervisor and Educators on developing, implementing and reviewing policy that will guide health and safety procedures within the service; and

- collect, maintain, and store appropriately the required enrolment documents and enrolment information of children in the service.

**The Nominated Supervisor will:**

Develop procedures for:

- providing families and staff with relevant infectious diseases and immunisation information; including current research, available vaccines and local medical services and immunisation clinics. This will be provided to staff and families in home languages.
- ensuring staff are aware of relevant immunisation guidelines for children and themselves; and
- maintaining relevant records regarding the current status of the immunisation of staff (See Section 4, Policy 4.4.1) and children at the service, as well as any relevant medical conditions of children at the service.
- Develop an enrolment procedure that captures all required information regarding the children's immunisation status, and any medical conditions.
- Provide relevant sourced materials to families about:
  - the current NSW Immunisation Schedule for children;
  - exclusion guidelines for children that are not immunised or have not yet received all of their immunisations in the event of an infectious illness at the service, upon induction at the service;

- advice and information regarding any infectious diseases in general, and information regarding any specific infectious illnesses that are suspected/present in the service; and
- providing information on illnesses (as soon as practicable after the occurrence of an infectious disease).

**This will be done by:**

- Advising staff of the recommended immunisations for people working with children as per the Immunisation Handbook - 10th Edition (2013);
- Maintaining current records of staff immunisation status (See Section 4, Policy 4.4.1) and ensuring educators familiarity with written procedures for exclusion of educators as well as children in the event of an infectious illness;
- Providing relevant sourced materials to families & staff in their orientation handbooks when they commence at the Centre about:
  - the current NSW Immunisation Schedule for children;
  - exclusion guidelines for children that are not immunised or have not yet received all of their immunisations in the event of an infectious illness at the service, based on advice from the Public Health Unit (See Section 2, Policy 2.5.3)

- advice and information regarding any infectious diseases in general, and information regarding any specific infectious illnesses that are suspected/present in the service; and
- Providing information to families as soon as practicable of the occurrence of an infectious disease that describe the:
  - nature of illness;
  - incubation period; and
  - infectious and exclusion periods.

This information will be sourced from a reliable source such as, *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th Edition), National Health and Medical Research Council (2013).

- If any outbreak occurs within the Centre, the Nominated Supervisor will follow the Centre's written procedure to contact the Public Health Unit and report information as directed by NSW Department of Health (See Section 2, Policy 2.5.5).
- The Centre will keep children's immunisation history statements from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register for at least 3 years after the child leaves the service.

**Educators will:**

- Ensure that any children that are suspected of having an infectious illness are responded to and their health and emotional needs supported at all times;
- Implement appropriate health and safety procedures, when tending to ill children;
- Ensure that families are aware of the need to collect their children as soon as practicable to ensure the child's comfort;

- Advise families that they will need to alert the service if their child is diagnosed with an Infectious Illness;
- Maintain their own immunisation status, and advise the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor of any updates to their immunisation status;
- Take into consideration the grouping of children to reduce the risk of acquiring an infectious illness when planning the routines/program of the day;

**Families will provide on enrolment:**

To enrol in our service, families must provide a copy of one or more of the following documents:

- ACIR Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is up to date with their scheduled vaccinations. An ACIR Immunisation History statement for all children will be requested prior to enrolment and a photocopy will be kept and filed with children's records. Families are required to provide the Centre with an updated copy of immunisation information each time their child receives an updated immunisation. Parents/guardians who fail to provide the required documents will not be permitted to enrol their child in the Centre.

\*\*These forms need to be signed by the doctor/immunisation provider and lodged with Medicare and a copy provided by the parent to the centre on enrolment; or

- ACIR Immunisation Medical Exemption form (IMM011) which has been certified by an immunisation provider,

[www.humanservices.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/im011-1512en.pdf](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/im011-1512en.pdf) or;

- Interim vaccination objection form for enrolment in NSW child care centres

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Documents/vaccination-objection-form-for-child-care-centres.pdf>

This has been developed for use during 2016 while the Public Health Act undergoes its scheduled review process. Please note that these interim arrangements apply to children enrolled after 1 January 2016 only. Children who were enrolled in 2015 to commence child care in 2016 do not need to complete the new forms.

- An ACIR Immunisation History form (IM013) on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule.
- A copy of their child's immunisation details can also be obtained at any time:
  - by calling the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809
  - through Medicare Online Services at [www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online)
  - by requesting a statement by emailing [acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au)
- by visiting the local Department of Human Services Service Centre, Medicare office or Centrelink office
- Overseas immunisation records must not be accepted. Children who were vaccinated overseas will need to have their immunisation records assessed by an immunisation provider who will transfer the information to the ACIR. A revised Immunisation History Statement will then be issued to parents/guardians.
- Advise the Centre when their child's immunisation/medical condition is updated and provide this information to the Centre to ensure that enrolment records are up to date;
- Have the opportunity to provide input into the review and effectiveness of policies and procedures of the service via various methods.
- Families choosing not to immunise their child will be informed that their child may be excluded from care if there is a case of a communicable disease within the Centre, based on advice from the Public Health Unit (See Section 2, Policy 2.5.3)

### **Statutory Legislation & Considerations**

- *National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care , Council of Australian Governments December 2011*
- *NSW Public Health Amendment (Vaccination of Children Attending Child Care Facilities) Act 2013*
- *Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations 2014, Reg 12(b)*

## Sources

- Community Child Care Co-operative Ltd. (NSW)
- NSW Department of Health - [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)  
[http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/childcare\\_ga.aspx](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/childcare_ga.aspx)
- Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit For Early Childhood Education and Care Services, NSW Department of Health 2013,  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Documents/Immunisation-Enrolment-Toolkit.pdf>
- National Health and Medical Research Council - [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)
- Immunise Australia program - [www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)