

EDUCATION AND CARE GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Immunisation, Infectious Diseases & Illness Exclusion

Background

Immunisation is the best way to protect children against serious diseases.

From 1 January 2018, children who are unvaccinated due to their parent's conscientious objection can no longer be enrolled in education and care.

Exemptions apply for children who are on a recognised catch-up vaccination schedule or those who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons upon presentation of the appropriate AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption or AIR Immunisation History form signed by a medical practitioner.

The following temporary exemptions will apply within a 12 week period from date of enrolment in the education and care service:

- Those who are subject to a guardianship order under [section 79A](#) of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998;
- Those who have been placed in out-of-home care;
- Those who are being cared for by an adult who is not the child's parent due to exceptional circumstances such as illness or incapacity;
- Those who have been evacuated following a state of emergency (for example, a declared natural disaster);
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children.

The changes will apply to some registered and approved education and care services, including long day preschool and family day care (**FDC**). Before and after school care and school holiday care are exempt from these changes.

The Australian Government is not taking away the right of a family (caregivers/ parents/ guardians) to choose not to immunise their children. Vaccination is not compulsory and parents will continue to have the choice whether or not to vaccinate their child. However, conscientious objectors can no longer enrol their children into education and care and will need to make alternative arrangements.

Services may continue to provide care to unimmunised children who have been enrolled into care prior to 1 January 2018. Families of these children who have not met the immunisation requirements will be liable to pay the full costs of the child's care.

Admission of children at an education and care service will continue to be at the discretion of the service and in accordance with the relevant state or territory legislation regarding immunisation and access to education and care.

Purpose

The aim of council's education and care services is to ensure that a healthy and safe environment is maintained in accordance with sections [77](#) and [79](#) of the [Education and Care](#)

[Services National Regulations \(Regulations\)](#) and that the spread of infectious diseases are prevented.

A child's health is an important part of their well-being. If a child is ill, they are not able to enjoy their time in care and their attendance increases the chance of cross infection to other children. We believe that the health and wellbeing of all children and educators in care is of upmost importance and all steps will be taken to reduce the risks of cross infection. The most effective way to ensure this occurs is to exclude anyone from the care environment who is unwell.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In accordance with sections [85](#), [88](#) and [168](#) of the Regulations, all services must have policies and procedures that are followed by all staff members and FDC educators in the event that a child 'becomes ill'.

Before enrolling a child, the education and care service must obtain the immunisation history statement from families showing that the child's immunisation status is fully immunised for their age, or:

- an AIR Immunisation History Form on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch up schedule (temporary 6 months only);
- an AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form which has been certified by a GP.

Exclusion due to illness will be based on recommendations from [National Health and Medical Research Council: Staying Healthy - Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services \(5th Edition\)](#). A copy of this document is kept at each service and is available for reference.

The Illness Register is to be updated on each occasion when a child is identified as having an illness. This may be completed when a child is sent home from the centre, or when a parent advises that their child is ill. The purpose of the form is to track patterns in illness and identify when the public health unit is to be notified about an outbreak of an infectious disease is present at the centre.

All educators and families are encouraged to act in an educated and mature manner when dealing with infectious diseases and other illnesses. Remember that quality care should be available to all children.

IMMUNISATION

A copy of the child's Medicare immunisation history statement is the only form of immunisation status record accepted and must be kept at the service. Immunisation history statements can be obtained online from www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register/how-get-immunisation-history-statement. For more details go to www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation.

Staff/educators are to provide a copy of the immunisation history statement and any additional immunisation details to the service they work at to keep the immunisation register up-to-date whenever they receive a vaccination.

NSW Health and The National Health and Medical Research Council recommend all educators and staff are immunised against:

- Measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) if non-immune
- Pertussis (whooping cough) included with diphtheria and tetanus
- Influenza
- Varicella (chicken pox) if non-immune
- Hepatitis A

For more information, refer to Immunisation Programs on the NSW Health website - www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation.

It is a council requirement that all educators and staff are vaccinated against COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Refer to council's [COVID-19 Vaccination Procedure](#).

Immunisation records must be kept up-to-date at all times. It is the family's responsibility to keep their child's immunisation status documentation current.

