



## 2.02 IMMUNISATION

### Purpose Statement

Childhood diseases can have serious health consequences for children, especially young children and when groups of children are together, illness and disease can spread rapidly. Immunisation is a reliable way to prevent many childhood diseases.

Educators and staff members who work in an ECECS are at increased risk of contracting certain infectious illnesses. To help minimise the spread of infectious disease, children are to be fully vaccinated before they start WFDC. Immunisation helps to:

- protect children from diseases that are preventable.
- protect others, who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons, from being exposed to infectious diseases.

WFDC implements the Australian Government Department of Health, 'No Jab No Play' legislation. A child's Immunisation Status is an important component of the enrolment process.

### Scope

This policy applies to all salaried full time and part time staff (including casuals), Educators, children and families of the Service.

### Definitions

*ECECS*: Early Childhood Education and Care Service.

*WFDC*: Windermere Family Day Care.

*'No Jab, No Play'*: Victorian government legislation that requires parents/carers to provide evidence that their child has received all the vaccines they need and can confirm enrolment in an ECECS. Following enrolment, parents are required to keep this evidence up to date with the ECECS.

*NIP*: The National Immunisation Program Schedule is a series of immunisations given at specific times throughout life. The immunisations range from birth to through to adulthood.

*AIR*: The Australian Immunisation Register.

*Telstra Desktop Messaging*: a web application that allows SMS (short message service) & MMS (multimedia message service) messages to be sent to multiple people at the same time, from a computer, laptop, tablet or mobile phone.

*General Practitioner (GP)*: a licensed medical physician who is not a specialist but treats all illnesses.

*Contraindication*: a medical reason that makes it inadvisable to prescribe a particular drug or employ a particular procedure or treatment.

### Policy Statement

WFDC HAS A DUTY OF CARE TO ENSURE THAT ALL CHILDREN, FAMILIES, EDUCATORS AND STAFF ARE PROTECTED FROM INFECTIOUS DISEASES WHILST ATTENDING A WFDC SERVICE.



## 2.02 IMMUNISATION

WFDC IS COMMITTED TO PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES THROUGH MONITORING THE IMMUNISATION STATUS OF CHILDREN AND COMPLYING WITH RECOMMENDED EXCLUSION GUIDELINES AND PERIODS.

### Procedures

#### **Responsibilities of the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person:**

1. To ensure that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met.
2. To ensure WFDC Educators, staff and families have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedures.
3. To ensure, when required, parents/guardians are provided with information about:
  - a. Requirements of the law for enrolment
  - b. Immunisation (NIP)
  - c. Infectious diseases and exclusion periods
  - d. Locating and accessing immunisation services
  - e. Obtaining immunisation documents required for enrolment.
4. To ensure that an Immunisation History Statement from the AIR 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 (see below for more information regarding medical exemption). Enrolment will not be confirmed until a current Immunisation History Statement from the AIR is received.
5. To ensure that, if an Immunisation History Statement reads the child is '*not up to date*', it is returned to the parent/guardian for follow up. A child who is '*not up to date*' with immunisations, must NOT be enrolled until the acceptable documentation is provided.
6. To consult with families experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage, informing them that they may enrol their child with the service, without the relevant documentation (i.e. Statement from the AIR), where they qualify for the 16-week grace period. This provides vulnerable or disadvantaged families with an extended timeframe (i.e. 16 weeks) to submit the relevant documentation. (See below for more information regarding the 16-week grace period).
7. Where a family advises that their child was immunised overseas, refer them to a doctor or an immunisation nurse to review the child's immunisation history for compliance with the Australian immunisation schedule. The child can NOT be enrolled until the AIR is informed of the child's immunisation history and a Statement is created detailing follow up requirements. This may include a vaccine catch-up schedule.
8. To review children's immunisation status regularly, updating the child's records kept at the WFDC service, and sending reminder emails to families as required.
9. To provide children's updated Immunisation History Statements to Educators for their records.



## 2.02 IMMUNISATION

10. To maintain the privacy of all enrolled children by not sharing information regarding their immunisation status with other enrolled families/children. This information must only be provided in accordance with applicable privacy laws.
11. To notify the Department of Health and Human Services immediately on 1300 651 160, and the Regulatory Authority within 7 days, of any incidence of a notifiable infectious illness or disease diagnosed within a WFDC service.
12. To forward any WFDC Educator Incident Report Forms submitted, relating to a notifiable infectious illness or disease diagnosed within a WFDC service to: [ohs@windermere.org.au](mailto:ohs@windermere.org.au) within 24 hours of the notification.
13. To notify families if an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs within a WFDC service via email or Telstra Desktop Messaging.
14. To exclude any child, who is not immunised, from the WFDC Service, if and when an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs, to protect that child and to prevent further spread of infection.
15. To advise families who have chosen not to vaccinate their child due to their beliefs, that, under Victorian law, the service is NOT allowed to enrol the child without acceptable documentation (i.e. medical exemption – refer to further information below).

