



IMMUNISATION AND INFECTION CONTROL

Links

Education and Care Services National Regulations: 77; 78; 79; 80; 168
National Quality Standard: 2.1.1; 2.1.2; 2.1.3; 2.2.1

Policy statement

Tropics Early Learning aims to protect and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all children, educators and families, minimising the risks associated with the spread of vaccine preventable diseases by encouraging the immunisation of children and staff, in accordance with the National Immunisation Program Schedule.

We will maintain a healthy and hygienic environment and minimise the spread of, and risks associated with, infectious diseases in the service.

Implementation

The most important ways to break the chain of infection and stop the spread of diseases are:

- effective hand hygiene
- exclusion of ill children and staff
- immunisation

Other strategies to help prevent infection include:

- cough and sneeze etiquette
- appropriate use of gloves
- effective environmental cleaning

Immunisation

Upon enrolment families are required to provide:

- A copy of a current Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is fully immunised for their age, in line with the National Immunisation Schedule, or a letter from a recognised immunisation provider stating that the child is up to date with their scheduled immunisations, or is on a recognised catch up schedule.
- If the child is unimmunised, an AIR Immunisation Exemption – Medical Contradiction Form signed by a recognised immunisation provider, or an AIR Immunisation Exemption – Conscientious Objection Form signed by a recognised immunisation provider, and the child's guardian.
- Forms can be downloaded from the Services Australia website - <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/organisations/health-professionals/forms/im011>.
- A copy of the National Immunisation Program Schedule will be available to all families upon enrolment.
- Overseas vaccination records must be assessed by a recognised immunisation provider before the child can be classified as being immunised.

Once the child has been accepted into the service:

- Each time a child receives an immunisation, it is the family's responsibility to provide the service with an updated copy of the child's immunisation status within 4 weeks of the child receiving the immunisation. If a child's immunisation status is not updated with the service, the child will be regarded as not being fully immunised and will be excluded from the service in the case of a vaccine preventable disease occurring within the Service. We will consider the Exclusion periods recommended by the National Health and Research Council.
- Families choosing not to immunise their child will be informed that their child will need to be excluded from the Service if there is a case of a vaccine preventable disease occurring within the Service
- The Service will consider children who have received homeopathic immunisation as not being immunised, and they will need to be excluded from the Service if there is a case of a vaccine preventable disease occurring within the Service.
- Information will be provided to families throughout the year on exclusion and immunisation, via newsletters, notice boards, online programming software, email.

Record keeping

- A register of children's immunisation records will be maintained by the service administration and updated accordingly. Families will be given reminders throughout the year if their child's immunisation records are not up to date.
- If requested, we will provide a copy of individual children's immunisation records and certificates to:
 - The parent/guardian of the child
 - The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor of another service at which the child may be enrolled, with the authorisation of the child's guardian.
- Records will be kept as per the requirements of the National regulations.

Immunisations for Staff and Educators

We will:

- Provide educators and staff with information about diseases that can be prevented by immunisation.
- Encourage all non-immune staff to be vaccinated based on the recommendations provided by the National Health and Medical Research Council for people participating in child related work, particularly those working in the Nursery room.

Hygiene and Infection Control

We will implement the following procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection:

- Implement cleaning schedules, to ensure a process of cleaning toys and equipment on a regular basis is adhered to, these will be displayed so that all educators are knowledgeable of what needs to be cleaned each day.
- Notify families of any infectious diseases in the service and advise families to keep their children home if they are unwell.
- Ensure staff and volunteers follow service procedures on hand washing/sanitising, toileting and cleaning up bodily fluid spills. These procedures will be displayed in the appropriate areas, in a prominent position, where they can easily be read by all staff members and volunteers.
- In circumstances when there is no running water available (e.g. temporary suspension of water service, or while on excursion), we will ensure that effective hand washing is achieved by using alternative hand sanitisers or wipes.
- Communicate and encourage effective hand washing to all children, staff, volunteers and families, by displaying posters and signs of hand washing techniques near basins and sinks (where possible)
- Ensure that hand sanitiser is available for all people entering the service.

- Incorporate health and hygiene information and procedures into the programs for the children – e.g. teaching children to effectively blow noses, procedures for hand washing, how germs are spread, flushing of toilets, etc.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitiser every time a child's nose is to be wiped and dispose of dirty tissues immediately.
- Encourage children to cover their noses and mouths when sneezing or coughing, washing and drying hands afterwards. If possible encourage them to sneeze/cough into their inner elbow, or use a tissue to cover their mouth and nose.
- Each child will be provided with clean eating utensils at mealtimes. These utensils will be washed after each use. Children will not share cups, food, bowls etc.
- Warm soapy water will be used for cleaning throughout the service, in the case of bodily fluids, a sanitiser will also be used.

Sources: *Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI). Australian Immunisation Handbook, Australian Government Department of Health, Canberra, 2018, immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au; Education and Care Services National Regulation; Staying Healthy – Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5th ed), 2012; National Quality Standard; No Jab No Pay legislation; Work Health and Safety Act, 2011*

Policy Redeveloped January 2023 (this policy replaces the Immunisation and Control of Infectious Diseases policies, see archived policies for previous versions)

Date of review	Modifications made	Approved
January 2023	Redeveloped policy	February 2023