A register of the age appropriate vaccination documentation needs to be maintained for each child (a register template is available at [Strengthening vaccination requirements for child care](#)) and in the event of specified vaccine preventable disease outbreak in an education and care centre, the public health officer can exclude children who are not vaccinated for that disease to protect them from infection and prevent them from passing diseases to others.

In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease in any of council's education and care services, children who are not immunised will be excluded for the duration of the outbreak as advised by the Department of Health.

Any days of exclusion must be paid for as per the Education and Care Fees Guiding Principle.

HIV, HEPATITIS AND BLOOD

- It is important that we prevent the spread of infectious diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis, and that the additional needs of individuals who are diagnosed are recognised. All families (caregivers/ parents/guardians) deserve the right to quality education and care.
- Our services will at all times follow proper Universal Control Procedures to eliminate the risk of transmission of HIV/Hepatitis as recommended by the World Health Organisation, the Department of Health and NSW Health.
- Educators, prospective employees, families and children shall not be discriminated against on the grounds of having or being assumed to have HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis. Full acceptance and support will be given by all services.

- If an educator is informed that a child, family or another educator is HIV positive or has Hepatitis this **MUST REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL** at all times. It is requested that families give the Centre Director of the service permission to inform educators in contact with the child. However, this information will be strictly confidential.
- Being infected with HIV or Hepatitis is not grounds for exclusion of a child, family or educators.
- No child, family or educator shall be denied first aid at any time.
- The service shall at all times follow the necessary hygiene procedures to eliminate the risk of transmission of HIV or Hepatitis.
- This includes educators and children thoroughly washing hands:
 - before preparation of food
 - before serving food
 - before eating
 - after toileting and nappy changing
 - after blowing noses
 - before (if possible) and after giving first aid.
- All services should have access to information issued by NSW Health and other resources to promote accurate information to families and educators regarding HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis.
- Education and Care educators' role includes showing support to children and their families in a sensible and informed manner.
- Should there be any queries please speak to the Centre Director of the service.
- Families are responsible to keep children with HIV at home during outbreaks of other infectious diseases in the Education and Care Services.

Procedure

Educators involved in toileting or nappy changing of children must exercise strict hygiene at all times

- Educators must wear disposable gloves when dealing with faeces, urine or blood.
- Wash blood, faeces and urine off the skin with warm soapy water.
- Protect any cuts or broken skin from direct contact with bodily fluids.
- Cover any cuts on educator's or children's skin with a waterproof dressing.
- Wipe vinyl-covered change mats with detergent/D10 and warm water after each change or use disposable nappy change paper.
- Floors must be cleaned at least twice a day.
- All equipment and toys will be washed in hot soapy water.
- Air, soap, detergent and disinfectant destroy the HIV virus.

All cases of external bleeding should be dealt with carefully

- Avoid contact with blood if hands or lower arms have cuts or open unhealed wounds.
- Disposable gloves must be worn and the hands and lower arms washed thoroughly with soap and water if in contact with or splashed by blood.

- When cleaning or treating a child's face that has blood on it, do not put yourself at eye level with the child – their blood could enter your eyes or mouth if the child is crying or coughing.
- If educators or children get blood splashed in their eyes or face it should be rinsed with running water for several minutes, as soon as possible. If you have any concerns seek medical advice.
- Dispose of or place in sealed plastic bags any bloodied clothes as per Cleanliness and Hygiene Guiding Principle.
- Any biting incidences which result in skin breaking must be washed with warm soapy water and rinse the biting child's mouth.

Should any blood spills occur it should be cleaned as follows:

- Use spill kits
- Wear disposable gloves
- Soak up with paper towel
- Clean up area with detergent/D10 and warm water
- Wipe the area again with paper towel
- Wipe the area with diluted bleach and allow to dry
- All soiled material to be placed in sealed plastic bags
- Wash hands and lower arms with soap and water
- The bagged material should be disposed of as soon as possible in an appropriate way (deposited in the ladies' sanitary bins or deposited in a contaminated waste container – DO NOT USE THE NAPPY BINS)

ILLNESS EXCLUSION

Below are reasons that a child or educator must be excluded from attending council's education and care services:

- Infectious diseases [[Reg 88](#)]
- Temperature over 38°
- Two (2) or more symptoms of diarrhoea (watery stools, abdominal cramps) within 24 hours
- Two (2) or more repeated vomiting within 24 hours
- Unidentified or infectious rash or skin infection
- Undiagnosed eye discharge
- Symptoms of an upper respiratory tract infection (cough, nasal discharge, sore throat, ear ache) associated with a fever
- Extreme lethargy or fretting
- Started a course of antibiotics within the last 24 hours
- Not been immunised, in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease in an education and care facility.