### **Responsibilities of the Educator:**

1. To remind families to provide children's updated Immunisation History Statements to WFDC, as and when required.
2. To forward a copy of a child's updated Statement, to [EducatorSupport@windermere.org.au](mailto:EducatorSupport@windermere.org.au), as soon as possible, should a family provide the updated copy to the Educator.
3. To maintain the privacy of all enrolled children by not sharing information regarding their immunisation status with other enrolled families/children.
4. To notify the WFDC Manager or Team Leader, by phone immediately, should a child or adult attending a WFDC residence or venue, be suspected of having an infectious disease.
5. To submit a WFDC Educator Incident Report Form to: [EducatorSupport@windermere.org.au](mailto:EducatorSupport@windermere.org.au) within 12 hours, should a child or adult attending a WFDC residence or venue, be diagnosed as having an infectious disease. (Refer to the Incident Reporting procedure for further information).

### **Responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian:**

1. On enrolling a child into WFDC, parents/guardians are required to provide the Coordination Unit with a copy of one or more of the following documents:
  - a. An AIR Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is 'up to date' with their scheduled vaccinations; or
  - b. An AIR Immunisation History Form on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule; or
  - c. An AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form which has been certified by a GP.



## 2.02 IMMUNISATION

2. To provide the Coordination Unit with an updated copy of their child's current immunisation record every 6 months, or when the next scheduled immunisation has been completed.

**NOTE:** A copy of your child's Immunisation History Statement can be accessed by:

- a. Logging in to Medicare online account: MyGov website or application
  - b. Calling the AIR on 1800 653 809, or
  - c. Visiting a Medicare or Centrelink office.
3. To support an unimmunised child's exclusion from WFDC if there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease or if they come into contact with a person with a vaccine preventable disease, even if there is no evidence of an outbreak at the Service.

### **What is considered a 'medical exemption':**

1. Some children may be exempt from the requirement to be fully vaccinated on medical grounds. Valid medical reasons include:
  - a. an anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of a particular vaccine, or
  - b. an anaphylactic reaction to any vaccine component
  - c. has a disease which lowers immunity (such as leukaemia, cancer, HIV/AIDS, SCID), or
  - d. is having treatment which lowers immunity (such as chemotherapy).
2. If a child has a valid medical reason as to why they cannot be vaccinated, a GP needs to complete and sign a *Medicare Immunisation Exemption Medical Contraindication Form* and send it to the AIR.
3. The parent/guardian then needs to obtain an updated Statement from the AIR that:
  - a. indicates the child is up to date with all the vaccines that are medically safe for them to have and
  - b. lists the vaccines that they cannot have due to a medical contraindication.
4. Upon receiving an updated Statement from the AIR, the parent/guardian is required to submit it to the Coordination Unit to confirm enrolment.

### **16-Week Grace Period:**

1. A 16-week grace period can be entered into if a child/family, who has not provided acceptable immunisation status documentation, answers 'yes' to one or more of the questions below:
  - a. Is your child Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?
  - b. Do you or your child hold a health care card?
  - c. Do you hold a pensioner concession card?
  - d. Do you hold a veterans affairs Gold or White card?
  - e. Is your child from a multiple birth of triplets or more?
  - f. Are you and your child currently evacuated from your home due to an emergency such as a flood or bushfire?
  - g. Is your child in the care of an adult who is not the child's parent due to an emergency or exceptional circumstances such as parental illness or incapacity?
  - h. Did you arrive in Australia as a refugee or asylum seeker?
  - i. Is child protection involved with your child or have they been in the past?
  - j. Has your family received support through Family Services?



## 2.02 IMMUNISATION

- k. Are you living in crisis or emergency accommodation or are you being supported by a housing agency or a family violence service?

**NOTE:** A *Grace Period Eligibility Assessment form* is available to ascertain eligibility. This form is for use by the service, in conversation with the parent. It is not to be handed to parents for completion on their own.

2. The Coordination Unit will support families in obtaining an Immunisation History Statement from the AIR within 16 weeks of the date the child first attends the service.
3. If acceptable immunisation documentation has not been provided by the end of the 16-week grace period, the Coordination Unit will provide families with ongoing support and information to bring their child's immunisations up to date.

### **Managing a Disease Outbreak:**

ECECS have a responsibility to help manage the spread of infectious diseases if a suspected case of an infectious disease arises. Management of a disease outbreak includes:

1. Contacting the Department of Health and Human Services immediately on 1300 651 160, should a child or adult attending a WFDC residence or venue, be suspected of having an infectious disease.  
**NOTE:** For a list of infectious diseases and exclusion requirements, please refer to the links section below.
2. Notifying families if an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs within a WFDC service via email or Telstra Desktop Messaging.
3. Excluding any child, who is not immunised, from the WFDC Service to protect that child and to prevent further spread of infection. In the instance of the child being immunised but the updated immunisation record has not been provided to WFDC yet, the child is to be considered as not being immunised.

### **Relevant Legislation/Standards**

- National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care Services including:
  - Education and Care Services National Law 2011 (Amended 2024)
  - Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Amended 2024)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations (2009) (Amended 2019)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014)
- 'No Jab, No Play' legislation

### **Related Policies & Links**

- WFDC Policies/Procedures:



## 2.02 IMMUNISATION

- 1.08 Enrolment
- 2.21 Occupational Health and Safety
- 2.23 Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- 2.24 Managing Medical Conditions
- 7.03 Incident Reporting
- [No Jab No Play for early childhood education and care services | health.vic.gov.au](https://health.vic.gov.au)
- [No Jab No Play - Better Health Channel](#)
- [School exclusion table for primary schools and children's services | health.vic.gov.au](https://health.vic.gov.au)