

# Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens

## CHILDREN'S IMMUNISATION POLICY

### CONSIDERATIONS:

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS	2.1
NATIONAL LAW ACT & NATIONAL REGULATIONS	Law Sections: 167,174 Regulations: 88, 162
OTHER	Public Health Act 2005

### POLICY STATEMENT:

To inform families/parents/guardians and staff of vaccination recommendations, to actively support immunisation of all children attending the Service programs and to protect children, as far as possible, from the spread of infectious diseases where there is an outbreak in any program.

### RELEVANT FORMS/MATERIAL:

- Individual Child's Immunisation History Statement.
- Individual Child's Enrolment Form.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Immunisation Record.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Conscientious Objection to Immunisation Form.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Staff Immunisation Policy.
- Kindergarten Family Handbook.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Exclusion and Recording of Illness and Infectious Diseases Policy.
- National Immunisation Program Schedule.
- National Immunisation Program Schedule (Queensland).

### SOURCES:

- National Health and Medical Research Council (June 2013) *Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services* (5th Ed.) Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra.
- National Immunisation Program, [www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/national-immunisation-program](http://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/national-immunisation-program)
- Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI). Australian Immunisation Handbook, Australian Government Department of Health, Canberra, 2018, [immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au](http://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au)
- State of Queensland (Queensland Health), (2016), Queensland vaccination legislation: A handbook for early childhood education and care services.
- Queensland Government Health Services. Time Out Poster (2020) (Accessed 2020)

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<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<p>On commencement at the program, the child's immunisation record is to be cited by the teacher/administration staff and a copy made so a <b>record</b> of the child's current immunisation status is kept at the Service.</p> <p>The records of each child's immunisation will be <b>updated regularly</b>, through a Service request annually.</p> <p>Any child who <b>has never been vaccinated</b> will be excluded from the program during outbreaks of <b>some</b> infectious diseases in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council and/or Queensland Health exclusion guidelines, even if the child is well.</p> <p>Where a child has been <b>partially vaccinated</b> when required, they will be excluded from the program during outbreaks for <b>any</b> infectious diseases they have not received the <b>full vaccination schedule</b> for in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council and/or Queensland Health exclusion guidelines, even if the child is well.</p> <p>Families will be given information on a six monthly basis regarding the exclusion of care to ensure families are aware of this procedure.</p> <p>Families who have a conscientious objection to immunisation will complete the Conscientious Objection to Immunisation Form to be placed on their child's file at the Service.</p>
<b>WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</b>	<p>Encourage families/parents/guardians to vaccinate their children by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displaying current wall charts in the Service for vaccine requirements for children – Time out (exclusion periods) as well as other relevant information available.</li> <li>• Have available for parents any Fact Sheets on the various immunisations and any new vaccines as they become available.</li> <li>• Consider a computerised message at the bottom of receipts.</li> <li>• Display immunisation posters and make brochures available at the Service.</li> <li>• Remind families of the four year old immunisation through signage at the Service and communication from the Service such as in the Service newsletters.</li> </ul>
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH ACT</b>  <b>APPROVED PROVIDER CONSIDERATIONS</b>  <b>WHAT YOU CAN DO</b>	<p>From 1 January 2016, The Queensland Government amended the Public Health Act, 2005 to give Approved Early Childhood Education and Care Services (ECEC Services), the power to exercise discretion regarding enrolment and attendance of children who are not up to date with their immunisations.</p> <p>The change does not make immunisation mandatory, the Approved Provider (Executive Committee) can make the decision for the individual context of the Service Community to refuse enrolment or attendance of children whose immunisation status is not up to date. This decision must be minuted and</p>

communicated with all families and staff including families on the Service waitlist.

The Gowrie (QLD) Inc as Central Governing Body of Affiliated Services encourages all Services in receipt of Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme (QKFS), to consider if they choose to undertake the option of refusing enrolment or attendance of children whose immunisation status is not up to date, how access to early childhood education and care programs is provided and supported in their community. The Exclusion and Recording of Illness and Infectious Diseases Policy will continue to be implemented regardless of the Approved Providers decision in relation to immunisation.