If a child becomes ill whilst in care:

- the child's family (caregivers/parents/guardians) will be notified by the service [[Reg 86](#)]. It is important the family comes to the service immediately or arrange for another person to collect their child straight away. If the family cannot be contacted, a person authorised by a parent or an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record will be contacted to collect the child from the premises [[Reg 99](#)]. Please note educators will ring families when they are genuinely concerned about a child's health.
- permission from the family will be sought to administer paracetamol if the child has a temperature above 38.5°C, based on the child's age. Educators are to ensure the authority to administer paracetamol has been signed on the enrolment form, in addition to contacting the parent or the authorised person. The Medication Record in the Medication Guiding Principle is to be completed in full by the educator administering the paracetamol and the parent or authorised person is required to sign the Medication Record on arrival to collect the child [[Reg 92](#)]. All medication must be administered in accordance with section [95](#) of the Regulations.
- an Illness Record will be given to the family when they collect their child. If a person other than the parent collects the child, the form will be emailed to parent for them to sign and return to the service.
- the Illness Register is to be updated.

If a child arrives into care and the educator feels that the child is too ill to stay at the service or if they return without a doctor's clearance, then families will be asked to take the child home.

Please remember that if a child is well enough to attend care then they will be expected to engage in general activities and routines with the other children. Often sick children will ask to come to care and although they may be disappointed, please keep them at home. **The best place for a child who is unwell is at home with one to one supervision and where they can rest.**

The close proximity of children and educators within the service makes the risks of cross infections very high. We emphasise that we need families' cooperation in keeping their unwell child at home so that the spread of illnesses can be kept to a minimum.

Children who have been sent home or are absent from the service will be advised if a doctor's clearance certificate is required before returning to the service.

Following cases of vomiting and diarrhoea, children should be excluded until vomiting/diarrhoea has stopped for a least 24 hours.

If children have had vomiting or diarrhoea, they should not participate in cooking activities until they have been symptom-free for 48 hours.

Educators and other staff who have a food handling role should always be excluded until there has not been a bout of vomiting or diarrhoea for 48 hours.

In the event that a child contracts head lice, effective treatment must occur prior to the child returning to care.

A child will need to be excluded from care during the first 24 hours of antibiotic therapy while symptoms of illness exist.

In the event a FDC educator or staff member of the educator's household has an infectious or contagious disease, the educator will be closed with no fee payable. The FDC educator must notify the Coordination Unit of service closure.

If a child has been given medication before coming to care, an educator must be notified by the family and the reason for the medication provided.

Children should have a normal temperature up to 38°C for at least 24 hours prior to returning to care.

When a child returns to care they must have a doctor's clearance, if stated in the Illness Record.

If a child presents with cold and flu-like symptoms, families are encouraged to have their child tested for COVID-19 in accordance with the recommendations of the NSW Government. Families are requested to provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test before their child returns to the service.

Irrespective of this, council reserves the right to request that a person is tested for COVID-19 within 72 hours prior of returning to work or care and producing a negative result.

If educators are concerned with a child's change in behaviour, temperature, or physical symptoms then they will:

- refer to [National Health and Medical Research Council: Staying Healthy - Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services \(5th Edition\)](#)
- contact family to consult about treatment and organise collection of the child
- monitor child
- respond to symptoms (isolate if necessary)
- fill in the attached Illness Record for the family when they collect the child
- if necessary, seek medical advice or treatment.

NOTIFICATION OF DISEASES

If there is an occurrence of an infectious disease at a service (centre-based or FDC), the approved provider must ensure that a parent or an authorised emergency contact of each child being educated and cared for by the service is notified of the occurrence as soon as practicable [[Reqs 88\(2\) & \(3\)](#)].

