

## Procedure

# Protecting children against vaccine preventable diseases

Please note this procedure is mandatory and staff are required to adhere to the content

### Summary

<b>Publication date</b>	7 February 2017
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<b>Related legislation</b>	Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 (the Act), and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (National Regulations)
<b>Related policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks</b>	<p>Infection Control</p> <p>Health Support Planning</p> <p>Preschool Enrolment Policy</p> <p>Preschool Enrolment Guidelines</p> <p>Rural care enrolment and fee payment Policy</p> <p>Occasional care program Procedure</p> <p>Playcentre program Procedure</p> <p>Family Day Care – Children’s Health and Safety Standard <i>(draft awaiting approval)</i></p>
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<b>Policy officer (position)</b>	Policy Advisor, Early Childhood Services
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<b>Policy sponsor (position)</b>	Executive Director, Early Years and Child Development
<b>Executive director responsible (position and office)</b>	Executive Director, Early Years and Child Development
<b>Applies to</b>	<p>Children attending the following DECD services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• preschool</li> <li>• rural care</li> <li>• occasional care</li> <li>• playcentre</li> <li>• family day care</li> <li>• respite care</li> </ul>

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12/01/2017	1.0	First publication
07/02/2017	1.1	Minor edit to include the playcentre program within scope

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## 1. Title

Protecting children from vaccine preventable diseases procedure

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline:

- processes for recording and managing the vaccination status of children attending an early childhood service
- the requirement of a departmental operated early childhood service (“service”) to exclude children in the event of an occurrence of a vaccine preventable disease according to the [Childhood Immunisation schedule](#).

## 3. Scope

This procedure applies to children enrolled in and attending the following DECD early childhood operated services:

- preschools
- rural care
- occasional care
- playcentre
- family day care
- respite care

This procedure does not apply to children attending a DECD operated crèche, playgroup or parenting service.

## 4. Policy detail

Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases before they come into contact with them in the community. Immunisation not only protects individuals, but also others in the community, by reducing the spread of disease.

A number of immunisations are required in the first few years of a child’s life to protect them against the most serious infections of childhood. The immune system in young children does not work as well as the immune system in older children and adults because it is still immature. Therefore, more doses of vaccine are often needed.

Another reason why children get many immunisations is that new vaccines against serious infections continue to be developed. However, the number of injections is also being reduced by the use of combination vaccines, where several vaccines are combined into one injection.

While the responsibility for the prevention and control of infectious diseases is primarily with individuals, families and public health authorities, education and care services operated by DECD also have an important role to play.

The department values the importance of vaccinating children to:

- help protect them from diseases that can be prevented by vaccination

- help protect others who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons from being exposed to these diseases
- help protect DECD employees from diseases that can be prevented by vaccination.

In the event of an occurrence of a vaccine preventable disease according to the [Childhood Immunisation schedule](#) access to the vaccine status of children will identify those who are at risk of getting the disease and those who are able to pass the disease onto others.

Services must:

- request and sight the immunisation status of each child
- follow exclusion requirements in the event of an occurrence of a vaccine preventable disease
- support the prevention and control of transmission of infectious diseases by:
  - supporting the childhood immunisation schedule
  - providing prompt and consistent response to detected or suspected cases of disease.

DECD operated services are not expected to give expert advice or treat children, this is the role of medical practitioners and health authorities.

## 4.1 Recognised record of immunisation status

### 4.1.1 Australian Immunisation Childhood Register (ACIR) History Statement

The ACIR history statement can be accessed by:

- visiting [www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online)
- visiting a Medicare service centre
- phoning 1800 653 809
- emailing [acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au)

Note: A child's immunisation status is current when the date of 'next due immunisation(s)' (located at the bottom of the statement) is in the future or blank.

### 4.1.2 South Australian Child Health and Development Record (known as the 'Blue Book')

Parents are encouraged to take their child's Blue Book each time the child is immunised. The doctor or nurse administering the vaccine is required to complete each record entry in [section 2](#) of the book.

## 4.2 Providing immunisation records

### 4.2.1 2017 enrolments

By 24 February 2017 services must forward communication to families of enrolled children, requesting immunisation records be available for sighting at the service by 13 April 2017.

The staff person that sights the immunisation record is to notate the immunisation status on the child's enrolment form, initially the notation as confirmation.

Services are to record status (in accordance with section 4.5) as sighted.

#### 4.2.2 Post 2017 enrolments

As part of the enrolment process, parents are requested to make immunisation records available for sighting. The enrolling staff person will initial the enrolment form to confirm that the record has been sighted.

#### 4.2.3 Frequency of sighting records

A record of each vaccination is to be provided to a service for sighting within 2 weeks of the vaccination being administered or when next attending the service (whichever occurs first).

