Legislation

ACT Public Health Regulations (2000)

National Quality Standard/Education and Care services National Regulations

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Aim

The Canberra Girls Grammar School Early Learning Centre and Junior School encourages children and staff to be fully immunised. We provide families and staff with information on immunisation, vaccines and recognised exclusion periods defined by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Explanation

Immunisation is a means of protecting people against diseases that can have serious complications. Immunisation, defined exclusion periods and good hygiene practices reduces the potential risk of exposure within school settings.

Practice

The ACT Public Health Regulation 2000 (the Regulation) was developed to help control the spread of vaccine preventable and other communicable diseases in primary schools, preschools and child care centres.

At the time of enrolment into the Early Learning Centre, the Regulation requires parents to provide two copies of their child’s immunisation history.

This information will help identify those children most vulnerable to vaccine preventable diseases and will assist health authorities in protecting all children in the event of a vaccine preventable disease occurrence in the ELC.

If a situation occurs where a child has a vaccine preventable disease, staff must be able to quickly access immunisation histories and determine who has not been immunised. If there is a case of a vaccine preventable disease, and your child has not been fully immunised for that disease, they may be excluded from the ELC for a period of time.

Immunisation is not compulsory. However, if there is a case of a vaccine preventable disease at the ELC, and your child has not been fully immunised for that disease, they may be excluded for a period of time.

If your child has a medical condition which prevents them from being immunised, your doctor will need to complete an ‘AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption’ form and submit it to the AIR. The form can be obtained by calling the AIR on 1800 653 809 or downloaded from the AIR website at: www.humanservices.gov.au/health-professionals/forms/im011. You will need to provide a letter to the ELC stating your child has a medical exemption.
To be fully immunised your child needs to have received all vaccines recommended for their age as part of the National Immunisation Program (NIP). The vaccinations recommended on the NIP are listed in Appendix A.

As there are changes made to the NIP from time to time, you are encouraged to speak with your immunisation provider, call the ACT Immunisation Information Line on 5124 9800 or visit health.act.gov.au/our-services/immunisation for the most up to date information about the recommended schedule.

**IMMUNISATION RECORD**

An immunisation history is a written record of the immunisations that your child has received and the date that they received them.

Valid immunisation histories are either:

- a signed and dated Immunisation Record (known as the “Blue Book” in the ACT)
- an Immunisation History Statement provided by the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)

You cannot provide an immunisation history that has been completed by yourself. If you are providing the original or transcribed immunisation history (other than an AIR history), it must be dated and signed by:

- a medical practitioner, or
- a registered nurse (e.g. Child Health Nurse, Practice Nurse), or
- a registered midwife, or
- an enrolled nurse, or
- a person authorised by the ACT Chief Health Office

**IMMUNISATION HISTORY**

The Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) is a national register that records vaccinations given to people of all ages in Australia. You can obtain an AIR Immunisation History Statement for your child by calling 1800 653 809 or through your myGov account online.

The original immunisation record is usually kept in the personal health record book (the “Blue Book”). These books are usually given to parents at the time of their child’s birth.

**OVERSEAS IMMUNISATION RECORD**

Overseas immunisation schedules often differ from the Australian National Immunisation Program (NIP) and your child may require extra vaccinations to be up to date with the Australian schedule.

If your child was immunised overseas, you will need to have your child’s overseas immunisation history transcribed onto the AIR.

A medical practitioner, registered nurse, registered midwife, enrolled nurse, or a person authorised by the ACT Chief Health Officer may transcribe overseas immunisation histories.

Once your child’s overseas immunisation history has been transcribed, you can obtain an AIR Immunisation History Statement by calling AIR on 1800 653 809 or through your MyGov account online. A copy of your child’s AIR Immunisation History Statement can then be provided to the ELC.

For more information about having your child’s overseas immunisation record transcribed please speak to your doctor, practice nurse, child health nurse or call the Health Protection Service, ACT Immunisation Information Line on 5124 9800.

**HOMEOPATHIC ‘IMMUNISATION’ INFORMATION**

Homeopathic “immunisation” has not been shown to work as an alternative to conventional immunisation in preventing vaccine preventable diseases. Only conventional immunisation produces measurable immune responses against vaccine preventable diseases. The National Health and Medical Research Council consider a homeopathically “immunised” child to be not immunised. Homeopathic substances may be used in conjunction with conventional immunisation if desired, but not as an alternative.

**IMMUNISATION LOCATIONS**

Childhood immunisations can be administered in general practice by your doctor or practice nurse. Please phone your practice to make an appointment. The Women, Youth & Children – Community Health Programs run Maternal and Child Health (MACH) immunisation clinics for children under six years of age. To make an appointment at a MACH clinic, call the Community Health Intake (CHI) line on 5124 9977.
SCHOOL NOTIFICATION

If your child has been diagnosed with a vaccine preventable or infectious disease they may need to be excluded from the ELC for a period of time regardless of whether they are immunised or not.

You must inform the Director of Junior School (ELC) as soon as possible so the school can take any necessary action to protect other children. The Regulation requires children with the following conditions or children who have been in contact with the following conditions, to be excluded from child care, preschool or primary school for the periods specified in appendix 2.

The School will maintain up to date student immunisation records on the student database system (Synergetic), in order to quickly notify the parents of any un-immunised students in the case of an outbreak of communicable disease within the School. Families will be given reminder notifications once a term when immunisation information is not complete or scheduled immunisations are overdue, to ensure the School has the most up to date immunisation record for each child. Parents are required to provide updated information within one week of this notification.

UPDATING INFORMATION

Parents are responsible for providing the School with an updated copy of immunisation information each time their child receives an immunisation. This information should be provided within one week of the immunisation.

Families who fail to provide information about their child’s immunisation status and those who do not provide updated information following immunisations, will be informed that their child will be excluded from care if there is a case of a communicable disease within the School, based on advice from the Public Health Unit. Regular fees will be payable during any period of absence. Government child care subsidies (Child Care Benefit, Child Care Rebate, Family Tax Benefit Part A), where applicable, will be forfeited when complete immunisation information is not provided.