All staff and educators must inform their Education and Care Coordinator if any staff member is tested for COVID-19 and provide test results. The Education and Care Coordinator must then notify council's Human Resources Manager.

Notifying the NSW Public Health Unit

Education and Care Services must inform the [NSW Public Health Unit](#) as soon as possible after they are made aware that a child enrolled at the service has one of the following vaccine preventable diseases or is reasonably suspected of having come into contact with a person who has one of these diseases (if the child has no evidence of immunisation lodged to show that the child is immunised against that disease):

- Diphtheria
- Mumps
- Poliomyelitis
- Haemophilus influenzae Type b (Hib)
- Meningococcal disease

- Rubella ("German measles")
- Measles
- Pertussis ("whooping cough")
- Tetanus.

A [Vaccine Preventable Disease Notification Form](#) should be submitted to the Parramatta Public Health Unit.

Services are also encouraged to seek advice from the Parramatta Public Health Unit when they suspect an infectious disease outbreak is affecting their service, such as the following [gastrointestinal](#) or [respiratory illnesses](#):

- COVID-19 (Coronavirus)
- Gastroenteritis
- Influenza
- Hepatitis.

By informing the Public Health Unit, the service benefits because public health staff may be able to help:

- identify the cause of the illness
- explain the consequences to children and educators of an infection
- trace the source of the infection (for example, contaminated food)
- advise on appropriate control measures (for example, vaccines, antibiotics, exclusion, education, infection control practices)
- by providing information to families and educators.

Procedure

- Educators are to notify the nominated supervisor immediately if they are notified or suspect that a child has one of the above infectious diseases.
- Nominated supervisor/educator to notify Manager Children, Youth and Families and the Parramatta Public Health Unit within 24 hours of diagnosis.
- Nominated supervisor/educator is responsible for notifying families of disease at the service as directed by the Public Health Unit and in accordance with sections [88\(2\) & \(3\)](#) of the Regulations.
- If applicable, a notice should be displayed and clearly visible at the main entrance to the service or FDC residence stating that there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease at the premises [[Reg 173\(2\)\(g\)](#)].

ATTACHMENTS

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Related Legislation and Online Resources

- [Children \(Education and Care Services\) National Law \(NSW\)](#): Sections [172\(f\)](#) & [174](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#): Sections [77](#), [79](#), [85-88](#), [93](#), [95](#), [96](#), [99](#), [162\(f\)](#), [168](#), [173\(2\)\(g\)](#), [177](#), [178](#) & [183](#)
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), [National Quality Standards](#): Quality Area 2.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3
- [Public Health Act 2010](#) NB: Information about the changes to the Public Health Act is available by contacting the local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055
- [Public Health Regulation 2012: Part 7, Division 2](#)
- [NSW Health](#) for information about:
 - [Vaccine Preventable Disease Notification Form](#)
 - [Catch up vaccine arrangements](#)
 - [Questions and answers about vaccination requirements for child care](#)
 - [Disease Notification](#)
 - [Gastro Pack for Childcare Centres](#)
 - [Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit](#) for Early Childhood Education and Care Services
 - [Ending HIV](#)
- Department of Health:
 - [Immunisation for children](#)
 - [National Immunisation Program Schedule](#)
- [Services Australia](#) for information about:
 - [Australian Immunisation Register \(AIR\)](#)
 - [How to get immunisation history statement](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidelines for ECEC Services](#)
- [National Health and Medical Research Council: Staying Healthy - Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services \(5th Edition\)](#)
- Health & safety in family day care: model policies & practices (2nd edition) (*J Frith, N Kambouris, O O'Grady*)
- Health & safety in children's centres : model policies & practices (2nd edition) (*J Frith, N Kambouris, O O'Grady*)

Related Documents and Council Policies

- Council's Education and Care Guiding Principles:
 - [Cleanliness and Hygienic Practices](#)
 - [Fees](#)
 - [Guiding Children's Behaviour](#)
 - [Medical Conditions and Medication](#)
- Council's [COVID-19 Vaccination Procedure](#) adopted 25 October 2021
- Council's Work Procedure Schedule: [Responding to a positive COVID-19 case in Education and Care services](#)

Authorisation & Version Control

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CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL

ILLNESS RECORD

(Regulation [87](#))