Where an immunisation record is not provided or where the record is outdated when sighted, then these children will be recorded as non-immunised.

Once a child has completed the recommended vaccinations from the childhood schedule (at 3 ½ - 4 years) no additional immunisation records are required to be sighted.

### 4.3 Exempt from vaccinations

Children who have a medical reason for not being vaccinated are required to have a general practitioner complete an [exemption form](#). A completed form should be sighted by the service. These children are to be recorded as non-immunised.

### 4.4 Homeopathic immunisation

Homeopathic immunisation is not recognised as a valid vaccination option. Children receiving homeopathic immunisation will be recorded as non-immunised.

### 4.5 Recording Immunisation status

Preschool or occasional care services will record the immunisation status in the Early Years System (EYS). The status will be recorded in the 'Child Details screen', 'Health tab', 'Scheduled Immunisations Received' as either:

- immunisation received
- not immunised
- information not supplied.

Rural care, playcentre and family day care (and respite care) services are to record the immunisation status of all children enrolled and attending in such a way that the service has immediate access to the information in the event of an occurrence of a vaccine preventable disease.

### 4.6 Exclusion requirements

If there is an occurrence of an infectious [vaccine preventable disease](#) (VPD) covered by the [Childhood Immunisation Program](#) at a service, then a child who is recorded as non-immunised is to be excluded in accordance with the [SA Health exclusion period guidelines](#).

## 4.7 Reporting requirements

The occurrence of a communicable disease, including a vaccine preventable disease covered by the [Childhood Immunisation Program](#), is a reportable matter in accordance with clause 174(2) of Schedule 1 of the Education and *Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011*.

All services are to lodge a report of an occurrence on IRMS in accordance with the [Injury Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure](#).

Note: an occurrence of a vaccine preventable disease is also a [notifiable condition](#) that is required by law to be reported by medical practitioners and health laboratories to SA Health.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Authority/responsibility for
Site leader	<p>Implementation and compliance with this procedure.</p> <p>Recording and maintaining the immunisation status of all children enrolled and attending in such a way that the service has immediate access to the information in the event of an occurrence of a vaccine preventable disease.</p> <p>Implementing the exclusion requirements (as stated in 4.6) in the event of an occurrence of a vaccine preventable disease according to the <a href="#">Childhood Immunisation schedule</a>.</p>
Family day care educator	Compliance with the procedure
Respite Care program manager	Ensuring compliance with the procedure is effectively managed
Respite Care program careprovider	Compliance with the procedure
FDC scheme manager	Ensuring compliance with the procedure is effectively managed

## 6. Monitoring, evaluation and review

This procedure will be reviewed in November 2017 to revise section 4.2.1 (2017 enrolments). Thereafter the procedure will be reviewed at least every year by the Early Childhood Services directorate in consultation with the Partnerships, Schools and Preschools, Health and Safety Services and DECD early childhood operated services. Reviews may also be undertaken at other times if there has been a change in legislation, Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) or DECD specifications.

## 7. Definitions and abbreviations

Term	Meaning
AIR	Australian Childhood Immunisation Register – collects all immunisation records for children up until their seventh birthday.
DECD	Department for Education and Child Development.
Immune deficiency	Immunodeficiency (or immune deficiency) is a state in which the immune system's ability to fight infectious disease and cancer is compromised or entirely absent. Most cases of immunodeficiency are acquired ("secondary") due to extrinsic factors that affect the patient's immune system.
In scope early childhood services	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• preschool / kindergarten</li> <li>• children's services centre</li> <li>• children's centre</li> <li>• playcentre</li> <li>• rural care</li> <li>• occasional care</li> <li>• DECD family day care schemes</li> <li>• DECD respite care program.</li> </ul>
Out of scope early childhood services	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DECD operated crèche</li> <li>• DECD operated playgroup</li> <li>• parenting services on a DECD site.</li> </ul>
Site leader	Any person who has the responsibility, management or control of a DECD workplace or work unit. This includes, but is not limited to executive directors, education directors, directors, principals, pre-school directors, managers, FDC managers, respite care program manager and supervisors.

## 8. Supporting documents

- [Work Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Injury, Incident, Reporting and Investigation Procedure](#)

- [Infection Control Procedure](#)
- Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular: [PC012 Information Privacy Principles Instruction 20 June 2016](#)
- [The Australian Immunisation Handbook](#)
- SA Health's [You've Got What?](#)
- [Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services](#)
- The Department of Health: [Series of National Guidelines](#)
- Childhood Immunisation Program: [Frequently asked questions](#) (SA Health)

## 9. References

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2012](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012](#)
- [Notifiable disease reporting](#) (SA Health)