### **Proof of Immunisation Status**

The Queensland vaccination legislation: A handbook for early childhood education and care services shares the following information;  
An immunisation history statement is required to prove a child's immunisation status. Section 160A of the *Public Health Act 2005* defines this statement as being:

- an official record issued by the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) or
- a letter from a recognised immunisation provider (e.g. a General Practitioner or recognised immunisation nurse).

The Red Book, or Personal Health Record from Queensland Health is a good record for parents. However, as it contains hand written immunisation records it is not recognised as an official record of a child's immunisation status and is not an acceptable form of proof of vaccination.

The Kindergarten Service can ask parents/guardians to provide an Immunisation History Statement when enrolling their child and an updated statement when their child passes the 4 years vaccination milestone. The Service must allow families at least 4 weeks' notice to provide the current Immunisation History Statement.

The Immunisation History Statement will show if a child is up to date with their scheduled vaccinations.

If the child is not up to date, the Service can choose to;

- Refuse enrolment of a child,
- Conditionally accept enrolment and / or attendance of a child
- Cancel enrolment or refuse attendance of a child.

Children who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons (e.g. medical contradiction) or who are on a recognised vaccination catch-up schedule are considered up to date and cannot be refused enrolment based on their immunisation status.

Children from families who conscientiously object to immunisation will have their immunisation status recorded as "not up to date" and where the Approved Provider chooses the Service approach, of only approving the enrolment and attendance of immunised children, these families and children will be unable to enrol and attend the Kindergarten Service.

	<p>Vulnerable Children;</p> <p>The Queensland vaccination legislation: A handbook for early childhood education and care services notes “Under the new Queensland legislation, your Service has the flexibility to accommodate vulnerable children whose immunisation status may be unknown or not up to date. The Queensland Government recognises the importance of immunisation and high quality education and care for all children. It is not the intention of the legislation to disadvantage vulnerable children.”</p>
<p>STAFF STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS</p>	<p>Where an Approved Provider (Executive Committee) of a Kindergarten Service chooses the Service approach of only approving the enrolment and attendance of immunised children this will also apply to staff, students and volunteers at the Service.</p> <p>Prior to commencement at the Service the staff member, student or volunteer will need to provide an Immunisation History Statement or documentation from their General Practitioner that they are considered up to date with all recommended immunisations.</p>
<p>INFANT SIBLINGS</p>	<p>The Kindergarten Service is encouraged to discuss with families who have infants, who are yet to commence their immunisation schedule (commenced at two months of age), how arrival and departure of their kindergarten aged child can be supported, whilst minimising the engagement of any child aged under two months at the Service in supporting their health and wellbeing.</p>
<p><b>NOTIFICATION OF A CONFIRMED CASE OF A VACCINE PREVENTABLE ILLNESS OR DISEASE</b></p>	
<p>WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</p>	<p>Staff will follow the Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Exclusion and Recording of Illness and Infectious Diseases Policy.</p> <p>Any directive received from the Local Public Health Unit following notification of an outbreak of an illness, infectious disease or reportable case is to be implemented at the Service. Any such directive overrides and supersedes information in this policy.</p> <p>Any directive received from Australian Government or Department of Education (Regulatory Authority), in relation to outbreak of an illness or infectious disease in the local, national or global community is to be implemented at the Service. Any such directive overrides and supersedes information in this policy.</p> <p>Children and teacher/educators with infectious diseases will be excluded from the Service in accordance with the guidelines from the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia “<i>Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services</i>” (Table 1.1 Recommended minimum exclusion periods) and The Queensland Health Time Out Poster, will also be used for reference.</p> <p>Exclusion periods are based on the time that a person with a specific condition or disease might be infectious to others.</p>

**Children who are not immunised or partially immunised:**

The Service will refer to the fact sheets in *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (Table 1.1 Recommended minimum exclusion periods) and The Queensland Health Time Out Poster, in relation to exclusion times for non immunised children.

Where a child is not immunised and they have previously had a case of the infectious illness/disease, their family is able to provide documentation from their Medical Practitioner regarding the fact that they have previously had the disease and are now considered immune if applicable to the illness or infectious disease.