*Please complete this record as soon as practicable, but not later than 24 hours after the onset of the illness

Details of person completing this record

Name: Position/role:

Date and time record was made: Signature:

Child's details

Child's full name:

Date of birth: Age:

Gender: Male Female

Illness details

Illness date:/...../..... Time: am/pm Location:

Name of witness:

Witness signature: Date:

General activity at the time of illness:

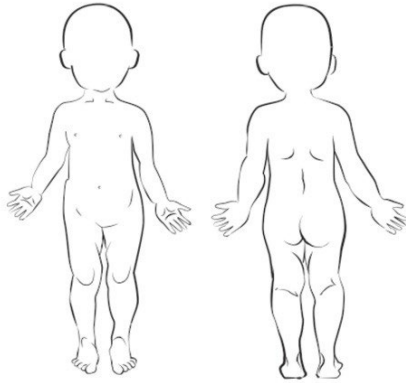
.....
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.....

Circumstances surrounding any illness, including apparent symptoms:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Nature of Illness

Indicate on diagram the part of body affected



- Abrasion / Scrape
- Allergic reaction (not anaphylaxis)
- Amputation
- Anaphylaxis
- Asthma / respiratory
- Bite wound
- Bruise
- Broken bone / fracture / dislocation
- Burn / sunburn
- Choking
- Concussion
- Crush / jam
- Cut / open wound
- Drowning (non-fatal)
- Electric shock
- Eye disease
- Infectious disease (inc. gastrointestinal)
- High temperature
- Ingestion / inhalation / insertion
- Internal injury / Infection
- Poisoning
- Rash
- Respiratory
- Seizure /unconscious/ convulsion
- Sprain / swelling
- Stabbing / piercing
- Tooth
- Venomous bite/sting
- Other (please specify)

Action taken

Details of action taken (including first aid, administration of medication etc):

.....
.....

Did emergency services attend?: Yes / No

Was medical attention sought from a registered practitioner / hospital?: Yes / No

If yes to either of the above, provide details:

.....
.....

Have any steps been taken to minimise the effects of the illness (e.g. temperature management notes, Panadol)?:

.....
.....

.....

Notifications (including attempted notifications)

Parent/guardian: Time:am/pm Date:

Director/educator/coordinator: Time:.....am/pm Date:

Other agency (if applicable): Time:.....am/pm Date:

Regulatory authority (if applicable): Time:.....am/pm Date:

Parental acknowledgement

I (name of parent/guardian)
have been notified of my child's illness.

Signature of parent/guardian: Date:

Additional notes

Diarrhoea last bout(time)

Vomiting last bout(time)

Eye discharge(time)

Other symptoms(time)

High temperature Time taken: am/pmam/pm am/pm
Temperature:

Rash (description and time of onset)

Permission to give (child's name) Paracetamol was given
by (parent or authorised person's name).

Paracetamol was given: Yes / No / N/A (please circle)

Paracetamol (dosage) given at am/pm

While at the service today, your child ate and drank the following:

.....
.....
.....

It is Cumberland City Council's Education and Care Services' policy that if your child vomits or has had diarrhoea, they are excluded until the diarrhoea/vomiting has stopped for a least 24 hours. If your child has a temperature they are unable to attend the centre/service for at least 24 hours from when the temperature returns to normal.

It is important that any symptoms which may indicate an infectious illness be confirmed by a doctor as soon as possible. If your child is prescribed antibiotics, they **must not** return to the centre within 24 hours of their first dosage. If they have a highly infectious disease such as chicken pox, measles, mumps, conjunctivitis, etc, the centre must be notified and they must have a Doctor's Clearance Certificate on their return to education and care.

The close proximity of children / babies and educators in care makes the risk of cross infection very high. We emphasise that your cooperation in keeping sickness to a minimum is needed.

A doctor's certificate is required on your child's return to education and care: Yes / No



CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL

ILLNESS REGISTER

Centre: _____

Contagious period	
NIL	Not contagious
USS	Until symptoms stop
DRS	Until Doctor's clearance received

Date	Child's name	Age	Symptoms/illness	Room	Date/time of onset	Contagious period	Dr's Certificate Y/N	S = sent home C = called in	Comments

