

**Policy Statement**

Staff immunisation and associated health issues are considerations of Work, Health and Safety practice within our preschool. Staff members who work in an early childhood education and care service are at increased risk of contracting certain infectious illnesses. Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases.

**Policy Goals**

Staff and educators will be fully informed on immunisation and associated diseases. A voluntary staff immunisation record will be maintained at the preschool.

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

**Managing vaccinations in the workplace**

The Public Health Orders (PHO) place obligations on workers in areas where mandatory vaccination is required, not employers. However, as an employer of a relevant worker, you are able to request evidence of compliance with the PHO when the worker enters their place of work.

The following people may request evidence of vaccination status:

- the worker's employer
- the occupier of the workers place of work
- a police officer
- an authorised person (under the Public Health Act 2010).

Where requested, a worker must show:

- evidence of their name and place of residence,
- regarding proof the vaccination itself:
- an online immunisation history statement or
- a medical certificate from a medical practitioner in the form approved by the NSW Chief Health Officer.

## Roles and Responsibilities

**The Nominated Supervisor will:**

**Upon employment:**

Staff/educators are informed of infectious diseases that may be contracted when working with children. Information will be provided on mandated compulsory and recommended adult immunisation and vaccines for preventable diseases (see reference list) as part of induction procedures for new staff, students, and volunteers.

Staff/educators are advised to discuss with their doctor what precautions can be taken to minimise/prevent the risk of contracting infectious diseases. This is particularly important for women of childbearing age. Any female staff planning to become pregnant should consult their doctor about specific immunisation needs.

**Throughout employment of staff and educators: -**

- A voluntary up-to-date Staff Immunisation record will be maintained. The information contained within the record will be kept confidential and only used for the purpose of maintaining a safe workplace. It will not be shared with any other agency. Staff/educators are encouraged to volunteer information regarding immunisation status however this is not compulsory under legislation.

- If a vaccine preventable disease occurs in the preschool and a staff member is not immunised, the staff member is encouraged to inform the Director. Non immunised staff should consult their doctor to determine suitability to attend work during the outbreak.
- Follow recommendations and advice from a doctor regarding a decision to proceed with appropriate vaccination.
- Inform the nominated supervisor/coordinator as soon as possible if they are pregnant, and follow procedures as outlined in Tathra preschool's Work Health and Safety Policy.
- Continue to minimise their risk of exposure to infectious diseases by adhering to Tathra Preschool Work, Health and Safety Policies. All educators and staff are responsible for following the Health and Hygiene procedures and practices to minimise the risk of spreading infection. Educators/staff must take responsibility for following all hygiene policies and procedures outlined in the service policy manual and the Australian Government publication, Staying Healthy in Child Care.

### **NHMRC Recommendations for vaccinations of educators working with children:**

**Measles-mumps-rubella (MMR)** if non-immune - 2 doses (4 weeks apart). Free for anyone born during or since 1966.

**Pertussis (whooping cough)** included with diphtheria and tetanus - 1 dose (every 10 years). Free up to 19 years of age Free for pregnant women

**Influenza** - 1 dose (annual). Free for Aboriginal people. Free for those with underlying health problems

**Varicella (chicken pox) if non-immune** - 2 doses (4 weeks apart). Free up to 19 years of age; not needed if you have had chicken pox infection.

**Hepatitis A** - 2 doses (6 months apart). Not free\*

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the preschool will review this policy every 3 years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the preschool will ensure that families of children enrolled at the preschool are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the preschool; a family's ability to utilise the preschool; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

## Relevant Legislation

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to be read in conjunction with the Work Health and Safety Act 2012
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011:168;77;88
- National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care; Element 2.1.4; Element 2.3.2;

## Sources and References

- Safe Work Australia <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/industry-information/early-childhood-education/vaccination>
- Current Adult Immunisation Schedules can be accessed through the Immunise Australia website at [www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)

- The Australian Immunisation handbook, 9th edition (2008). National Health and medical research Council. Australian Government Department of Health and Aging.  
<https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/>
- Health & Safety in Children’s Centres’. Model Policies & Practises, 2nd Edition Revised (November 2003) School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales.
- Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Immunization of health-care workers: recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the Hospital Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC). MMWR - Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report 1997;46(RR-18):1-42.
- Bega Valley Medical Practice. 61 Carp Street, Bega. 6492 333.

**Updated**

April 2024

**Review Date**

2027 or when procedure, practice or legislation changes.